

MINUTES
of the
PLANNING COMMITTEE
held on 17 June 2025 at 7.30pm

Present:

Councillor R. Lee (Chair)
Councillor S. Dobson (Vice Chair)

Councillors J. Armstrong, H. Clark, J. Frasca, S. Hall, R. Hyland, J. Lardge, V. Pappa, E. Sampson, A. Thorpe-Apps, C. Tron and P. Wilson

1. Chair's Announcements

For the benefit of the public, the Chair explained the arrangements for the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

3. Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 29 April 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. Public Question Time

[Two public questions had been submitted in advance, one for Item 7 and one for Item 8, which were summarised under the relevant items and can be viewed via this link.](#)

6. 24/01735/FUL – Unit and Yard 8 at Five Tree Works, Bakers Lane, Galleywood, Chelmsford

The Committee considered a retrospective change of use application from open storage and business administration to a mixed-use comprising the storage and distribution of vehicle-mounted mobile cranes, the siting of office and storage containers and the provision of

education/training for the operation of vehicle-mounted mobile cranes. The Committee were informed that the application had been referred to them at the request of a local ward member, who had raised concerns as to the visual impact of the two mobile cranes on the surrounding landscape and built environment, including the A12 to the North.

The Committee were informed that the proposal followed a previous retrospective application for the permanent siting of a tower crane, which had been refused due to the spatial and visual impacts of the tower crane, which had since been removed. The Committee heard that since the refusal, relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework had been amended, leading to the redevelopment of previously developed land complying with green belt policy provided it did not result in 'substantial' harm to openness. The NPPF changes also stated that developments to utilise 'grey belt' land, should meet a demonstrable unmet development need and be sustainably located, leading to two routes to compliance for the application. The Committee were also informed that visual impact assessments had been carried out to assess the impact of the crane booms, along with unscheduled site visits to the area and that the visual impact of the crane booms had been assessed as limited to modest, with the imposition of conditions.

The Committee were informed that with the proposed conditions in place limiting usage, maximum heights, retention of landscaping, parking provision and on the number of pupils using the training site that it had been recommended for approval. It was noted that there would also be economic benefits from the proposal, that outweighed the limited harm caused to the character and appearance of the area.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers confirmed that;

- The proposed hours of use were the current operating hours and were viewed as reasonable, given that other users of the industrial estate had similar hours as well.
- A condition had not been proposed in relation to lighting as it was an existing industrial estate, benefiting from a current lawful use and that floodlight columns for example, would require a separate application and that any lighting nuisance for residents, would be a matter for the Council's Public Health team to investigate.
- The Highways Authority had not raised any concerns about the cranes having an impact on the condition of the highway at Bakers Lane, also that movements of the cranes were expected to be limited and that the site was already an established industrial site, where significant vehicle movements would be expected.
- Conditions 6 and 7 were viewed as sufficient to ensure that only the cranes described in the application would be used at the site and that no others could be erected at the site.

RESOLVED that application 24/01735/FUL be approved, subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

(7.47pm to 8.10pm)

7. 25/00229/FUL – 71 Ash Grove, Chelmsford, CM2 9JT

The Committee considered an application for a proposed ground floor infill and first floor rear extension, which had been referred to the Committee at the request of a local ward member, who had concerns that the flank elevations of the proposed extension, would cause harm to the character of the street scene, due to its scale, siting and design. The Committee heard that the site was visible from the South entrance to Ash Grove when approaching from Lucas Avenue, and whilst the extension would be visible, it would be constructed of matching

materials and be of a similar design to other extensions close by. The Committee also heard that due to the location of the extension and existing additions in the street scene, the scale, form and design of the proposal would suitably relate to the existing dwelling and the character of the area, whilst safeguarding the amenity of all neighbouring properties and had therefore been recommended for approval subject to conditions.

The Committee heard from a member of the public who felt that the proposal did not adequately safeguard the amenities of nearby properties and that existing extensions nearby were of equal and much shallower projection, with a different orientation and impact on neighbouring properties. The Committee also heard concerns about misleading information in the officer's report about the impact, with regard to drawings and that it was difficult to fully envisage the impact of the development purely from the report. They asked the Committee to refuse the application, or attend a site visit to assess the impact on their property.

The Committee also heard from the local ward member who had called the application in. They raised concerns regarding vehicular access to the rear of the property during any building works, inaccuracies in the plans regarding the roof design of the adjacent substation and the likelihood of asbestos on the substation roof which may be disturbed during building works. They also highlighted the lack of a building regulations application for the development, the prior removal of two mature trees and the request from the adjoining neighbours for boundary wall treatments including the replacement of the brick boundary wall to secure continued protection of their property.

In response to the points raised by the member of public and local ward member, officers confirmed that;

- The trees in question would not have been subject to Tree Preservation Orders.
- Condition 3 was a standard condition that meant a review of boundary treatment replacements would be carried out at the time of any development, to see if they were required.
- A building regulations application was not required at the same time as a planning application and these often followed closer to the time of any works actually taking place.
- A party wall act agreement would be required with the electricity company due to building works on the boundary with their substation and asbestos issues were covered under different legislation to planning.
- The agent had been asked to correct the drawings for the substation flat roof, but in addition, as with all applications planning officers had visited this site to see it personally and so were aware of the correct roof design and took that into account in their assessment of the application.
- Construction traffic for domestic extensions would potentially be slightly inconvenient, but the site was not on a main carriageway and any obstructions would be temporary and local and not a matter that an application could be refused on.

In response to questions from members of the Committee, officers confirmed that, the property in question did already have a seamless two-storey extension, which was very common in Moulsham Lodge. They also confirmed that extension was to the east side of the neighbour, so in the early part of the day the proposal might lead to a bit more shadow, but this had not been viewed as harmful enough in the planning judgement to refuse planning permission.

RESOLVED that application 25/00229/FUL be approved, subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

(8.11pm to 8.30pm)

8. 24/00695/FUL – Land South East of Banters Lane Business Park, Banters Lane, Great Leighs, Chelmsford

The Committee considered an application for the construction of 105 residential dwellings including affordable housing and custom build housing, principal means of site access, provision of residents' and visitors' car parking, open space including children's play space, a new shared pedestrian/cycle route, enhancements to existing routes, hard and soft landscaping, highways works, new drainage basin and all associated infrastructure works. The Committee heard that the application was for Strategic Growth Site 7c, which had been through the Masterplanning process and was near other sites that had already been granted planning permission, with this being the largest land parcel in Strategic Growth Site 7c. The Committee heard information about the pedestrian and cycle connections to the site and were provided information on the layout and block plan details of the site, which included the access to it, landscaped areas, custom homes and the children's play area.

The Committee were informed that there would be 35% affordable housing on the site, alongside significant Section 106 obligations as part of the proposal which included, highways works and contributions, bus service contributions, cycle/pedestrian routes, healthcare contributions and open space contributions. The Committee heard that the application was for an allocated site with a masterplan, with an acceptable layout and design, 35% affordable housing and S106 contributions and was therefore recommended for approval. [The Committee also noted the additional condition on the green sheet and amended conditions and drawings, this can be viewed here.](#)

The Committee heard from a member of the public who spoke in support of the application, highlighting the alignment with the masterplan, extensive engagement with officers, stakeholders and the local community and the significant community benefits that would be secured through a comprehensive Section 106 agreement. They also stated that there were no outstanding objections from any statutory consultees, the application was policy compliant, deliverable and would make a meaningful contribution to Chelmsford's housing supply.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers confirmed that;

- The custom homes element provided future occupiers with a range of options for their plot, including customised internal layouts, materials and windows along with landscaping options and different energy technologies.
- The cycle and pedestrian route through the site would be shared rather than split for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The S106 contribution for open spaces/allotments, would be utilised by the City Council's parks team and it was anticipated that this would be used within Great Leighs.

Members of the Committee stated that they were pleased to see the 35% affordable housing provision being met by the proposal, including the high proportion for affordable rent, but raised concerns about the shared pedestrian and cycle way, which was not seen as ideal on a new build development.

RESOVLED that 24/00695/FUL be approved, subject to the completion of a S106 agreement together with compliance with the conditions detailed in the report and green sheet, the details of those items and any variations that may be considered necessary and appropriate to be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities/Planning Development Services Manager in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

(7.30pm to 7.47pm)

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Chair