

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Monday 15 April 2024 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court

Committee Members:

Councillors: C Davies (in the Chair)
P Abraham W Kauffman S Murphy
K Rainbow J Riley G Wiskin

Also present:

Officers: Debra Paris (Planning Committee Clerk)

PL624 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received for this meeting.

PL625 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Rainbow declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning applications EPF/0603/24 and EPF/0605/24 both for 31 Baldwins Hill, as he knew the applicant.

The Committee declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following planning applications: EPF/0483/24 – 27 St Johns Road, EPF/0553/24 – 38 Church Hill, EPF/0554/24 – 18 York Hill, and EPF/0659/24 – Avenue Lawn Tennis Club, owing to comments received from the Loughton Residents Association Plans Group (LRAPG).

PL626 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Licensing Committee held on 3 April 2024, amended from those circulated to read “MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 3 April 2024” were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PL627 Matters for Report

627.1 Notice of Appeal

627.1.1 EPF/2084/23 – 51 Algiers Road, Loughton, IG10 4NF.
Proposal: The proposal is for a single storey rear extension to the existing garage, a single storey rear/side wraparound extension, alterations to garage roof and front garage door with brick infill/replacement door, and rear external timber decking (Revised scheme to EPF/0620/23). (Appeal ref no: APP/J1535/D/24/3340063 – Min no PL515.1)
The Committee NOTED the information received from Epping Forest District Council.

627.1.2 EPF/1033/23 – 16, Eleven Acre Rise, Loughton, IG10 1AN.
Proposal: Variation of condition 2 'Plan numbers' attached to EPF/1508/18 (Demolish existing house. Replace with 2 detached houses). (Appeal ref no: APP/J1535/W/24/3337933 – Min no PL427.1)

The Committee strongly supported the refusal reasons of the local planning authority, Epping Forest District Council, for this application and reiterated its previous comments which were:

“The Committee NOTED the Contents of two letters of objection.

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

Members deplored the retrospective nature of this application.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the following grounds:

There has been far too much unauthorised works on this site. It was noted that the items covered in this application had previously been included in EPF/0204/23, which had already, rightly, been refused.

The increase in the height of the buildings, that were too high anyway, dominate the whole road, which was evident when approaching them along Eleven Acre Rise, and from the neighbouring properties. This had also led to the subsequent change in the level of windows, which was responsible for the overlooking and loss of amenity of neighbours at no.17. The change of glass in the balcony also resulted in loss of privacy for these neighbours.

There would be no need for increasing the height for insulation between floors unless the underfloor heating was considered subsequently. Electrics do not require extra floor thickness either. Therefore, no further increase in height should be tolerated.

Members were concerned about substituting the approved drawings for the new ones, as the local planning authority may unintentionally grant the unauthorised ground levels. They should stick with the original plans and spell out what amendments are being permitted to them rather than reissue the planning condition with the substituted drawings.

None of the proposed variations should be allowed. The dwellings should be built as per the original approved plans.”

The Committee further stated that this matter had been reported to Enforcement Officers without any remedial action being taken by the applicant. The Committee believes that the imposition this development has had on the neighbours at no.17 cannot be overestimated.

627.1.3 EPF/1852/23 – 16, Eleven Acre Rise, Loughton, IG10 1AN. Proposal: Installation of air conditioning condenser units (6 in total - 3 per house) to the pair of new houses. (Appeal ref no: APP/J1535/W/24/3337934 – Min no PL498.1)

The Committee strongly supported the refusal reasons of the local planning authority, Epping Forest District Council, for this application and reiterated its previous comments which were: *“The Committee NOTED the contents of three letters of objection.*

Members deplored the retrospective nature of this application.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application, supporting the comments of the Loughton Residents Association Plans Group, which were:

“The Environmental Noise report concludes that, without mitigation measures the noise levels at night would be above the acceptable level. Given the sorry history of this development, it is essential that the mitigation measures be put in place and conditioned. We ask the plant be soundproofed to a level that will ensure neighbours are not disturbed in the evening. A condition limiting the times of operation is not a suitable alternative because it will be almost impossible to enforce. We also consider any plant above ground floor level on the side elevation is unacceptable on visual amenity grounds.”

Members also drew the attention of the planning officer to the comments of the neighbours at no 17, regarding the ongoing Enforcement issues with this proposal site and the accuracy of the survey and proposed mitigation in this application which was based on measurements that have been declined and which could alter should Enforcement action be taken.”

The Committee further stated that this matter had been reported to Enforcement Officers without any remedial action being taken by the applicant. The Committee believes that the imposition this development has had on the neighbours at no.17 cannot be overestimated.

627.2 Permitted development rights consultation: changes to support householder development, building upwards, demolition and rebuild, and the installation of electric vehicle charge points and air source heat pumps - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Citizen Space.

Members NOTED the comments submitted by the Planning Committee Clerk on behalf the Committee regarding this Government survey.

PL628 Planning Applications

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

628.1 Application No: EPF/0399/24

Officer: Loredana Ciavucco

Location: 36 Roding Gardens, Loughton, IG10 3NH

Proposal: Proposed First Floor Rear extension and proposed loft conversion incorporating rear and side Dormers and raising off existing roof by 500mm.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating that this housing development was relatively new and had been built to a good design standard.

This application would not enhance the street scene and would set a precedent for this estate, spoiling these attractive houses. The proposed loft conversion would be out of keeping and the proposal would result in a negative impact on the amenity of the neighbours caused by overlooking.

Application No: EPF/0483/24

Officer: Samuel Finnis

Location: 27 St Johns Road, Loughton, IG10 1RZ

Proposal: Demolition of existing 4 bedroom house and erection of a new 4 bedroom house.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that the proposed new build was out of keeping and would result in a negative impact on the street scene. It was an unattractive massive block and would create a negative impact on the amenity of the neighbours.

The existing building was a house of character and of an age that did not warrant demolition, rather than refurbishment. Demolition of this building, which is situated close to the Forest, would create a very negative impact on the Forest and would fail to support the Local Plan's biodiversity objectives.

It is 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. It was also contrary to the principles of the circular economy.

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. Epping Forest does not need a bespoke planning policy to justify refusing on embedded carbon grounds. Other councils refuse consent to the loss of buildings without bespoke policies.

No justification has been provided for its demolition and or about the recycling of the existing materials in the building. There are no public benefits associated with the redevelopment and therefore permission should be refused.

Application No: EPF/0553/24

Officer: Sukhvinder Dhadwar

Location: 38 Church Hill, Loughton, IG10 1LA

Proposal: Proposed addition of existing basement to ground floor use Class E, currently in no use.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that the area concerned was not fit for purpose to be used for anything other than a storeroom, being completely enclosed with no ventilation or light. Because the basement room is not currently being used does not mean it is not within a use class.

The planning consent for the Estate Agents was granted planning permission in 2001 and is subject to a condition that the area can only be used for an Estate Agents and no other use within the A2 use class or any other future use class which includes Class E. The Committee strongly supports this condition. The use should remain ancillary.

Members noted the previous refused application, EPF/1464/23, to use the basement for an online pharmacy. The Committee objected to the space being used for anything other than an Estate Agents as per the original planning consent because of the likely impact on the amenity of the residents above and adjoining the premises.

Application No: EPF/0554/24

Officer: Mohinder Bagry

Location: 18 York Hill, Loughton, IG10 1RL

Proposal: Hip to gable loft conversion.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that the proposal was out of keeping for this part of the York Hill Conservation Area. The loss of symmetry would create a negative impact to the street scene. No 18 forms part of a matching pair of 19th Century dwellings within the York Hill Conservation Area.

The application fails to meet planning law which clearly states that each local planning authority has a duty to protect and encourage the enhancement of Conservation Areas. This proposal fails to do that.

Application No: EPF/0557/24

Officer: Amy Hallett

Location: 53 Algiers Road, Loughton, IG10 4NF

Proposal: The demolition of existing single storey rear and side extensions, replace with single storey side and rear and double storey rear extensions.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating the proposal would result in a loss of symmetry and would create a negative impact resulting in the loss of the neighbour's amenity.

Application No: EPF/0577/24

Officer: Kelly Sweeney

Location: 13 Stanmore Way, Loughton, IG10 2SA

Proposal: Demolition of existing house to erect new build with basement and second floor - resubmission of refused application EPF/2421/23.

Members believed this application failed to address the refusal reason of the local planning authority for the previous application at this site, EPF/0577/24, which this Committee strongly supported.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that it was an overdevelopment, by reason of its bulk, massing and height, and would result in a negative impact on the amenity of neighbours. The overdevelopment aspect was supported by the applicant's claim that they had agreement from the neighbours to remove trees on their land to accommodate this proposal.

The Committee objected to the demolition of the existing house, which would have a very negative impact on the Forest, this house being so close to the Forest. This proposal failed to offer any biodiversity gain, as set out in the Local Plan.

Application No: EPF/0585/24

Officer: Samuel Finnis

Location: 67 Felstead Road, Loughton, IG10 3BB

Proposal: Ground floor side and wrap around extension to meet with existing rear extension. Moving the stairs. Removing the existing porch. New entrance. First floor side, rear wrap around extension. Improving the accessibility of the ground floor space.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application stating the proposal was an overdevelopment and would be visually overbearing. The left side extension was too large and would create a negative impact on the amenity of the neighbour.

Members noted that there were two further applications under consideration for this property, a CLD for a loft conversion and a Prior Approval extension application which, when compounded, would result in an overdevelopment of this property.

The Committee also drew to the attention of the planning officer errors in the drawings for this proposal, which included roof lights on the sloping roof that were not included in the drawings showing elevations and sections.

The Committee considered the following two applications, EPF/0603/24 and EPF/0605/24, together as they were for the same site.

Application No: EPF/0603/24

Officer: Frederique Caillat

Location: 31 Baldwins Hill, Loughton, IG10 1SF

Proposal: Installation of replacement windows to the front and rear of a Grade II listed building.

The Committee had NO OBJECTION to this application.

Application No: EPF/0605/24

Officer: Frederique Caillat

Location: 31 Baldwins Hill, Loughton, IG10 1SF

Proposal: Grade II listed building consent for installation of replacement windows to the front and rear of a Grade II listed building.

The Committee had NO OBJECTION to this application.

Application No: EPF/0622/24

Officer: Robin Hellier

Location: 68 Spring Grove, Loughton, IG10 4QE

Proposal: TPO/EPF/19/89 (Ref: T33)

T4: Oak - Crown reduce, as specified. Reduce lateral branches, as specified.

The Committee objects to applications which will result in inappropriate treatment being carried out to any significant tree, and also objects to any application to fell such a protected tree. It therefore objected to this application.

Members noted that the application indicated: *“Alleged damage to property - e.g. subsidence or damage to drains or drives”*, which should be supported by reports, but no such reports were included in this application.

Application No: EPF/0659/24

Officer: Amy Hallett

Location: The Avenue Lawn Tennis Club, 18 The Avenue, Loughton, IG10 4PT

Proposal: Installation of lighting to Tennis Court No1.

The Committee NOTED the contents of a letter of objection.

The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that the proposal would be detrimental to the amenity of residents of neighbouring properties caused by light and noise pollution. Members expressed concern that neighbours may not have received notification for this proposal, as has recently been evident for so many planning applications.

Members noted that in respect of planning permission, EPF/1744/20, to replace lighting on the existing courts, the applicant stated in writing: *“1. Tennis Court No1: In order to allay concerns from residents adjacent to Court No1 who raised concerns about lighting trespass onto their properties, the club has decided not to light Court No1 now or in the future.”* Members believed this statement should be honoured.

Should the local planning authority be minded to grant permission, members requested that a condition be imposed that the lights should be conditioned to restrict their use only between dusk and 10pm. Replicating the condition on previous consents.

Application No: EPF/0661/24

Officer: Robin Hellier

Location: 9 Stony Path, Loughton, IG10 1SJ

Proposal: TPO/EPF/04/79 (Ref: T27 & T28)

T1 & T2: Oak - Reduction of selected branches, overhanging rear boundary, as specified.

The Committee objects to applications which will result in inappropriate treatment being carried out to any significant tree, and also objects to any

application to fell such a protected tree. It therefore objected to this application.

628.2 Deemed Permission – provided for information only:

The Committee NOTED the following applications:

Application No: EPF/0556/24

Officer: Murtaza Poptani

Location: 87 Avondale Drive, Loughton, IG10 3DE

Proposal: Certificate of lawful development for a proposed rear dormer and front roof light windows in connection with a loft conversion.

Application No: EPF/0589/24

Officer: Loredana Ciavucco

Location: 67 Felstead Road, Loughton, IG10 3BB

Proposal: Certificate of lawful development for a proposed rear dormer window in connection with a loft conversion.

Application No: EPF/0621/24

Officer: Caroline Brown

Location: 24 Marjorams Avenue, Loughton, IG10 1PU

Proposal: Certificate of lawful development for a proposed rear dormer extension.

628.3 Others – provided for information only: EPF/0650/24, EPF/0658/24, EPF/0670/24 and EPF/0689/24

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

PL629 Decisions

629.1 Decisions by Epping Forest District Council

The Committee NOTED the decision notices for March 2024.

PL630 Licensing Applications

No Licensing Applications had come to the attention of Officers.

PL631 Enforcement and Compliance

No reports had been received.

Signed:

Date: 29 April 2024