

Lowestoft Town Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee

Remote meeting at 17.00 on Tuesday 10 November 2020

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight(Chair), Andy Pearce (joined 17.35) and Alice Taylor

Also participating: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk)

507. Welcome

The right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol were explained and noted, and the meeting was welcomed.

508. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Parker and accepted (proposed by Cllr Barnard, seconded by Cllr Taylor) and agreed (five votes in favour, one against (Cllr Frost)). Cllr Eastwood and Carlton were absent.

509. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

510. Minutes of last meeting

a. It was noted that the minutes of 27 October 2020 would be agreed at the next appropriate meeting.

511. No public comments had been submitted prior to the meeting.

512. Planning applications

a. To consider the following planning applications (all available on www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk) and decide the recommendations of the Council:

Reference	Address and Description	District Ward
DC/20/4364/FUL	137 Stradbroke Road - Demolition of Existing Conservatory, and Part Kitchen, and Erection of Single Storey Rear and Side Extensions	Kirkley and Pakefield
It was proposed by Cllr Hardie, seconded by Cllr Barnard and unanimously agreed to recommend approval.		
DC/20/4113/FUL	22 The Avenue Lowestoft - Single storey rear extension	Kirkley and Pakefield
It was proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Barnard and unanimously agreed to recommend approval.		
DC/20/4180/FUL	10 Vermeer Close Lowestoft - Single-storey front extension to create new kitchen, together with new porch.	Gunton and St Margarets
It was proposed by Cllr Frost, seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously agreed to recommend approval.		
DC/20/4090/FUL	Cherry Lodge 23 - 24 Lyndhurst Road - Construction of a first floor extension (partially above lower ground floor rear wing) to provide 3 additional bedrooms and associated works	Gunton and St Margarets
It was proposed by Cllr Frost, seconded by Cllr Barnard and unanimously agreed to recommend refusal due to overdevelopment of the existing property and poor design standards for the proposed extension.		
DC/20/4102/FUL	175 Oulton Road - Rear extension	Harbour and Normanston
It was proposed by Cllr Barnard, seconded by Cllr Hardie and unanimously agreed to recommend approval.		
DC/20/3540/COU	72 Pinewood Avenue - Change of use from shop (Class E) to Hot Food Takeaway (Sui-generis)	Carlton and Whitton
It was proposed by Cllr Hardie, seconded by Cllr Frost and agreed to recommend approval. Cllr Pearce did not participate in the vote as he joined the meeting mid consideration of the application. At this point in the meeting a five minute break was taken.		
DC/20/3943/FUL	32 Hotlon Avenue - First floor extension above porch, removal of garage and new rear extension	St Margaret's West
It was proposed by Cllr Hardie, seconded by Cllr Pearce and unanimously agreed to recommend approval.		

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b. Applications for tree works:

Applications for tree works - Noting that the Planning Authority has received the following applications for works for trees subject to a tree preservation order (TPO) and/or proposed works to trees within a Conservation Area (TCA). The Town Council will note these applications.

Reference	Address and Description	District Ward
DC/20/4200/TPO	7 Kirkley Park Road - TPO 86 Front garden T1 & T2 - 2 x Pine - Reduce crown height and spread by between 1.5-2.5m to reduce lever arm stress and risk of failure in adverse weather conditions. Prune to tidy up previous storm damage on the lateral limbs over the adjacent property Rear garden T3, T4 - 2 x Pines -Reduce crown height and spread by between 1.5-2.5m to reduce lever arm stress and risk of failure in adverse weather conditions.	Kirkley and Pakefield

c. The following report from the East Suffolk Council Referral Panel were noted:

DC/20/2589/FUL - replacement windows and doors at Christ Church Hall, Whapload Road. The application was referred to Referral Panel, as the Town Council comments were contrary to the officer recommendation of approval. At the Referral Panel it was agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of both Development Control Committees, that the application did not need to be referred to development control committee, and could remain at officer delegation level with the recommendation of approval.

d. There had been no Planning Determinations issued by the Planning Authority which were contrary to the recommendations of the Town Council.

513. Consideration was given to if and how applications for repair to and replacement of windows would be considered going forward in respect of the East Suffolk Council Window Policy Scoring System. It was proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Frost and unanimously agreed to only consider applications for window repair and/or replacement as those within the conservation areas were dealt with by the above scoring scheme. In relation to the scoring scheme, it was agreed to ask East Suffolk Council for the current scoring scheme to be adjusted to take into account energy efficiency in line with both Council's climate emergency declarations.

17.47 Cllr Frost left the meeting and returned at 17.49.

514. Consultations

The following consultations were considered:

a. East Suffolk Council - how can we better engage you in the planning process

It was agreed to respond to East Suffolk Council with the following comments: Given the back drop of de-regularisation of the planning system, this consultation is welcome. The Planning Authority needs to improve engagement with harder to reach sectors and not be reliant, as central government would steer, on digital consultation. It should ensure that neighbour consultation letters and site notices are definitely posted which has not been consistent in recent months. It should also review the current system of public representation at Planning Committees and offer a more realistic time slot for the public to speak to applications. The current three minutes total for all public comments does not offer appropriate time for the public to properly engage in the planning process. Ideally, this should be changed to three minutes per person up to a maximum time, perhaps 15 minutes, in total.

b. East Suffolk Council - how can we improve cycling and walking

It was agreed to respond to East Suffolk Council with the following comments: It is noted that more people in Lowestoft than the national average use the bicycle as a form of transport. Connectivity of routes through and around town should be reviewed and the East Suffolk Council should scrutinise and strongly lobby the County Council on lack of funding being allotted to Lowestoft as opposed to other Suffolk towns. It is hoped the public will submit their individual comments to East Suffolk Council in response to this consultation, however, again, it is noted that a digital consultation is not inclusive to the whole community.

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c. East Suffolk Council - the impact of housing development on protected habitat sites

It was agreed to respond to East Suffolk Council that no housing should be permitted on protected habitat sites or in the vicinity if the development would have a negative impact on the protected site. The Town Council is keen that the current regulations are not diluted in favour of housing delivery numbers and wherever possible all green spaces not just protected habitats should be preserved and not developed.

d. Suffolk County Council - Traffic Regulation Orders for various roads in Lowestoft; Corton Road, Stubbs Wood, Lyndhurst Road, Carlton Road, St Aubyns Road, College Road, Rectory Road. Consideration of these orders would be deferred to the next meeting.

515. The East Suffolk Council publication of 'Local Validation List' in relation to submitting planning applications was noted and should be referred to by all when submitting planning applications.

516. It was proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Pearce and unanimously agreed that Cllr Green would represent the Town Council at the ESC Planning Committee on 8 December when application DC/20/2593/FUL High Dene, 105 Park Road (change of use from C2 residential care home to large HMO) and DC/20/3472/FUL, St Marys Catholic Primary School, Kirkley Cliff Road, (landscaping) would be heard.

517. Consideration of how to progress the following action towards implementation of the Town Council's Health Emergency Declaration: "Item 8 Taking account of health and well-being as part of our decisions on planning and development". Members commented that this was part of their ongoing work with consideration being given to immediate environment impacts such as noise pollution, loss of light and how these could impact on people's well being and encouragement of healthier life styles with recommendations for cycle parking and improved cycle networks.

518. Noting that the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee were considering Committee and Sub-Committee structures and Terms of Reference, it was agreed to submit the following for their consideration: The Planning and Environment Committee fulfilled a statutory function by providing recommendations on planning application consultations supplied by the planning authority. However, it would welcome a review of the 'Environment' role of the committee particularly in light of the Town Council's climate emergency declaration and how the Committee fulfils item 6J of its Terms of Reference.

519. Date of the next meeting – 4.30 pm on Tuesday 24 November 2020.

520. Items for the next Agenda - Traffic Orders from today's meeting.