

Regulatory Board (Planning)

Wednesday, 18 July 2018

7.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Michael Wenban (Chair)
Cllr Robin Theobald (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: John Burden
 Lee Croxton
 John Knight
 Bronwen McGarrity
 Brian Sangha
 Lauren Sullivan
 Derek Shelbrooke

Note: Councillors: Harold Craske and Shane Mochrie-Cox were also in attendance.

Laura Caiels	Lawyer (Place) Medway Council
Wendy Lane	Assistant Director (Planning)
Christopher Butler	Planning Manager (Development Management)
Peter Price	Principal Planner
Richard Hart	Principal Planner (Major Sites)
Lauren Wallis	Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

7. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

8. To sign the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2018 were signed by the Chairman.

9. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10. To consider whether any items in Part A of the Agenda should be considered in private or the items in Part B (if any) in Public

None.

11. Planning applications for determination by the Board

11.1 20171385 - Community Hall Site, Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, Kent

Further to a pre-meeting site inspection held on 14 July 2018, the Board considered a revised application for the demolition of the former community hall and the erection of a 3 to 4 storey block comprising of 12 x one bedroom and 12 two bedroom self-contained flats and 8 three storey three bedroom semi-detached houses with associated landscaping, cycle and refuse storage and parking.

The following points were raised during discussion on this application:

- It was noted that the artist's impression of the development had fences instead of walls at the rear of the proposed 3 bedroom semi-detached houses and that the same back gardens were not shown as terraced. Members were assured that this would be ensured by the appropriate conditions.
- Following questions about the control of cycles using the footpath linkage, the Board was advised that speed slowing devices such as chicane gates would be investigated and conditioned as appropriate.
- The protection of the healthy Ash trees on the site was requested including a report being made to the appropriate organisation of the presence of these trees in case cuttings could be taken from them.
- The applicant was requested to consider the planting of fruit trees in the proposed soft landscaping.
- The Board was advised that opaque perspex would be used to enhance privacy on the balconies to the flats to discourage residents from installing their own privacy screening.
- In relation to the two proposed unallocated car parking spaces next to House D, officers were requested to investigate the possibility of utilisation these as an open space with soft landscaping instead.

Resolved that application 20171385 be DELEGATED to the Planning Manager (Development Management), in consultation with the Chair of the Regulatory Board (Planning), for the issue of planning PERMISSION within six months of the date of the meeting subject to the Unilateral Obligation being signed by the applicant and Kent County Council. The decision notice shall include the planning conditions set out in the supplementary report along with the additional condition requested by the Environment Agency. In addition, Members requested that the soft landscaping scheme should include fruit trees where possible, and existing trees should be kept where possible and, if not, cuttings are taken from them. The planning conditions detailed in the decision notice issued by the Planning Department will be made available on the following link: www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning-search.

Note: Mr Joseph Ewen, agent for the applicants) addressed the Board.

11.2 20180041 - Reserved Matters Application for Land at Coldharbour Road, Northfleet, Gravesend - report herewith

Further to a meeting of the Regulatory Board (Planning) held on 3 June 2015, the Board considered a reserved matters application for the approval of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference number 20141214 for residential development for up to 400 new homes, including details pursuant to conditions 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 44 and 45 and being: 4 – compliance with outline plans; 6 – compliance with density/storey heights; 7 – levels; 8 – design code; 10 – compliance with space standards; 11 – sustainable energy measures; 14 – noise levels; 27 – northern road link; 28 – pedestrian/cycle access; 31 – design of roads etc; 32 – vehicle parking; 33 – electric cabling; 35 – cycle parking; 39 – external lighting; 44 – existing trees/hedges and 45 – ecology/biodiversity measures.

The following points were raised during discussion on this application:

- Members were advised that garages had not been counted as parking spaces under Kent County Council. It was also noted that Kent County Council would not usually count two tandem car parking spaces as two spaces but in this instance, had made an exception.
- The Board was advised that none of the proposed properties included in this development would be located on the flood plain.
- The open spaces would be maintained by a Resident Management Association that would include a charge which was the standard approach.
- A buffer zone had been included in the plans in respect of the Ellenor Hospice to protect the amenity of the building and its visitors. There would also be no building located any closer than that already existing and proposed landscaping would enhance the buffer.
- Further to a question about the community engagement exercise, Members' were given three examples of changes made to the proposals as a result of concerns expressed at the event:
 1. A reduction in the number of pedestrian and cycle linkages through the development from Lanes Avenue.
 2. The proposed play area abutting Lanes Avenue had been relocated towards the middle of the site in a move to discourage the perceived threat of anti-social behaviour.
 3. The proposed three storey block of flats on the western middle edge near Lanes Avenue had been deleted as it had been felt it would be out of keeping with the character of the area.
- The proposed play park or LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) had been designed in conjunction with Fields in Trust and would cater for a range of ages. A request was made that children be involved in the design as currently there were no swings or a slide included in the proposals.
- It was suggested that the land around the hospice that was proposed to be maintained by a Resident Management Association, be protected in perpetuity by a covenant spanning up to 50 years that would allow the Hospice to buy the land for £1 should it ever be put forward for development.
- It was noted that although there was only one proposed access to the site, there was potential for a link through the neighbouring Kent County Council owned site. There would also be an emergency access to this site further down Coldharbour Road.

- Following concern expressed about the poor state of the hedgerows on the site, Members' attention was drawn to fact that there was still a requirement under the outline planning conditions to submit full details of landscaping and the currently submitted landscape framework details would be further refined
- With regard to the size of some of the properties not meeting the National Space Standards, the Board was advised that if the housing units were enlarged to meet the National Space Standards then the site could not support as many dwellings and therefore the overall decrease would include a reduction of affordable housing dwellings. It was also noted that the Council would need a clear planning policy in place if the requirements of the National Technical Space Standards were to be fully imposed against developers. It was noted that the development was largely meeting current the Borough Council's adopted standards.

Resolved that application 20180041 for reserved matters of appearance, landscaping and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference number 20141214 for residential development for up to 400 new homes, including details pursuant to conditions 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 39, 44 and 45 be APPROVED subject to the informatives detailed in the decision notice issued by the Planning Department and made available on the following link: www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning-search.

Note: (a) Mr Jonathan Lieberman (agent for the applicants) addressed the Board.

(b) Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox spoke with the leave of the Chair.

11.3 20171169 - Oast House Cottage, Hermitage Road, Higham

The Board considered an application for the erection of a two storey side extension, two storey infill extension at the rear of the property, the construction of a canopy along the front elevation, the construction of a pitched roof over part of the existing rear extension, the demolition of the existing garage and erection of a detached workshop/garden store building and enlargement of the car parking area.

The Chair drew Members' attention to the restricted supplementary report on this application and advised that since Members would have read the report there would be no need for the meeting to go into private session for this item. It was also noted that the applicant and his wife had given permission for the subject of the impact of the wife's medication condition to be discussed in Part A of the agenda.

The following points were raised during discussion on this application:

- Members accepted that they must balance the possible impact on the openness of the Green Belt with the very special circumstances put forward by the applicant in relation to his wife's medical condition and the present layout of the dwelling.
- The applicant's representative advised that the rear extension was an upwards expansion of the existing first storey rear extension.
- No objections had been received by the Council, only correspondence that supported the proposal had been received from neighbours and Higham Parish Council.
- Following a question on how a nearby property (Warwick House) had gained permission for a larger scale extension, the Planning Manager (Development Management) advised that the Warwick House extension had been done under

Lawful Development Certificate (permitted development) therefore there had been no need to apply for planning permission.

- Members agreed that they felt that the application was well designed and would enhance the locality. The improvements to the internal space and layout would also improve the quality of life for the current occupants and would also future proof the house for other residents.
- It was noted that the National Planning Policy Framework contained a closed list of exceptions in relation to development in the Green Belt and that one such exception related to extensions to residential properties. It was also noted that the Council's own policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 limited residential extension within the Green Belt to being no more than 33% of the property's original footprint. This application exceeded the 33% limit.
- Members felt that the required very special circumstances had been clearly demonstrated in the supplementary report and by information imparted by the applicant's agent, the applicant's neighbour and the Ward Member for Higham.

Taking everything into account, Members considered the submitted planning application and all other material planning considerations and information available to them and judged that the submission demonstrated that the proposal was necessary, clearly met the identified health needs of the applicant's wife and that the identified health needs could not equally be met in a more appropriate form, which was less harmful to the Green Belt and its openness. Members considered that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, was clearly outweighed by the Very Special Circumstances advanced by the applicant in the submission.

Following the Officer presentation to Members, Members considered the submitted planning application and all other material planning considerations and information available to them. Members judged that the submission demonstrated that the proposal was: necessary; clearly met the identified health needs of the applicant's wife; and that the identified health needs could not equally be met in a more appropriate form, which was less harmful to the Green Belt and its openness. Members considered that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, was clearly outweighed by the Very Special Circumstances advanced by the applicant in the submission. In the light of these considerations, Members resolved that application 20171169 be permitted.

Resolved that application 20171169 be PERMITTED subject to the conditions, reasons and informatives to be detailed in the decision notice issued by the Planning Department and made available on the following link: www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning-search.

- Note:
- (a) Mr Andrew Street (a supporter) addressed the Board.
 - (b) Mr Peter Booth (a supporter) addressed the Board.
 - (c) Cllr Harold Craske spoke with the leave of the Chair.

12. Planning applications determined under delegated powers by the Director (Housing & Regeneration)

A schedule showing applications determined by the Director (Housing & Regeneration) under delegated powers has been published on the Council's website.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 9.07 pm