

PLANNING COMMITTEE



2 MARCH 2016 - 1.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Miscandlon(Chairman), Councillor S Clark(Vice-Chairman), Councillor M G Bucknor, Councillor D W Connor, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor A Hay, Councillor D Laws, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor Mrs F S Newell, Councillor W Sutton, Councillor M Davis.

APOLOGIES: Councillor C C Owen

Officers in attendance: N Harding (Head of Planning), R McKenna (Senior Solicitor), Ruth Lea (Legal), Mella McMahon (Development Manager), Kathryn Brand (Senior Planning Officer), Jane Webb (Member Services & Governance Supervisor)

P69/15 TO SIGN AND CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3 FEBRUARY 2016

The minutes of the meeting of 3 February 2016 were confirmed and signed.

**P70/15 F/YR15/0640/F
MARCH - LAND SOUTH OF ST MARYS VIEW, WISBECH ROAD
HYBRID APPLICATION: FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OF
FIVE RETAIL UNITS (CLASS A1), 2 X DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANTS/COFFEE
SHOPS (CLASS A3/A5), ASSOCIATED PARKING, ACCESS, STREET
FURNITURE, BALANCING POND, PUMPING STATION, ELECTRICITY
SUB-STATION AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AND OUTLINE PLANNING
PERMISSION FOR A FURTHER 3 X RETAIL UNITS (CLASS A1) WITH SITING
AND ACCESS TO BE DETERMINED AND ALL OTHER MATTERS RESERVED**

The Chairman suspended the meeting in order to allow Members time to read the Planning updates.

The committee had regard to its inspection of the site (as agreed in accordance with the Site Inspection: Policy and Procedure (minute 19/04 refers)) during its deliberations.

Officers presented the application to Members and informed them that updates had been received as per the documents handed out (attached).

Nick Harding, Head of Planning, highlighted a need for a correction on page 31 of the report in the paragraph headed "Emerging March Neighbourhood Plan" stating that a consultation on the March Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken last year therefore some weight can be afforded to that document in determination of this application. For the benefit of the committee, he highlighted the key features with the March Neighbourhood Plan in its draft form that were relevant this application. Firstly the Town Council identified that it wished the town centre to become a shopping destination of choice, secondly that it would like to see the regeneration of the town centre including a new supermarket and thirdly it wished to seek protection to the town centre through the refusal of development proposals which could be demonstrated to be harmful to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Notwithstanding what was in the report, elsewhere in the document it has been considered whether or not this development proposal could be

accommodated within March town centre which it is unable to be accommodated and secondly a detailed assessment has been undertaken with regard to the retail impact and this has been indicated not to be so significant as to be harmful to the vitality and viability of the existing town centre.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Councillor Mrs French, March Town Councillor.

Councillor Mrs French explained that she would like to declare an interest as a Member of March Town Council and a personal interest as a resident of Westry. She stated that March Town Council recommend refusal of this application for the following reasons; she stated she realised Members had received an update from Councillor Count but there were some inaccuracies within it but it was up to Members to decide.

- The loss of primary agricultural land of Grade 1 and 2, this was being disputed and within the officers' report it stated best and most fertile agricultural land;
- It is in conflict with Fenland Council's Local Plan and March Town Council Emerging Plan;
- The destruction of Fenland's visual open countryside landscape and the impact visually on Westry and the surrounding impact of the residents in Whittlesey Road and Whitemoor Road;
- The destruction of the viability and vitality of the town centre which was in the officers' report;
- How many more supermarkets does March need as there are already Sainsburys, Tescos, Lidl, Co-Op and various one stop shops and she was sure that Whittlesey would like some of them;
- How many more food outlets do we need in March as we are inundated with them. March Town Centre is buoyant and has many food outlets already.
- The smell at Westry was bad enough now with KFC and the appalling smells that come from the digester when the filters go wrong;
- Residents' objections should be taken seriously;
- Policy LP16 of the FDC Local Plan in the report, clearly a development of this scale proposed will have some adverse visual and landscape impact with buildings intruding into the open countryside;
- LP16 and NPPF requires that new development shall not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbouring users;
- Flood Zone 3, this land is reclaimed and not part of the original island of March and they would have to raise the land levels to accommodate this and the buildings will be more intrusive into the countryside;
- Councillor Mrs French stated she could not believe a recommendation for approval of this when Members were repeatedly refusing much needed dwellings in zone 3 flood areas.
- The disturbance when both KFC and Cobblestones were built was horrendous, not just for the residents but for commuters on a daily basis and went on for many months.
- No amount of landscaping will hide this site, it will destroy the enjoyment of the residents who have enjoyed the quiet living in the countryside and this could be classed as a breach of their human rights under article 8; they have the right of protection of their homes from invasion and intrusion.
- The report states there are no other sites available -that is incorrect. Councillor Mrs French stated she had documents produced by the same applicant in 2008/09 and she also had a copy of the document produced by Fenland District Council with regard to the March Regeneration Strategy produced in 2008 and updated in July 2014, two months after the Local Plan was adopted.
- Has a retail impact study been carried out and if so what were the findings? Has Fenland done its own retail impact study as they did for the supermarkets in Whittlesey with the same developer? This application is bigger than that and should be taken into consideration.

- This application does not provide any end users. At the exhibition they held it showed a number of end users and these end users would not go to Wisbech and they certainly would not come to March so it could possibly end up like the Cromwell Road site in Wisbech.
- The County Council want a roundabout but not at any cost or disruption of the local countryside. They could have had one when Tesco extended their store a few years ago but decided that it should be further up at Martins Avenue; an absolute lost opportunity.

Councillor Mrs French asked Members to refuse the application and to not go against their own policies, not to destroy March town centre, not to destroy the gateway to March and not to destroy the unique landscape of Fenland.

Questions were asked of Councillor Mrs French as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that Councillor Mrs French had mentioned a document produced by the applicant in 2008/09 and asked if it was for the same site. Councillor Mrs French stated it was not but it was for the town centre, for the regeneration of the old indoor market and High Street, it would have taken some working out and that the town centre should seriously be looked at first before the countryside was destroyed.
- Councillor Mrs Laws asked if March Town Council were in favour of the document supplied by the present applicant in 2008/09. Councillor Mrs French stated it was a draft document and it had not been taken further as economics fell.
- Councillor Mrs Laws asked if the applicant had come forward and presented the plan in 2008/09 to March Town Council to which Councillor Mrs French stated that it did not get that far.
- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that Fenland's document with regard to the March Regeneration Strategy was this anything to do with the present application to which Councillor Mrs French stated no but that March Town Council did not want the town centre destroyed by more out of town shopping.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Gary Robinson, representative from Next Plc.

Mr Robinson stated he represented Next Plc who was one of the end users that were looking at occupying the retail park and he was here to confirm Next's interest. He explained that Next had 500 stores across the UK and along with their directory and online business they comprehensively cover most of the UK population. There were however a few places where this coverage could be better and where Next could give their customers much better convenience and access to their stores and they had identified March as one such place. Presently Next know from their deliveries, online sales and the parcels collected in their stores that people from March, Chatteris, Wisbech and Ely are all going to the larger stores in Kings Lynn, Cambridge and Peterborough and they believed this to also be the case for a new store they are trying to open in Huntingdon in quarter one of 2017. Next realise this is not convenient for this group of customers and would like to give these customers a store that would serve Fenland's catchment more effectively and something that Fenland can call its own. From Next's vast experience of these situations they know the store will need to be on a main arterial road, have to have easy and safe access and egress and provide a large free car park which would not be used by competing uses. It would have to have a number of other national multiple retailers to give Next the confidence to make an investment. Next Plc are an ideal tenant for many of these schemes across the country and without tenants such as Next and perhaps M&S then many times a lot of other retailers are too nervous to follow suit and join developments. Ideally it should be close to a supermarket obviously generating existing traffic and footfall for Next and it needs to be a retail warehouse format for this market as they hoped to sell furniture as well as their fashion from the store and this sort of space cannot be delivered in town centres, it needs to be north of 8,000sqft, large site with a mezzanine floor and this cannot be accommodated in small market towns. Next believe the subject site today has all the aforementioned ingredients for Next to make a substantial investment

required in the store, they hope it will bring in better sales and customer service and for March it would bring in investment, employment, rates, revenue and an exciting new development for the town and they hoped it would be good for the wider Fenland area. He thanked Members for their time.

Questions were asked of Mr Robinson as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that Next had obviously flagged up and identified Fenland as a region where an investment by Next would be successful and asked if they had explored the town centre fully. Mr Robinson stated they had looked at different stores they could take into the centre and it did not fulfil the criteria that Next would need for a modern store for this type of catchment. Councillor Mrs Laws stated that Next wished to open a store that had to be outside of the town centre to which Mr Robinson stated it had to be an out of town retail warehouse type store as the internet is constantly eating away at sales and there is a need to have the convenience that the store could also function as a hub for collections, parcels and those of have bought things from the internet and want to take them back and it gives them the confidence to buy on the internet; he explained it was a full cycle and this cannot be achieved within town centres.
- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that if this store would be a main hub then what did they anticipate the hours of operation would be, including deliveries. Mr Robinson stated this was hard to answer but a typical out of town retail store would open from 9am until 7pm/8pm depending on the area, planning restrictions. Next also have stores that have limited deliver hours as they are close to housing estates and Next can function around stipulations to individual sites and tailor deliveries to suit to not cause a noise nuisance at key times.
- Councillor Mrs Davis stated that Mr Robinson had mentioned that other named retailers were reluctant to enter into this type of development unless they see someone like Next taking an interest and was this evidence based. Mr Robinson stated that retail property development is very formulaic in this country and a lot of the main retailers have a mentality that there is safety in numbers and footfall is guaranteed more by grouping together. Marks & Spencer Simply Food are equally acquisitive to Next and he understood they were interested in the site. He stated he dealt with 105 stores in the region and most are collectives of a similar bunch of retailers.
- Councillor Connor asked if there was any other site outside of March or was this the only one as he realised that Hostmoor was looking out for more outlets and this was already on a trunk road and asked what makes this site special for Next. Mr Robinson stated that March was perfectly situated in the middle of their existing network of stores. Councillor Connor stated he understood that Next had identified March as an extremely good site for their store but from a site perspective had Next looked at any other sites. Mr Robinson stated this site gave next everything required and they were a retailer that like to be in the best position possible and this was considered the best position, they did not take secondary shopping centres, Next are a premium retailer of the country and they prefer the best sites and once these have been identified they are primarily focussed on.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Karen Crowder-James, Agent.

Ms Crowder-James stated that as in the officers' report this proposal seeks to provide an amount of retail floor space in sufficient quality and size to attract national retailers such as Next to a key destination in March. Its purpose to retain expenditure and trade currently leaking from the town and district. Whilst they agreed the conclusions and recommendations they reiterated a number of key points for Members' consideration when debating the application. Firstly, the proposal would meet the clear need to provide a key retail destination for the residents of March and would prevent them from having to drive outside the area to undertake comparison shopping. This in turn would have significant sustainability benefits in terms of reducing the need to travel to

undertake this type of shopping. As Members may know, the Council's own retail study undertaken in 2006 and updated in 2009 identified that about 75% of comparison retail expenditure generated from within Fenland is being spent outside the district. In order to establish an up to date picture of where people shop, an independent survey was commissioned to obtain up to date shopping patterns and this should that the outflow has risen to 93% and this means that only 7% of March's available expenditure is being spent within it and that is a lot of money being generated from within March that is currently being spent outside the area. Secondly the Council's Independent Retail Consultants have confirmed the proposal meets all retail policy tests, in particular they agree there are no other sequentially preferably sites on which this development could be accommodated. The Council's retail consultants also agree the proposal will not have any significant impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Conversely it is agreed that the scheme could in fact bring back shoppers into the town centre and the town which will have spin-off benefits for other trades and services. Thirdly the proposal has a number of other key benefits, one of which is the provision of a roundabout to service the existing retail provision and industrial estate on Hostmoor Avenue, the proposed roundabout will improve highway safety and the free flow of traffic along this stretch of road and will ease congestion at Peas Hill roundabout to the south; it has passed the safety audit from the Highways department who have no objections. It is also worth noting that the March Transport Strategy calls for measures to mitigate the future impact of traffic and enhance accessibility of the A141 junction. It is considered that the proposed enhancement that would be secured through the grant of this planning permission fully meets with this local objective. The proposal would also give rise to other economic benefits for the district and the town of March in terms of additional jobs for local people, both during construction and throughout the operation and through the improvements of the accessibility to the attractiveness of the Hostmoor Industrial estate which generates significant additional annual income for the Council in terms of business rates too. Fourthly, the proposal has generated a significant number of letters of support from local business residents and people who work and live in March which demonstrates a clear local desire and need for this development. Also the proposal has not given rise to any objections from statutory consultees. Conversely it's interesting to see the only objector to the application is March Town Council. The letter submitted by Councillor Count, the ward councillor, addresses the reason why the Town Council object pointing out that none of the reasons can be substantiated. Ms Crowder-James pointed out that the Town Council clearly supported all applications for retail facilities in the vicinity of the application in the past, namely the Meadowlands Retail Park at Peas Hill, the retail permission for three non-food retail units on the site that Cobblestones now sits and Cobblestones; furthermore, she directly quoted the consultee response given by March Town Council in relation to the application for the three non-food retail units on the now Cobblestones site originally aimed at Argos which says no objection subject to suitable access preferably via a proposed roundabout at Hostmoor Avenue junction. Given the above there is no apparent valid planning justification as to why the Town Council have objected to this application, especially given the level of local community support for this application and the correspondence to the emerging local plan which requested better shopping facilities in March. Letters of intention have already been submitted to the Council from Next, Pets At Home and Costa to demonstrate the quality tenants interested in the scheme. Furthermore the scheme is being marketed by the country's leading retail agency firms along with a number of other occupiers who have expressed an interest including M&S Simply Food. In summary the officers' report confirms total acceptability of the proposals and we are also pleased that the Council have worked proactively with us to ensure the proposal would not give rise to any planning concerns. The proposal is considered by retail consultants to be policy compliant and a deliverable solution to the problem of retail expenditure outflow as per the town and surrounding catchment area and therefore they requested that Members supported the officers' views.

Questions were asked of Ms Crowder-James as follows:

- Councillor Connor stated that Ms Crowder-James had mentioned a roundabout in her presentation and asked if the application were to be approved then at what time would the roundabout be constructed. Ms Crowder-James stated this would be for the first phase of

the development. Councillor Connor asked if it would be done before the first phase, would there be a roundabout in place to which Ms Crowder-James confirmed the roundabout would definitely be in place before the operation of the retail units.

- Councillor Mrs Hay stated that alternative sites had been mentioned, in particular the Acre Road site and asked why this would not be suitable. Ms Crowder-James stated that a detailed analysis had been carried out on this site and there were a number of reasons why it was not suitable; there were a number of planning reasons and also a number of wider reasons. Firstly the site has been progressed historically for a number of years and has been promoted in 2008 but the site itself is in a number of multiple ownerships and to try and get those ownerships together is a long process even if it is achievable. Secondly and one of the main stumbling blocks for the development of the site is the fact that there is an electricity substation within the site and it costs approximately £3million to relocate, which would make the development completely unviable. Thirdly there is a constrained access caused by the current access into the site, the site is not big enough and it is also the historic core of March Town centre and the road network and infrastructure caused by the river crossing means it does not have the capacity and capability to accommodate that kind of traffic associated with that kind of development that March needs to be able to claw back the trade that is currently being lost.
- Councillor Mrs Hay stated that two other sites had been mentioned, land to the south of Station Road and land to the north of Centenary Church. Ms Crowder-James stated that both these sites had been looked at but they were very small sites and they would not have the quantum of retail floor space, not even for one retail unit as opposed to any of the phases in the combined and cumulative quantum of retail development that March needs and also it also suffers from the same highways constraints; March is a lovely historic core of a town centre and it has historic buildings and both those sites are either in conservation areas, have listed buildings, protected trees; there are all sorts of planning issues as to why those sites could not come forward for redevelopment.
- Councillor Cornwell stated there was an indication from the developer that there are a number of retailers keen to see this go ahead and asked how soon did they think, if permission was granted, it would take to create the retail outlet on that site, complete with roundabout. Ms Crowder-James stated she imagined if the proposal was granted today then the S106 could come forward very quickly and they could get on site very quickly. Councillor Cornwell stated this was not something that was being looked at to be land-banked this would actually be going ahead to which Ms Crowder-James stated this was a serious proposal and added that she doubted a Next representative would be here in support if they were not very interested and as an agent they were very interested in providing that for them.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws asked if a retail assessment report had been done by the applicant and Fenland District Council. Officers stated the applicant had submitted a retail report and Fenland District Council had commissioned a set of consultants of which their key two letters were contained within the appendices to the report.
- Councillor Mrs Laws stated with regard to land-banking, there were no guarantees and if Members passed this application then there would be no guarantee.
- Councillor Mrs Laws stated she was very anti anything being built in flood zone 3 as she had witnessed land that had been built on and even with sympathetic drainage it had been unsuccessful when there were high tides and heavy rainfalls; climate changes have had a serious affect. Councillor Mrs Laws stated she could see the balancing ponds, in years to come expanding and turning into manmade lakes.
- Councillor Mrs Laws asked if the residents concerned in the bungalow adjacent to the boundary of the application were completely happy with the landscaping as it would take many years to establish. Officers stated the Council had fully reconsulted local residents on the amended proposals that came forward during the course of the application and no

further objection had been received. Councillor Mrs Laws stated the trees would take a long time to mature therefore she did not think it would offer much of a boundary for the residents. Officers stated that if this concern was shared amongst Members then the conditions could be revised slightly or a note added to the bottom of any consent issued to highlight that the Council would be looking in the area adjacent to the bungalow to have extra heavy standard trees put in as part of the planting mix and then that would enable a faster result.

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated she was slightly concerned about the 2008/09 document for a town centre site and about creating another retail area as there was already the Tesco site in Hostmoor Avenue and once again Members have been told that it was "just a small piece of agricultural land", how many more pieces of agricultural land would Fenland lose and in her mind March had more than enough supermarkets; she also thought there were areas on the Tesco site which were available for this type of development. Councillor Miscandlon stated he thought that Councillor Mrs Laws was slightly missing the point as this was not a supermarket, it was a convenience store. Councillor Mrs Laws stated it was still a food store to which Councillor Miscandlon explained that Next was not a food store; Councillor Laws stated she did not mean Next but the implication was that Marks & Spencer would move in and there were already shops that Next would be in competition with in March. Officers explained that the proposal before Members could include an element of food retail on it whether or not that would be in the form of a supermarket that was a less obvious version such as Marks & Spencer Simply Foods - the proposal does allow for an element of food sales. Officers explained that in terms of the regeneration proposal for March identified the likes of Acre Road as being a regeneration site, the Council fully accepts that but what the National Guidance requires the Local Authority to look at what the application was for in terms of the quantum of floor space being sort and the nature of the development proposal and the Council are minded to have to find whether or not there was an alternative that fits the proposal and as indicated by the applicant, Acre Road has a myriad of problems associated with it but the key one is that it was too small and because of that then the site has to be discounted even though the Town Council and District Council fully supports its regeneration. The other point is that the other sites where this could be accommodated, ie across the main road, again that cannot deliver the quantum of floor space that the applicant requires and that is an assessment that the Council are required to undertake.
- Councillor Cornwell stated he was surprised that Councillor Mrs Laws had stated March had too many supermarkets because there were certain people in March who did not think that there were enough. He also stated that one ward Councillor had written in fully supporting the application and the other one, himself, had received no adverse comments from anyone in the ward therefore everyone seemed to be acknowledging that there was a need for a retail outlet of some kind and they saw Hostmoor, apart from one end of it, as a commercial and industrial unit and most of the retail was actually at the junction of the A141 which was precisely where everybody wanted the roundabout therefore he really did not have a problem with this.
- Councillor Connor stated he had reservations with regard to the roundabout and he would be more comfortable if the roundabout was completed before work was started on the construction of the units.
- Councillor Sutton asked as to what there was not to like about this application; Members have heard for years from the people of March that when the Co-op, Sainsburys and the big extension on Tesco was built that they would ruin the town and they have not therefore Members should approve the application as it will not ruin the town but in his view it would enhance the town.
- Councillor Sutton stated with regard to flood zone 3 - Middle Level Commissioners were happy with the proposal and if they had not been then he would have been worried therefore what was there not to like; there will be a new roundabout which would relieve the other roundabout and the traffic flow, it was a "no-brainer".
- Councillor Murphy agreed with Councillor Sutton and stated he could not see anything wrong with the application and Members needed to understand that retail units of that size

could not be in a town centre. If someone was willing to invest money into this and build a roundabout that the Council have wanted for years when it should have been completed when Tesco was built then Members should take the opportunity now; in his opinion planning permission must be granted.

- Councillor Mrs Hay stated she travelled to either Peterborough or Cambridge for fashion shopping and if there was a Next store here, which was a well-known high street brand, then it would encourage people to stay within March; if they were not travelling out of town then they would stay within March and use the town centre to purchase other items.
- Councillor Mrs Newell asked if it would be possible to state that the roundabout must be built first as a condition. Officers explained that in theory this could be done however advised against it simply because it was not what Cambridgeshire County Council had requested; they were satisfied that the roundabout did not need to be in place until such time as the first retail unit comes into operation and this was because the junction did not have a significant accident record, if there were an accident issue then they would want the roundabout up front. Councillor Mrs Newell stated it was frustrating that at present it was a left hand turn only; she had many complaints about it and did County realise what Peas Hill had to suffer as it was permanently congested and therefore she could not understand Highways. Officers explained that Highways have to work on the basis of whether or not the current junction was dangerous and also whether or not there were any overloading of junctions further on the network and if the answer to those was no then they could not realistically insist that the roundabout was in place before any significant construction work started on the site.
- Councillor Cornwell stated there was a need for a roundabout and he reiterated what Councillor Count had submitted that if the Council could get a roundabout at that point then it would add to future viability bids for the creation of a northern relief road which the Council have wanted for some considerable time; and secondly with regard to the balancing pond he stated he would like to see fencing around the bottom end of the pond in the same way there was on the industrial estate on the other side of the A141 where there was a substantial safety fence around it.
- Councillor Connor stated he was not against this application but felt that the roundabout was absolutely imperative and was completed as soon as possible; he would also like to see a good landscaping system including mature trees added. Officers confirmed that a note could be added to state that within the planting mix there should be some extra heavy standard trees added. Councillor Sutton stated that the mention of substantial trees was a little ambiguous as to what area this would be applied to; Councillor Miscandlon confirmed this was just in the vicinity of the adjacent bungalow.
- Councillor Mrs Newell stated she would still like to request that the roundabout is completed first to which Councillor Miscandlon stated her request had been duly noted.

The item was proposed by Councillor Murphy and seconded by Councillor Mrs Hay and decided that the application be:

GRANTED as per the recommendations within the report (attached).

(Councillors Miscandlon and Sutton, in accordance with Paragraph 2 of the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters, that they had been lobbied on this application.)

P71/15

F/YR15/0981/F

EMNETH - LAND SOUTH OF EVERGLENS, OUTWELL ROAD

ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AND 2.0 METRE HIGH CHAIN LINK FENCE

The committee had regard to its inspection of the site (as agreed in accordance with the Site Inspection: Policy and Procedure (minute 19/04)) refers during its deliberations.

Councillor Miscandlon stated this application was before the planning committee due to being a cross-boundary application.

Officers presented the application to Members and informed them that updates had been received as per the documents handed out (attached).

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Allen Giles, representative of Anglia Growers.

Mr Giles stated he was in attendance on behalf of Anglia Growers; he was responsible for the site and was present to answer any questions or allay any fears that Members may have on the application. He stated with regard to the making up of the entrance that this was already in hand, they had received quotes for the work and this would be carried out before any work was undertaken on the new shed. They had plans to tidy up the site as presently there were a range of agricultural machinery outside and they would like to get this under cover as it was expensive equipment which would result in fewer movements because at some point some of the machinery travelled to be stored off-site.

Questions were asked of Mr Giles as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated it had been noted that this work had not yet been carried out on the access prior to the application and asked if this would be carried out immediately. Mr Giles stated he believed it would be as it was already in hand.

The item was proposed by Councillor Connor and seconded by Councillor Bucknor and decided that the application be:

GRANTED as per the recommendations within the report (attached)

P72/15 **F/YR15/1001/F**
MARCH - LAND WEST OF, 126 - 128 ELLIOTT ROAD
ERECTION OF 1 X 4-BED AND 3 X 3-BED SINGLE-STOREY DWELLINGS WITH
GARAGES

The Chairman confirmed that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

P73/15 **F/YR15/1110/O**
MARCH - LAND WEST OF, 85 WIMBLINGTON ROAD
ERECTION OF 3 DWELLINGS INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING
BUILDINGS

The committee had regard to its inspection of the site (as agreed in accordance with the Site Inspection: Policy and Procedure (minute 19/04 refers)) during its deliberations.

Officers presented the application to Members and informed them that updates had been received as per the documents handed out (attached).

Members received a representation in accordance with the public participation from Councillor Mrs French, District Ward Councillor.

Councillor Mrs French stated she was concerned as Members kept mentioning LP16 and had just approved a planning application against the NPPF, this site was a site that had not been identified when the Local Plan was completed and was ideal for development and she could not understand why anyone would state it would be overlooking as it would be bungalows, there were no objections from neighbours or highways and with regard to RECAP and waste; many applications

have been approved recently of this type and they had private waste collection therefore this reason should be discounted. It was now a thirty mile speed reduction, Saxon Way was a similar site and was approved, Jobs Lane was recently approved and not in the plan and there were also another three or four sites along Wisbech Road exactly the same and therefore she really did not understand why Members were quoting that LP16 would be detrimental to the amenity. Councillor Mrs French stated that Members had also recently approved a large quantity of houses at Mill View which front onto Wimblington Road and therefore asked Members to approve this application.

Questions were asked of Councillor Mrs French as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws asked for clarification as she had understood the application was for chalet bungalows which would technically be two storeys. Councillor Mrs French stated it could be chalet bungalows or could be bungalows but they would not be overlooking like a two storey detached property.

Members received a representation in accordance with the public participation from Mr Campbell, the Agent.

Mr Campbell stated he was a planning consultant acting for the applicant. He stated that the arguments from the planning officers did not bear the test of examination; there were no objections to the application from anyone, the neighbours had been consulted and had no objections only requested the erection of a 2m fence as they already realised that the land at the back of their properties would be a major housing area. Mr Campbell clarified that it would be either bungalows or chalet bungalows but it would be very low eaves and a two storey chalet could be designed that would have no impact on the adjoining properties to the north; they look across rear gardens consisting of sheds and garages. There would be no impact on the council houses to the south as there was already a fence, hedge, ditch and a road before the well protected rear gardens of the smaller council houses. Officers highlighted three issues, firstly, amenity objections which he could not see and the neighbour consultation showed there was support for the application. Secondly, the impact upon the character of the area - he could not see how that could be the main point when the Council had already decided to have houses immediately on the land to the rear as part of an overall development. Thirdly, the question of design with regard to bin collection - this could be dealt with through design with an intervening bin store 25m away from the point of collection whether the vehicle either stands in the road or reverses into the site as happens at times and there could be a bin carry distance of 30m therefore there was no reason why a satisfactory bin collection system could not be designed into the full detail. In his view there was no considerable objection to this development, no highway objection and it was in a residential area, in a 30mph speed limit adjoining a major housing scheme within the next few years, there were no other technical objections and therefore he recommended that Members approved the application.

Questions were asked of Mr Campbell as follows:

- Councillor Miscandlon stated behind this location site there was a horse paddock and asked if the access would remain through the proposed driveway to the horse field. Mr Campbell stated that the set of gates owned by the applicant would remain although the owner had been approached about potential development as part of the more major development to the rear but for the time being the stables and the paddock would remain and the access would be through the proposed housing site.
- Officers clarified the application's description of development was for residential development with a design access statement on the basis it would be chalet bungalows and there would be potentially a level of accommodation on the first floor.
- Councillor Cornwell asked if Officers wished to see this particular plot incorporated into the Broad Concept Plan for the whole of area including the back fields. Officers stated this was not necessarily the case but it was just to make it clear to Members the context of the site in

terms of the Local Plan in that it did identify immediately adjoining the boundary of this application site but in a suitable location for an urban extension; The location plan shows the depth of gardens that the existing houses have that front onto Wimblington Road, the Broad Concept Plan could incorporate adjacent garden land which would maximise the use of land but the report did not consider this issue in detail; it just highlighted the context of the proposals to Members. Councillor Cornwell stated there would not be a future expectation that the track alongside would be incorporated as an access onto Wimblington Road from the major development at the back. Officers stated this was not necessarily the case; the Broad Concept Plan for that area was still at a very early stage therefore there was a lot of work to be done and that would indicate what type of access was required and the Council were some way from making those types of decisions. Councillor Cornwell stated this was why he asked the question because he saw that until there was a Broad Concept Plan then Members would struggle as there was uncertainty as to "where to draw the line" between an area covered by the Concept Plan and a development leading up to the edge of the area covered by the Concept Plan because the line was unknown. Councillor Miscandlon explained that Members were in a difficult position because the Concept Plan was in its infancy and as such Members have to make a judgement in that context. Councillor Cornwell agreed but stated this meant that Members were in a "Catch 22" situation.

- Councillor Bucknor commented that this application needed to be assessed on the basis that there was no Broad Concept Plan available to Members to which Councillor Miscandlon stated this was correct.
- Officers clarified they were not suggesting the application should be refused because there was not a Broad Concept Plan but it was part of the context and there would be development adjoining this site at some point in the future but the form was presently unknown.

The item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Murphy and decided that the application be:

REFUSED as per the officer recommendations within the report (attached)

(Councillors Miscandlon, Mrs Clark, Mrs Newell, Cornwell, Mrs Davis, Connor, Bucknor, Sutton, Mrs Laws, Mrs Hay and Murphy, in accordance with Paragraph 2 of the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters, that they had been lobbied on this application.)

P74/15 **F/YR15/0960/O**
EASTREA - LAND EAST OF, 51 COATES ROAD
ERECTION OF 3 DWELLINGS (OUTLINE WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED)

The committee had regard to its inspection of the site (as agreed in accordance with the Site Inspection: Policy and Procedure (minute 19/04 refers)) during its deliberations.

Officers presented the application to Members and informed them that updates had been received as per the documents handed out (attached).

The item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Murphy and decided that the application be:

REFUSED as per the recommendations within the report (attached).

(Councillors Miscandlon and Mrs Laws stated she was a Member of the Whittlesey Town Council, but takes no part in planning matters.)

P75/15

F/YR15/1038/F

WISBECH - 403 LYNN ROAD

ERECTION OF 2 X 2-STOREY 4-BED DWELLINGS AND 1 X 2-STOREY 3-BED DWELLING WITH GARAGES, INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS AND ANNEXE

The Chairman informed Members that this item had been deferred.

2:40pm

Chairman