

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Monday 21 February 2022 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall

Committee Members:

Councillors: T Downing (in the Chair)
P Abraham C Davies (until min no 159.1) S Murphy
K Rainbow J Riley G Wiskin

Also Present: W Kauffman (as substitute for Cllr Davies during and from min no 159.1)
S Fontenelle J Jennings D Wixley

Officers: Mark Squire (Town Clerk)
Debra Paris (Planning Committee Clerk)
Jonathon Glynn (Finance Officer)

2 Members of the Public

This meeting was preceded by a pre-meeting with Nigel Richardson, Planning Service Director and Andrew Marx, Development Service Manager from Epping Forest District Council, to discuss miscellaneous planning issues.

Cllrs Jennings and Wixley and the Town Clerk left following the pre-meeting.

PL154 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received for this meeting.

PL155 Declarations of Interest

The Committee declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning applications: EPF/1699/21 – 85 Spring Grove; EPF/2606/21 – 31 Traps Hill; EPF/2674/21 – 77 The Drive; and EPF/0191/22 – 140 Church Hill owing to comments received from the LRA Plans Group.

Cllr Wiskin declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application EPF/2606/21 – 31 Traps Hill, as he knew the applicant.

PL156 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Licensing Committee held on 7 February 2022 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward planning application EPF/1699/21 – 85 Spring Grove, as members of the public were interested in this item.

PL157 Planning Application

The following planning application was CONSIDERED, and the plans inspected.

157.1 Application No: EPF/1699/21
Officer: Muhammad Rahman
Applicant Name: Mr Marcin Marynnczak
Planning File No: 007010
Location: 85 Spring Grove, Loughton, IG10 4QE

Proposal: Replacement of the front garden wall with wall and gates.
The Committee NOTED the contents of two letters of objection.

A member of the public with an interest in this application addressed the meeting.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating it would be out of keeping with the character of the area. The proposed wall and gates, by reason of their excessive height and use of aluminium panels would be detrimental to the local townscape and openness of Spring Grove.

Members believed that the proposed design would create restricted views resulting in a safety risk to pedestrians and other highway users, including the neighbours at no 83 when exiting their own driveway.

The Committee considered the plans provided to be inaccurate, neglecting to show the basement that has already been built at the site, and failing to include the trees on the property that would be affected by the proposal.

PL158 Matters for Report

158.1 Amended Plans

158.1.1 EPF/2374/21 - 20 Goldings Rise, Loughton, IG10 2QP.

Proposal: Proposed remodelling of existing facade using existing levels and roof remodelling to adapt proposed hip to gable style roof extension – Min no PL85.1

The Committee OBJECTED to this application, considering the amended plans failed to address its initial concerns, and reiterated its previous comments which were:

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that the rear roof extension was too bulky, making it appear too large and clumsy. It needs to be subservient to the main building and read as a proper dormer. As such it should to be reduced in size. The poor example at No 21 should not be used to justify another one in this location.

Members expressed concern that this overbearing proposal would have on the neighbours; and with the site being so close to the forest, for the negative impact the extensive glazing at the rear of the property would have on insects and animals caused by light pollution.

The Committee further believed that the materials proposed should be more sympathetic to neighbouring properties, considering the black roof tiles and rendering to the side aspect to be inappropriate.

158.2 Epping Forest District Council Sustainability Guidance and Checklist Volume 3: Extensions and Refurbishments

The Committee RATIFIED the comments submitted under powers of delegated authority, in order to meet today's deadline for this consultation, which were:

"1 There is a propensity for planning applications and alterations to

include large expanses of glass, in doors and windows. This is concerning and not environmentally friendly for the following reasons...

A) Large glass windows, doors and skylights cause large amounts of light to pollute the surrounding area.

This is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of neighbours.

Also, it disturbs the habitat of and causes great disruption/injury to the breeding cycle of a wide range of moths and insects and wildlife. Active from dusk, they require a natural dark environment, protected from this kind of urban light pollution.

This light pollution has a follow-on negative effect on the food sources of birds and animals further up the forest and surrounding food chain.

B) Large expanses of glass allow more sunlight in to heat up a property. In Summer this causes overheating, which then requires air conditioning for cooling. The hot air sent out into the environment, in turn heats up the surrounding air temperature. This is injurious to flora, fauna and neighbours who are subjected to the raised environmental temperature.

C) See article - much special cooling glass, manufactured to protect from heat, cannot be recycled.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/28/ban-all-glass-skscrapers-to-save-energy-in-climate-crisis>

The solution to all the above, is...

Keep or revert to smaller windows.

This will keep the property at a more even temperature.

Light pollution will be reduced/not an issue. This in turn will stop all the many problems caused by light pollution, listed in point A) from occurring.

Air conditioning units should be avoided whenever possible

Environmental heating caused by the rising popularity of air conditioning units, along with their heavy use of power, should be avoided at all costs.

They should not routinely be given permission to be installed, until all other eco-friendly temperature control methods have been explored first.

Large glass windows/doors should only be installed as a last resort

If large glass windows/doors have to be installed, for health and safety reasons, for example. This should be as a last resort. Then only fully recyclable glass should be used.

To also make sure there is no light pollution, suitable blinds should be used to stop the escape of light into the wider environment, at dusk and throughout the night. To control the internal temperature during the day a light screening / shading method such as canopies, shades etc should routinely be used.

2 Trees/Hedges - Green Screening

All trees, hedges and green screening, even those in small properties, are essential. They provide shade, which helps keep the environmental temperature down and they provide habitats for flora and fauna. They also act as green screens against light pollution.

Even without TPO's Trees, Hedges and Green Screens can be of such environmental importance (e.g. because of their ages or the number of species they support) that their routine removal, without permission, should not be permitted.

Residents should be encouraged to value, protect and maintain their trees, hedges and green screens. They should also be educated about the damage that is caused to habitats and food sources by replacing green screening with barriers such as fences, walls, railings and link fences etc causes.

A green screen/ hedge audit should be set up and monitored. The aim is to stop their wholesale removal, protect the natural environment and ensure shade and natural cooling.

3 Grass and natural Planting

The popularity of car ownership has resulted in many gardens being paved over along with the removal of native / natural planting.

This should be strongly discouraged. Removing a natural garden/planting, and replacing it with block paving, concrete or similar, will inevitably cause the air temperature to rise.

And, of course, this also removes habitats and food sources for local insects, birds and fauna.

Our populations of vital insects and bees needed for pollination of our food crops and fruit trees will also be badly hit. Ultimately this will affect local food security.

The removal of natural grass and replacing with plastic grass is detrimental to the natural environment. It adds to air temperature rises, unlike natural grass which cools it. Plastic grass heats up and as it does so it can release chemicals into the air. Plastic grass destroys natural habitats and is injurious to insects and other fauna.

EPC

EPC is mentioned in this consultation for domestic rental properties. This should be taken into consideration when an application for an extension and refurbishments is made.

All properties in the UK have an EPC rating.

There should be a way of showing the increased carbon emission due to the loss of garden area, lighting, heating etc when an extension is planned. The EFDC or central government should provide ways to calculate this per square metre.

A planning application should also include carbon neutral activities incorporated - such as heat pump, solar panels, rainwater harvesting, additional trees and shrubs planted etc. This may include reduction in the number of cars used by the occupants and the use of electric cars/ bicycles.

A user-friendly chart to work out the increased carbon emission/mitigation efforts should be made available and a give a final projected EPC.

Finally, whilst members applaud such guidance, taking into consideration the limited resources of EFDC, it was questioned who and what enforcement action would be taken to hold applicants accountable?"

PL159 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were CONSIDERED, and the plans inspected.

159.1 Application No: EPF/2606/21

Officer: Sukhvinder Dhadwar

Applicant Name: Mr John Pike

Planning File No: 013134

Location: 31 Traps Hill, Loughton, IG10 1SZ

Proposal: Application for a new planning permission to replace an extant planning permission (EPF/1822/18) for demolition and removal of existing dwelling house and erection of a replacement.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application believing this was not an extant planning permission - it had expired. The applicant cannot apply to replace an extant permission. The application is dated 28/09/21 and was registered on 10/02/22.

It was not sustainable to knock down existing buildings and replace them with completely new builds. The existing building represented an enormous investment in carbon and energy already, and to simply throw it into the skip was unacceptable.

Historic England's Heritage Counts report confirms knocking down buildings releases embodied carbon dioxide (CO₂) which is stored inside them and contributes to climate change. An owner can adapt an old building and reduce CO₂ emissions by more than 60%. Historic England claim replacing a traditional Victorian terrace property with a new building of the same size produces up to 13 times more embodied carbon, which equates to about 16.4 tonnes of CO₂. This proposed development would be significantly higher than that.

No reason has been given to justify the loss of the existing dwelling and the embodied carbon dioxide which is stored inside it. The council needs to resist the loss of existing fabric and insist the existing dwelling is retro fitted with sustainable energy efficiencies and improved rather than allowing it to be demolished and sent to landfill. Any scheme that replaces an existing building should have a carbon assessment of the whole-life carbon footprint of it compared to the option of re-use.

The additional vehicular movements to remove the entire existing building and replace it with a brand new one would also impact the EFSAC.

In relation to the front boundary, any clearance works would constitute development, therefore the plans should reflect this.

However, if the District Council is minded to approve the application as it stands, the Committee requested the following condition:

You must carry out any building work which can be heard at the boundary of the site only:

- between 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to Friday; between 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturday; and not at all on Sundays, bank holidays and public holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Application No: EPF/2674/21

Officer: Kie Farrell

Applicant Name: Mr & Mrs Tom & Eylem Betchley

Planning File No: 003663

Location: 77 The Drive, Loughton, IG10 1HL

Proposal: Single storey rear/side extension, single storey front/side extension, part 1st floor rear/side extension & rear dormer extension to existing rear dormer.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating it would have a detrimental impact on the street scene. The proposal would knock out the symmetry of this pair of vintage houses creating a terracing effect.

Members considered the rear extension was an overdevelopment, which would result in a negative impact on the amenity of the neighbours at no 75.

Application No: EPF/0140/22

Officer: Marie-Claire Tovey

Applicant Name: Mr & Mrs Surridge

Planning File No: 008268

Location: Landscapes, 29 Woodbury Hill, Loughton, IG10 1JF

Proposal: Demolish existing timber frame conservatory. Proposed rear extension to lower ground floor, reconfigured door openings in front elevation lower ground floor. Insertion of roof window on top floor.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that it was out of keeping, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

Members considered a traditional design using traditional materials would be acceptable to replace the conservatory and for the roof window and which would be compliant with the Conservation Area.

Cllr Davies left the meeting. Cllr Kauffman was nominated to act as her substitute for the remainder of the meeting.

Application No: EPF/0146/22

Officer: Mohinder Bagry

Applicant Name: Mr & Mrs Gary Copeland

Planning File No: 031461

Location: 12 Greenfields Close, Loughton, IG10 3HG

Proposal: Single storey rear extension.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating it was too large and overbearing and would have a detrimental effect on the amenity of the neighbour at no.10.

Members considered it would be better if it was set back and away from the neighbour at no.10.

Application No: EPF/0154/22

Officer: Marie-Claire Tovey

Applicant Name: Mr Dean Citroen

Planning File No: 010137

Location: 5 Albion Hill, Loughton, IG10 4RA

Proposal: Single storey side extension & new roof with front & rear dormer to garage (Amended application to EPF/2664/21)

The Committee had NO OBJECTION to this application.

Members requested that should the local planning authority be minded to approve the application a condition be imposed that the garage extension remain ancillary to the main dwelling.

Application No: EPF/0191/22

Officer: Marie-Claire Tovey

Applicant Name: Lidl Great Britain Limited

Planning File No: 006441

Location: 140 Church Hill, Loughton, IG10 1LH

Proposal: Application for Variation of condition 1 of EPF/3016/19 to enable a variation in delivery and waste collection hours.

The Committee NOTED the contents of four letters of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application and requested that condition 1 of EPF/3016/19 remains as existing.

Members considered the existing two-hour window on Sundays and Bank Holidays for deliveries was sufficient for the applicant to undertake its business, while affording some protection to the amenity of neighbouring residents in Millsmead Way from the noise pollution caused by deliveries.

The Committee further drew the attention of the Planning Officer to the traffic chaos on Church Hill, during loading at the site, which removes several parking spaces and causes customers to queue outside the premises on this busy road. A traffic impact assessment should have therefore been included in this application. The current approved hours are outside peak times. To allow loading and unloading during busier periods would have a significant impact on the existing traffic congestion on Church Hill, and approval should therefore be refused for this additional reason.

Application No: EPF/0225/22

Officer: Caroline Brown

Applicant Name: Mr Onder Gorgulu

Planning File No: 031334

Location: 9 Southernhay, Loughton, IG10 4EN

Proposal: Proposed two storey side extension with loft conversion and rear extension (Revised application to EPF/2112/21)

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that it was overbearing and an overdevelopment. The proposal does not complement or enhance the existing building or the character and appearance of the street scene.

Members believed that just because the neighbouring property had a loft, it did not justify this proposal.

Further, Natural England and Loughton Town Council have both advised in their main modifications responses to the Inspector (autumn 2021) that the LPSV cannot yet be considered justified, effective or consistent with national policy in relation to detriment to the SAC. Therefore, we **object to this application** because of the extra burden on recreational pressure, and damage to air quality in the SAC that the application, alone or with other projects, will engender.

159.2 Deemed Permission – provided for information only:

The Committee NOTED the following applications:

Application No: EPF/0013/22
Officer: Caroline Brown
Applicant Name: Mr Peter Roffey
Planning File No: 023885
Location: 31 Station Road, Loughton, IG10 4NZ
Proposal: Application for a Lawful Development certificate for a proposed coffee shop offering minimal dry food for consumption on & off the premises.

Application No: EPF/0167/22
Officer: Rhian Thorley
Applicant Name: Mr Alex Hodgekins & Miss Katrina Peake
Planning File No: 023205
Location: 28 River Way, Loughton, IG10 3LH
Proposal: Application for a proposed Lawful Development certificate for a proposed loft conversion with a rear facing dormer and front roof window.

Application No: EPF/0170/22
Officer: Muhammad Rahman
Applicant Name: Mr Nabil Dar
Planning File No: 017741
Location: 5 Nafferton Rise, Loughton, IG10 1UB
Proposal: Application for a Lawful Development certificate for a proposed loft conversion with a rear dormer.

159.3 Others – provided for information only: EPF/3240/21 and EPF/0223/22
The Committee NOTED the information received from Epping Forest District Council.

PL160 Decisions

The Planning Decisions for January 2022 from Epping Forest District Council were NOTED.

PL161 Licensing Applications

No licensing applications had come to the attention of officers.

PL162 Enforcement and Compliance

162.1 Updates to reports previously received.

No reports had been received.

162.2 Enforcement Cases: Loughton – Open & Closed – December 2021

The Committee NOTED the confidential information received from Epping Forest District Council.

Signed:
Date: 7 March 2022