

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**Held on Monday, 4 February 2008 at 9.30 am in  
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Councillor E. Gould (Chairman)	Mrs D.K.R. Irving
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris
Councillor Claire Bowes	Mr J.P. Labouchere
Mr A.J. Byrne	Mr T.J. Lamb
Mrs M.P. Chapman-Allen	Mr B. Rose
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr M. Fanthorpe	Mrs P.A. Spencer
Mrs S.R. Howard-Alpe	Mr N.C. Wilkin (Vice-Chairman)

**Also Present**

Mrs A.L. Steward	Mr C.R. Jordan
Mrs J. Ball	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mr J.P. Cowen	

**In Attendance**

Mike Brennan	- Principal Development Control Officer
Julie Britton	- Senior Committee Officer
Nick Moys	- Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects)
David Spencer	- Principal Planning Policy Officer
John Chinnery	- Solicitor & Standards Consultant
Lee Webster	- Housing Enabling and Projects Officer

**11/08MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

Minute No. 6/08: Swaffham and Sporle: A wind energy development comprising six wind turbines and associated works on land off Sporle Road for Next Generation: Reference 3PL/2007/0314/F

A Member queried the content of this Minute and felt that it was incomplete as it had not included the Planning Officer's statement: "that the MOD requirements should be sorted out before an application could be heard".

In response, the Solicitor advised that he would confirm the wording with the relevant Officer.

Subject to the above concern, the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**12/08APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Francis, Mr R Kemp and Mr M Spencer.

**13/08DECLARATION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

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Members and Officers were asked to declare any interests at the time the applications were made.

The Chairman declared a prejudicial interest in item 4 of the Schedule of Applications (North Elmham) as she had relatives who lived next door to the site. The Chairman left the room whilst this item was being discussed.

Messrs J Labouchere and B Borrett declared a personal interest in item 3 of the Schedule of Applications (North Elmham) as they both knew the applicant.

**14/08 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

The Chairman advised the meeting of the procedures of public speaking.

The Chairman thanked those Members who had attended the Development Control training on Monday, 28 January 2008.

**15/08 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (STANDARD ITEM)  
(AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Principal Planning Policy Officer was in attendance for this item.

Members were informed that the six week consultation period, with regard to the Core Strategy Document and the Development Control Policies, was now underway.

All Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and stakeholders should have received copies of the aforementioned documents. The on-line version was now interactive for the public to make comments and put their views forward until 10 March 2008.

The next edition of Breckland Voice would include a two page spread on the subject of the LDF.

To accompany the launch of the Strategy document, public meetings had already taken place and further meetings had been arranged as follows:

- Dereham – 5 February 2008 – a special event for Local Service Centres, Breckland Council, Elizabeth House, The Anglia Room – 6.00pm
- Thetford – 6 February 2008 – public exhibition at the Carnegie Rooms – two drop in sessions on the LDF – 10.00am until 2.00pm and 5.00pm until 7.00pm

The Planning Policy Team had also been invited to Attleborough. A provisional date for this meeting had been arranged for Thursday 21 February 2008.

A number of LDF items were being presented to the Policy Development and Review Panel 1 meeting on Tuesday 5 February in

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Watton. The documents being discussed were:

- The Open Space Assessment
- The Landscape Character Assessment; and
- Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1.

All Development Control Members were invited to attend.

**16/08 DEFERRED APPLICATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

This item was noted.

**17/08 WRETHAM: STONEBRIDGE CAMP: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT: APPLICATION REFERENCE 3PL/2007/1569/F (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects) presented the report which concerned a planning application for the residential development of a former military camp on the edge of Wretham. It was recommended that the application be approved.

The development proposed would comprise of 27 dwellings, a new access and estate road, and an area of open space. The application had been supported by a number of technical reports, including a Planning Statement, Sustainability Statement, Consultation Statement, Design and Access Statement, Ecological Survey, Flood Risk Assessment, Transport Assessment and Site Investigation Desk Study.

The 1.6 hectare site was located just outside the Settlement Boundary on the southern edge of Stonebridge, East Wretham.

A draft Section 106 Agreement was currently under preparation and would include the following obligations:

- the provision of 8 affordable dwellings;
- provision of public open space and play area; and
- financial contributions towards schools and library services, traffic management proposals, improved bus stop facilities and improvements to the Village Hall.

There would be a range of properties proposed and all dwellings would be constructed to a high environmental standard (Sustainable Home Code Level 4). There were currently six codes: codes five and six contained zero carbon environmental factors. Code Level 4 was considered to be of an excellent standard of environmental design and was above the energy performance standard of Code Level 3.

The principal issues raised by the application were: i) the extent to which the development would accord with relevant planning policy relating to housing development in rural areas, and ii) the impact of the development on the character of the area.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the current

**Action By**

proposal for 27 dwellings exceeded what could reasonably be considered to be a small scale development in the context of the existing settlement. To this extent, the proposal would conflict with national policy. However, in support of the application, it was argued that a smaller scheme would not be viable, given the costs associated with redeveloping a brownfield site of this sort and the community benefits being offered. National Policy, as set out in PPS3, prioritised the re-use of brownfield sites, particularly those that contained vacant or derelict buildings that had previously been publicly owned. The site, although outside the defined development boundary, was well related physically to the built up form of the village. The site had previously been identified for commercial uses; however, no such uses had been forthcoming despite efforts by the applicants to market the land for such purposes.

There had been strong local support for the development from local residents and the Parish Council. Prior to the submission of the application, the views of the Parish Council and local residents had been sought at a series of public meetings. The general response had been positive except for the one issue of parking. The applicant had taken on board their concerns and had amended the scheme slightly by increasing the parking spaces belonging to the affordable units to two each. A further change incorporated had been an increase to the amount of visitor parking by the form of lay-bys around the public open space. All the parking areas on the site had been well located and were well overlooked for security purposes.

Natural England had asked that further information be provided in relation to bats. The Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects) explained that bats had been found residing in several existing buildings; therefore, the applicant had offered to build a bat structure to provide a roosting space. Natural England had been happy with this proposal.

Mr Kitson, the Parish Council Representative, had appreciated the amount of consultation that had taken place as this would be the biggest single development to ever take place in the village. The applicants had listened and had doubled the amount of car parking spaces for the residents as well as increasing the visitor spaces to ten; however, the Parish Council was still unhappy with the parking arrangements for plot no. 8 as future residents would have to park in the front garden.

Mr Williams, the Applicant's Agent, was in attendance for this item. He provided Members with a brief history of the site when the camp had been in operation. He was pleased with the results from the number of community events that had been held and indicated that he would take on board any other minor amendments suggested to satisfy the Parish Council. Mr Williams was in no doubt that this development would help to enhance the vitality of the village and believed that it could be held as a beacon to the community.

Mr Cowen, the Ward Representative, felt that this was an unusual application and very significant for this Committee particularly when the Officers were approving a development outside the Settlement Boundary. The scale and density of the development was appropriate

**Action By**

and the designers deserved a pat on the back; however, there was a little work still to be done. For example, he would encourage the Officers to approve the application subject to them looking again at plots 9 to 14 as according to the site layout, the parking areas were not quite apparent. Mr Cowen felt that the properties should be 'tweaked' to alleviate more space in that area. In response, the Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects) clarified that a number of those buildings in that area were in fact garages.

A Member was aware that the parking situation on any new development caused constant problems. He urged the applicant's to provide more visitor parking around the back of the site as, in his opinion, to install lay-bys around a fabulous piece of public open space would be very unfortunate.

Another Member believed that the most important matter that should be considered was the Council's policy. The policy clearly stated that estates in villages should not be built, and certainly not the ones that were outside the guidelines. Policies should be upheld, if not; Breckland Council would be pilloried as an authority if it allowed this development to go ahead. The Member felt that if the Committee was mindful to approve this application it could set a precedent for other dis-used camps to be built on in the future.

The Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects) agreed with the aforementioned concern but assured Members that careful consideration had been given to both national and local policies. A Member concurred with the Officer's response and pointed out that if the Council abided strictly to policy the Development Control Committee would be superfluous. The reason why this Committee was held was to discuss matters such as these and to allow a certain amount of flexibility. Although in support of the application, the Member still had doubts about sustainability items in the village and accessibility concerns. Mr Kitson pointed out that Wretham had a public house, a Village Hall and a part-time post office. He urged the Committee to support the application as this development would help sustain the village and encourage young people to move in.

Another concern highlighted related to whether there would be any traffic calming measures installed along the main road. Members were informed that there was a financial contribution being offered to the Highway Authority which would include traffic management measures on the A1075 and public transport facilities.

A Member was pleased that new life was being breathed into the village and wholeheartedly supported the application.

Given the level of local support for the development, it was considered that the balance of arguments fell in favour of the development. Whilst there was some risk of a precedent being set for other developments outside allocated areas, it was considered the combination of factors here present were unlikely to be repeated.

**RESOLVED** that the application be deferred; however, the Development Services Manager be authorised to grant permission subject to:

**Action By**

- i). conditions relating to external materials, access and parking, landscaping and boundary treatment, archaeology, drainage, site investigation and wildlife mitigation; and
- ii) the completion of a S106 Agreement to secure the affordable housing, public open space, sustainable construction, and financial contributions towards schools, libraries, transport initiatives and improvements to the Village Hall.

**18/08 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

**RESOLVED** that the applications be determined in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Schedule, subject to the following conditions and amendments:

- a) Item 1: 3PL/2007/1449/O: Hockering: Mattishall Road: Replacement of caravans with two dwellings for Mr N Melton

Approved, as recommended, subject to a further condition to include the removal of permitted development rights from both dwellings.

- b) Item 2: 3PL/2007/1569/F: Wretham: Stonebridge Camp, Thetford Road, Stonebridge: Development of Stonebridge Camp including removal of all buildings and erection of 27 dwellings (2, 3, 4, & 5 bed units) and associated works for Beres Developments Ltd

This item was considered in conjunction with Agenda item 9 (Minute No. 17/01 above refers).

- c) Item 3: 3PL/2007/1595/F: Watton: 1 High Street: Conversion and extension of existing building to form 13 new apartments for Kester Cunningham John

Approved, as recommended.

- d) Item 4: 3PL/2007/1688/O: North Elmham: Site adjacent 7 Station Road: Proposed residential development site for Land & New Homes

Deferred, contrary to the recommendation, for further information to be obtained on foul drainage and road and rail crossing concerns, and for negotiation on the layout.

- e) Item 5: 3PL/2007/1767/F: Thetford: Garage Court, Fir Road: Demolition of existing garages for the redevelopment of 5 dwellings and associated parking for Flagship Housing Group

Deferred, contrary to the recommendation, but the Officers, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to approve subject to amendments to parking and layout (particularly with regard to plots 4 and 5).  
Members also felt that Breckland's Tree and Countryside Officer should visit the site to investigate the option of issuing a Tree

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Preservation Order in relation to the mature trees on the site.

- f) Item 6: 3PL/2007/1783/F: Dereham: Rear to 1 – 5 Clifton Terrace: Proposed demolition of existing garages and construction of 8 flats and one 2 bed room house for MSM Property Services Ltd

Approved, as recommended, subject to a further condition to incorporate a number of blind windows to the blank elevations.

- g) Item 7: 3PL/2007/1796/F: Little Ellingham: Land adjoining Hambledowns, 5 The Green: New dwelling with double garage (plot 2) for Miss T Mays

Refused, contrary to the recommendation. Members felt that the proposal constituted overdevelopment of the site that would result in a form of development that was out of keeping with the character of the area. Members also felt that a further dwelling on the site would cause disturbance to neighbouring properties.

Mr Smith, the Ward Representative had been asked to speak on behalf of Little Ellingham Parish Council and on behalf of a number of residents. Photographs were displayed of the access to the site which illustrated that there would not be an adequate turning point provided for vehicles. Mr Smith expressed further concerns relating to drainage and highway issues, and with the number of trees that had already been removed prior to the submission of the plans.

- h) Item 8: 3PL/2007/1800/D: Dereham: Moorgate Business Centre, South Green: Residential Development for Norfolk Homes Ltd

Approved, as recommended, on the basis that the open space would be adopted and passed on to the Town Council.

- i) Item 9: 3PL/2007/1816/F: Yaxham: Hill House, Mattishall Road, Clint Green: Replacement of 'Hill House' with 2 detached dwellings for Mr & Mrs T Partridge

Refused, contrary to the recommendation, on the following grounds:

- i) overdevelopment;
- ii) poor design;
- iii) site layout; and
- iv) that the proposal failed to enhance the form and character of the area.

Members considered that the scheme did not represent an improvement to the area and felt that one dwelling, or to restore the existing dwelling, would be favoured.

- j) Item 10: 3PI/2007/1890/LB: Thetford: Abbey Barns, Monksgate: Conversion of unlisted barn to six dwellings and demolition of other unlisted buildings for H G Developments

**Action By**

Approved as recommended.

- k) Item 11: 3PL/2007/2002/F: Yaxham: Land adjacent Down Ampney, Well Hill: Proposed dwelling and garage for Mr & Mrs C Smith

Refused, contrary to the recommendation. Members considered that a further dwelling on this site constituted overdevelopment of the area and would result in a form of development which was out of keeping with the character of the area.

Mr Jordan, the Ward Representative, was in attendance and spoke against the application. He advised that a great deal of local interest had been generated by the application raising concerns about changing the character of Clint Green which, in the opinion of the residents, should be retained as a hamlet to Yaxham.

- l) Item 12: 3PI/2007/2038/F: Ashill: Site off Dunnetts Close: Low cost housing development scheme for 12 dwellings (resubmission) for Hastoe Housing Association)

Approved, as recommended, subject to an additional condition to require the details of slab levels, and subject to further discussion with the applicant on roofing materials. Members were pleased with the re-submitted design but asked the Officers to try and secure clay pantiles if possible.

**Notes to the Schedule**

The following persons were in attendance to speak on the following items:

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Agenda item 2 (Wretham)	Mr Cowen, Ward Representative, in support Mr Kitson, Parish Council Mr Williams, Applicant's Agent
1	Mr Thomas, Objector
4	Mrs Richmond, Objector Mr Banning, Applicant Mr Bailey, Applicant's Agent
7	Mr Smith, Ward Representative, spoke against the application Mr Hurrell, Applicant's Agent
9	Mr Jordan, Ward Representative, spoke against the application

**Action By**

	Mr Crummett, Parish Council
10	Mr Wilson, Objector
11	Mr Jordan, Ward Representative, spoke against the application
	Mr Crummett, Parish Council
	Mr Lowings, Supporter
	Mr & Mrs Smith, Applicants
12	Mrs Ball, Ward Representative, in support of the application
	Mr Retchless, Applicant's Agent
	Miss M Stephan, on behalf of the applicant

The Committee was made aware of the following amendment to the Agenda:

Item 6: Dereham – the proposal should have read: for the construction of eight flats” and not ten.

**Written representations taken into account**

Reference No.	No. of Representations
3PL/2007/1449/O	1
3PL/2007/1595/F	1
3PL/2007/1688/O	4
3PL/2007/1767/F	1
3PL/2007/1783/F	3
3PL/2007/1796/F	12
3PL/2007/1816/F	1
3PL/2007/2002/F	7
3PL/2007/1890/LB	21

**19/08 ENFORCEMENT ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

The item was noted.

**20/08 APPLICATIONS DETERMINED BY THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
MANAGER (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

This item was noted.

**Action By**

**21/08 APPEALS DECISIONS (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 13)**

The Solicitor updated Members on the following appeals:

Appeal references APP/F2605/C/06/2024074/2076/4078/2081: The Inspector had refused the permissions and the matter was now subject to three High Court legal actions.

Appeal reference: APP/F2605/A/07/2039597: costs had been awarded against the Council.

The meeting closed at 3.10 pm

CHAIRMAN