

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday 23 June 2015

Time: 18.30 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors D Cullen (Chair), M Downing (Vice Chair), D Bainbridge, R Broom, L Chester, J Fraser, E Harrington, G Lawrence and M McKay.

Started at: 18.30pm

Ended at: 19.15pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M Gardner, J Lloyd CC, P Stuart and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interests.

2. MINUTES – 27 MAY 2015

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on Tuesday 27 May 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. APP REF: 15/00259/FPM – SMILIN SAMS 1, STEVENAGE LEISURE PARK, KINGS WAY, STEVENAGE

The Committee considered an application involving external alterations to facilitate the subdivision of the unit into 2no.seperate units to accommodate Use Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) and Use Class D2 (Leisure and Assembly), incorporating a mezzanine floor and associated works.

The Principal Planning Officer gave an oral and visual presentation to the Committee and advised that the issues for consideration were the acceptability of the proposal in land use policy terms; its impact on the character and appearance of the area and on the highway network.

The Committee were advised that site lies within the Stevenage Leisure Park which is designated for leisure uses and that the proposed restaurant falls within the A3 use class whilst the trampoline centre is classified as a D2 use. As such the proposal is fully in accordance with policy L3 of the District Plan. He also stated that the proposal would both modernise and enhance the existing vacant unit in accordance with policy L5 of the District Plan.

With regards to the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the Officer

advised the Committee that the introduction of glazed panels on both the front and part of the side elevation of the building and the removal of the existing portico feature would improve the appearance of the building resulting in a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area. He also noted that the glazed panels would allow natural light into the building and provide both an active street frontage and a human scale to the façade of the building.

On the impact of the scheme on the highway network, Officers informed Members that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as Highways Authority (HA) had advised that the proposal would be unlikely to significantly alter the traffic generation of vehicles to the site and that the existing car park layout is considered acceptable to accommodate the development .

In relation to car parking specifically, the Officer advised that no additional parking spaces had been submitted as part of the application process, however the parking spaces already provided on the Leisure Park would be acceptable given that the Highway Authority consider that the proposal would not significantly increase the traffic generation above the existing A3 lawful use.

It was **RESOLVED** that Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 14.021(P)104, 14.021(P)105, 14.021(P)106 and 14.021(P)107.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. Prior to the use of the building for a mixed A3 / D2 use, details of secure cycle parking facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works, as agreed, shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of the building as a restaurant / trampoline park and permanently retained thereafter.

4. APP REF 15/00227/FP – LAND ADJACENT 109 BLENHEIM WAY, STEVENAGE

The Committee considered an application for a change of use from public amenity land to private residential garden and the erection of a single storey rear extension.

The Planning Officer gave an oral and visual presentation to the Committee and advised that issues for consideration were the impact of the loss of the amenity land on the character and appearance of the area; the loss of five oak trees on the amenity of the area and the acceptability of the design of the proposed rear extension and its impact on the visual amenity of the area.

The Chair invited Mrs Bosowitz of 107 Blenheim Way, an objector to address the Committee. Mrs Bosowitz was concerned with the sale of open public amenity land to a resident as it would affect the amenity of the residents in the neighbourhood. Mrs Bosowitz informed the Committee that this open piece of land was a unique design feature of the estate enjoyed by residents and it's loss would leave residents with no place for children to play. The nearest park being located on the opposite side of Blenheim Way, a main road. Mrs Bosowitz was concerned that the loss of the open space would result in a loss of privacy and overlooking issues to her property and that

the loss of the five oak trees was detrimental to the amenity of residents. Mrs Bosowitz suggested that the Council should continue to maintain this piece of land on behalf of residents.

The Chair thanked Mrs Bosowitz and invited the applicant Mrs Bennett to address the Committee. Mrs Bennett informed the meeting that the piece of land is to be used as private land only, the main element being front garden and not to be used as a builders yard. Mrs Bennett also noted that the open piece of land was not used by any residents in the cul-de-sac.

The Chair thanked Mrs Bennett and invited the Officer to continue with her presentation.

The Officer advised the meeting that the piece of land is currently in the ownership of the Borough Council and constitutes a small informal piece of open space as defined by policy TW2 of the Local Plan and is maintained by the owners of No.109 Blenheim Way. The Officer acknowledged that the appearance and use of the element of the amenity space would be retained; that the inclusion of the land within the curtilage and garden of 109 Blenheim would enlarge the existing front and rear gardens.

With regards to the impact of the loss of amenity land, the meeting was informed that given the amount of land to be lost and its siting within the small cul-de-sac, it is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the function and character of the structural open space within the estate.

In response to concerns about the erection of a fencing, Members were advised that having regard to the existing example of boundary fencing in place at the property, and the siting of the proposed fencing within the southern western corner of the land and cul-de-sac, the proposed enclosure of the additional area of rear garden with a 1.8m fence would not harm the visual appearance and character of the area.

With regards to the design and appearance of proposed extensions, the Officer advised that the single front and side extensions were simple in design and it incorporates a lean-to roof and materials to match the existing property. The Officer also noted that the depth and design of the proposal accords with the Council's adopted supplementary guidance as contained in the 'Stevenage Design Guide' and due to the property being sited away from neighbouring properties, the proposed extension would not impact the amenity of the neighbours.

On the proposed loss of 5 semi mature oak trees, Officer informed the meeting that the Council's Tree Officer had no objections as it would not affect the overall landscape and visual amenity of the area due to its proximity and that the trees were unlikely to mature at this location.

In response to the objectors concern that the site is being used for the storage of builder's materials, the Officer advised that applicants did acknowledge its use for a limited period following works to the property and garden.

It was **RESOLVED** that Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

- 1.The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in general accordance with

the following approved plans: Site location plan; 941:100 Existing site layout, floor plans and elevations; 941:101 Proposed site layout, floor plans and elevations.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the single storey rear extension hereby permitted shall match the materials used in the construction of the original dwelling to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class A of Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting this Order) no erection of or alteration to a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure shall be carried out to the amenity land the subject of this application which forms the front garden of the dwellinghouse unless permission is granted on an application made to the Local Planning Authority.

5. APP REF 15/00173/FP – 298 JESSOP ROAD, STEVENAGE

The Committee considered an application for a change of use from public amenity land to residential land and the retention of a picket fence.

The Planning Officer gave an oral and visual presentation to the Committee and advised that the issue for consideration is the impact of the loss of the amenity land on the character and appearance of the area.

With regards to the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, the meeting was advised that the application site is currently in the ownership of the Borough Council and constitutes a small informal piece of open space as defined by policy TW2 of the Local Plan. Members were informed that the inclusion of the piece of land within the curtilage of 298 Jessop Road would formalise the current use and maintenance of the land by the owners.

In response to concerns about the high fence and its impact on neighbouring amenity, the officer advised that the scheme does not propose the erection of an alternative fencing and a condition restricting the height of any future fencing or boundary treatment could be imposed as part of the permission when granted.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in general accordance with the following approved plans: Site location plan.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. The existing 1m high fencing in place along the boundaries marked 'T' on the approved plan shall be retained and only replaced with like for like fencing, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

6. INFORMATION REPORT – APPEALS

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

7. INFORMATION REPORT – DELEGATED DECISIONS

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

8. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

None

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not Required

PART II

10. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None

Chair