

Notes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council's Planning Working Group held on Tuesday 27th February 2018.

Present: Cllrs L Ashley (Chairman), J Smith (Vice Chairman), W Haggata and P Murphy. Cllr Murphy declared an interest in planning and took no part in the decision making process.

P38 17/18 Apologies for Absence: Cllrs I Benney, J Carney, A Hay and F Newell had sent apologies for absence.

P39 17/18 Speaker: Architect Mr Ian Gowler

Mr Gowler was welcomed to the meeting and explained he had asked to attend to speak about the application for a garden centre with three poly tunnels at 2 Doddington Road, on the old gas works site, next to the Green Welly Café. Mr Gowler said two applications had already been submitted. The first was refused and the planning officer requested a reptile survey. This was completed and the plans were re-submitted. The plans were then turned down by another officer because the entrance was shared with the existing lorry park and a viability assessment was required.

Mr Gowler acknowledged the Town Council had recommended refusal of the two previous plans because the land was contaminated. He admitted the land was very contaminated but he said a full contamination report had been prepared and the data had then been reviewed by a contamination agent who had carried out further tests on the soil and gas contamination.

The proposal was that the land should be capped with a contamination membrane and then capped over with hard core and concrete. A small wildlife area with trees would be left as a natural habitat in the corner of the site as major gas pipes ran under the ground. Mr Gowler said the garden centre only needed a concrete base as no plants would be grown there. It would simply be used for the retail of plants and garden equipment.

Access to the site would be through the existing car park for the Green Welly café and the two ventures would run together. However the applicant was prepared to give up the existing lorry parking facility if the plan went ahead. The applicant felt the garden centre would be a more viable business as it cost so much to maintain the lorry yard.

Members asked where lorries would park if the facility closed. The Clerk reminded them this was not a planning consideration and as it was a private facility the applicants were under no obligation to continue running a lorry park.

Cllr Haggata asked about the possibility of providing a cycle path beside the site but Mr Gowler explained major gas pipes were just below the surface in that area. He said National Grid should be able to provide a map of the exact position of the gas pipes.

Members made no comments on the suitability of the scheme, thanked Mr Gowler for attending and said they would consider the scheme when the plans were submitted.

P40 17/18 Appeals, Decisions and Withdrawn Plans

The Clerk updated members on the latest decisions from Fenland District Council. All applications had been granted (including 26 dwellings at Fairbairn Way and 4 dwellings at 14-16 Wenny Road) with the exception of the plan for 10 dwellings at land north east of 81-87 High Street which had been withdrawn.

A resident of Huntingdon Road had written asking the Council to withdraw its support for the development at land east of Llanca, Huntindon Road, arguing there were insufficient parking spaces and expressing fears the flats could be sold as standard dwellings. Members agreed there was no reason to withdraw their support for the scheme.

P41 17/18 Applications & Revised Applications

Application deferred from 6th February - F/YR18/0115/O - Erection of 2 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access and layout) at land west of 25 Linden Drive – *Recommend Refusal, over development of site and detrimental impact on 25 Linden Drive.*

a) F/YR18/0133/O - Erection of up to 2 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at land west of 28 West Street - *Support*

b) F/YR17/0822/F - Revised application (noise assessment submitted and plans revised in response to this) for erection of a 2-storey, 4-bed dwelling and detached double garage at land north west of 14 Pound Road - *Support*

c) F/YR18/0157/TRCA - Works to 1 Taxus Baccata (English Yew) within a Conservation Area at 8 Park Street - *Support*

d) F/YR17/1240/F - Revised application (amended design setting central unit back providing some relief, amending use of materials, low brick boundary wall at front and altered porches/roof lights bin store) for the erection of 5 x 3-storey, 3-bed dwellings and 1 x 2-bed flat involving demolition of existing buildings and alterations to vehicular access at 54 Bridge Street – *Unable to see revised plans so unable to make comment.*

e) F/YR18/0170/F - Erection of part 2-storey, part single-storey extension (incorporating double garage) with first floor terrace area and enlargement of rear dormer to existing dwelling involving demolition of existing office out-building at 37B Huntingdon Road – *Noted*

f) F/YR18/0182/CERTP - Certificate of Lawful Use (Proposed) for the erection of a detached timber shed in rear garden of existing dwelling at 79 St Pauls Drive - *Support*

g) F/YR18/0183/CERTP - Certificate of Lawful Use (Proposed) for the erection of a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving removal of existing conservatory at 15 St Pauls Drive - *Support*

h) F/YR18/0189/CERTLU - Certificate of Lawfulness (Existing): Erection of a conservatory to rear and block paving to front of dwelling at 17 Wesley Drive - *Support*

P42 17/18 Swift Boxes

Cllr Smith had been approached by a local resident pointing out the number of swifts was rapidly declining because nesting sites were being withdrawn as people renovated old buildings.

The letter said some local authorities had taken steps to halt the decline in the swift population but this was not the case in Fenland. The resident asked if the town council would explore ways of maintaining and increasing the number of nest sites in the town by incorporating cavities and nest boxes in new and existing buildings. Local planning regulations could encourage the installation of such boxes. Cllr Smith said the Town Council could purchase swift boxes.

It was agreed to ask Fenland District Council to introduce planning regulations encouraging the installation of swift boxes.

P43 17/18 Correspondence and Any Other Business

There was no correspondence or further business.