

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE SPIRELLA BALLROOM, ICKNILED WAY, LETCHWORTH
GARDEN CITY ON THURSDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2017 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors Councillor David Barnard (Chairman), Councillor Fiona Hill (Vice-Chairman), John Booth, Bill Davidson, Jean Green, Cathryn Henry, Tony Hunter, Michael Muir, Mike Rice, Adrian Smith, Harry Spencer-Smith and Martin Stears-Handscomb*

In Attendance:

Simon Ellis (Development and Conservation Manager), Tom Rea (Area Planning Officer), Jeanette Thompson (Senior Lawyer) and Ian Gourlay (Committee and Member Services Manager)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting approximately 90 members of the public, including 6 registered speakers..

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors John Bishop, Paul Clark and Ian Mantle.

Councillor Sarah Dingley was substituting for Councillor Bishop.

49 MINUTES - 17 AUGUST 2017

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 August 2017 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

50 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

51 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chairman welcomed the Committee, officers, general public and speakers to this Planning Control Committee Meeting;
- (2) The Chairman announced that Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or make a sound recording of the meeting, but he asked them to not use flash and to disable any beeps or other sound notifications that emitted from their devices;
- (3) The Chairman reminded Members and speakers that in line with Council policy, this meeting would be audio recorded;
- (4) The Chairman advised that Members would be using hand held microphones and asked they wait until they had been handed a microphone before starting to speak;

- (5) The Chairman requested that all Members, officers and speakers announce their names before speaking;
- (6) The Chairman clarified that each group of speakers would have a maximum of 5 minutes. The bell would sound after 4 1/2 minutes as a warning, and then again at 5 minutes to signal that the presentation must cease; and
- (7) Members were reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and were required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest which required they leave the room under Paragraph 7.4 of the Code of Conduct, could speak on the item, but must leave the room before the debate and vote.

52 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman confirmed that the 6 registered speakers were present.

53 17/01543/1 - LAND OFF HOLWELL ROAD, PIRTON

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 99 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access point from Holwell Road. All matters reserved except for means of access.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Development and Conservation Manager, supported by a visual presentation consisting of plans, drawings and photographs of the site.

The Area Planning Officer advised that, since writing the report, he had received 14 additional letters from members of the public, and the points raised in this correspondence had already been covered in the summary of the objections to the development and covered in the key issues as set out in his report. All of these letters had been placed on the Council's public access website.

In addition, the Area Planning Officer had received the following:

- (1) Pirton Parish Council had submitted a supplementary letter to their formal comments which were attached at Appendix 1 to his report. This additional letter repeated many of the points covered in Appendix 1, however, he summarised them as follows:
 - The proposals were premature in advance of the local and neighbourhood plan preparation;
 - There would be an adverse impact on the landscape and setting of the village;
 - There would be a negative cumulative impact;
 - Adverse impact from traffic and poor connectivity;
 - Loss of agricultural land;
 - Negative impact on the environment and biodiversity;
 - Potential impact on archaeology and heritage assets;
 - Would lead to an urbanising impact on the Hambridge Way and Icknield Way contrary to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan;
 - The development was unsustainable.
- (2) Comments from Holwell Parish Council which had also appeared on the web site under a neighbour representation. However, they had been submitted now as a consultee representation. He summarised them as follows:

Thursday, 14th September, 2017

- The Holwell Parish Council objected in the strongest possible terms;
- Concern of the impact of construction traffic on the rural villages of Holwell and Pirton;
- Concern of the impact on pedestrians and other users of local roads and footpaths;
- Query whether the homes would be affordable;
- Lack of local infrastructure to support the additional dwellings;
- The development would detract from the Chilterns Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Increase in traffic and congestion detrimental to highway safety;
- In summary, the Parish Council considered the proposals an overdevelopment at the highest level.

The Area Planning Officer had received formal comments from the Council's Waste and Recycling Manager, who recommended conditions relating to refuse collection routes and full details of on-site storage facilities for waste and recycling. The comments also included technical advice with regard to matters of waste storage and separation.

In summarising, the Area Planning Officer drew the Committee's attention to the Government's high priority, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, to deliver new housing. Clearly this proposal would provide a significant number of dwellings, including affordable dwellings and there would also be economic benefits to the local economy. On the other hand, the proposal would, by reason of its scale, cause significant environmental harm to the character and appearance of the countryside. In addition, the development would not be sustainable, as the new residents would have limited access to facilities, services, jobs and sustainable transport choices.

The Area Planning Officer considered that the benefits of delivering new housing would not outweigh the fundamental issue that the proposal was not the right development for this rural location. Accordingly, he asked the Committee to support his to refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the report.

The Committee was addressed by Parish Councillor Diane Burleigh (Pirton Parish Council) and Carol Anne McConnellogue (Pirton Action Group) in objection to application 17/01543/1.

Parish Councillor Burleigh advised that she was speaking on behalf of both Pirton and Holwell Parish Councils which supported the Area Planning Officer's conclusions and recommendations for refusal set out in the report.

Parish Councillor Burleigh considered that application 17/01543/1 was premature, and that the harm from its adverse impact significantly and demonstrably outweighed any benefit of housing development. It was premature as both the Local and Neighbourhood Plans were well advanced, and therefore to grant permission would seriously interfere with both Plans' well thought through, highly consulted upon and accepted housing plans for Pirton. She stated that the villagers were not NIMBYs. There was no agreed construction route as yet to this or to the adjacent site. There were no proposals for addressing the significant adverse impacts. She felt that Members simply did not have the information they needed to be able to grant this application.

Parish Councillor Burleigh stated that the adverse impact of a further 99 houses on top of recent permissions would lead to a cumulative growth of Pirton, and of its population, of some 37%, a greater percentage increase than that planned by the Council for Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City or Royston. Pirton's facilities would be overwhelmed. Socially, the village would struggle to assimilate so many people at one time. Historically, growth had been steady and small scale, and so assimilation had been positive and easy.

Thursday, 14th September, 2017

Parish Councillor Burleigh commented that access to the site would mean constructing a road across the very green corridor that the Committee had approved to protect wildlife in the adjacent sites, as well as destroying part of the hedge that the Council insisted should remain because of the importance of hedges and verges to wildlife and diversity.

Parish Councillor Burleigh considered that the proposal failed to enhance (an important word in the National Planning Policy Framework) the wider landscape of the Pirton Lowlands and its place next to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.. Also, important for the agricultural industry, the site comprised Grade 3A agricultural land, the best and most versatile agricultural land, which the UK needed to cherish.

Parish Councillor Burleigh advised that heritage was important to Pirton. Given the significance of material remains found on the adjacent site, including human remains, further extensive archaeological work would be needed on the site. This would enable Historic England to consider the possibility of scheduling it, or consider whether any remains should be preserved in situ before any planning permission was granted. She believed that was also the view of the archaeologists at Hertfordshire County Council.

Parish Councillor Burleigh explained that the Parish Council was wholly against any measures that would urbanise the countryside and Hambridge Way, an ancient part of the Icknield Way path used extensively by walkers, cyclists and horse riders, precisely because it was both ancient and rural. These visitors were an increasingly important economic group for Pirton, and the villagers did not wish them to be discouraged.

Ms McConnellogue advised that the Pirton Action Group urged the Committee to refuse this application. 78 new houses were already going to be built in Pirton, bringing potentially hundreds of more vehicles into the village. A further 99 homes would be perilous for pedestrians, dog walkers, riders and particularly for children walking to school. The village roads were also very narrow, many of which had no pavements.

Ms McConnellogue queried how this application could even be considered when the construction traffic plan and access had not even been agreed for the 78 houses already approved. In addition, the small village school and pre-school were at full capacity and local secondary schools were all heavily oversubscribed.

Ms McConnellogue stated that those leaving the village by car already experienced lengthy delays due to the sheer volume of traffic into Hitchin, Stevenage and Luton. There was also a significant pollution issue to consider.

Ms McConnellogue commented that the location of this large proposed development was definitely outside the village boundary and would create a large and vey separate estate. It threatened to destroy the wonderful community spirit that made Pirton so special, as well as changing forever the village's unique and historic setting.

Ms McConnellogue concluded by re-iterating that the villagers were not NIMBYS. They supported and encouraged reasonable development, however, the current proposal was unsustainable and disproportionate, but more importantly, would put lives at risk.

The Chairman thanked Parish Councillor Burleigh and Ms McConnellogue for their presentations.

The Committee supported the Planning Officer's recommendation that planning permission be refused on the basis that the benefits of delivering new housing would not outweigh the fundamental issue that the proposal was not the right development for this rural location. The reasons advocated in the report and the comments of the Pirton and Holwell Parish Councils were supported.

Thursday, 14th September, 2017

The Committee could see no merit in the application; no benefit to the village; it was overdevelopment; and was totally unsustainable. It was in the area beyond the Green Belt and would detract from the village's setting and the adjacent Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

RESOLVED: That application 17/01543/1 be **REFUSED** outline planning permission, for the reasons as set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

54 17/00477/1 - 1 AVENUE ONE, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY

Erection of single storey retail foodstore (Use Class A1), a three storey hotel (use Class C1), a single storey restaurant/drive-thru (Use Class A3/A5), a single storey coffee shop/drive-thru (Use Class A1/A3), new access arrangements, car parking, service areas, landscaping and other associated works following demolition of existing building (as amended by drawings received 02/06/2017).

The Development and Conservation Manager presented a report, supported by a visual presentation consisting of plans, drawings and photographs of the site.

The Development and Conservation Manager advised that negotiations regarding the proposed Section 106 Agreement had not been completed, and therefore that any grant of permission should be subject to the completion of such an Agreement. He further advised of the recommended amended wording to proposed Condition 4, as follows:

"Prior to the commencement of groundworks, full details of landscaping phasing will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details will identify at which stages the different aspects of landscaping, as shown on drawing numbers NCSP 508/1-002E and NCSP 508/1-003E, will be carried out and completed as part of the development site. The approved phasing of landscaping will be provided in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and visual amenity of the locality."

The Committee was addressed by Mr Julian Sutton (Applicant's Agent) in support of application 17/00477/1.

Mr Sutton advised that the Committee's consideration of this application was the culmination of year's work with the Planning Officers in bringing forward the development of the site for much needed regeneration. He and the applicant were grateful for the proactive and pragmatic way in which those officers had worked with them in order that they application could be presented at the meeting.

Mr Sutton considered that the redevelopment proposals were of significant benefit to Letchworth and its residents. They represented a £16Million investment in the town, and the proposed regeneration scheme would:

- Provide a widened food shopping choice in Letchworth in a highly accessible location;
- Provide high quality new visitor and business accommodation in the local area in an accessible location;
- Provide additional food and drink choice to local residents and surrounding businesses in the industrial area;
- Create approximately 150 full time equivalent jobs, plus spinoff jobs through the construction process;
- Create other economic spinoffs from the proposed Travelodge Hotel, as guests would visit shop and facilities within the town. Travelodge's own statistics suggested that this could be up to £1.25Million per annum; and

Thursday, 14th September, 2017

- It would redevelop a long term, vacant site which currently detracted from the local environment of Letchworth Garden City and offered the opportunity for environmental enhancement by bringing a derelict site back into beneficial use and, in particular, provided for enhanced landscaping to the benefit of the local environment.

Mr Sutton stated that the submission of the application had followed a public consultation event held on 8 February 2017 and, hence, the application was supported by a Statement of Community Involvement which confirmed that the majority of responses received from the public were positive, illustrating strong local support for the proposals. Not a single objection to the scheme had been received from local residents. The one solitary objection to the application, as set out in the report, was in his opinion without merit and the objector's arguments were entirely self-serving and intended to restrict competition and prevent additional customer choice within Letchworth.

Mr Sutton explained that the Council had appointed independent retail planning specialists to assess the supporting case for the application, and that they had confirmed that there were no sequential preferable sites closer to Letchworth Town Centre appropriate for the development and that, in their independent view, there would not be any unacceptable impact on Letchworth or Baldock Town Centres.

Mr Sutton advised that an Employment Report had been submitted with the application explaining the fundamental problems with the existing building on the site and how it had been marketed for four years by two leading national agents. He stated that the applicant had significant land holdings. After several years of looking for new tenants for the site without success, due in part to the building's fundamental deficiencies for modern businesses, such as the low eaves height and office to storage ratio, the applicant had decided that redevelopment for a modern multi-use development was the best option, a development which would not only provide useful facilities for local residents and businesses, but would also bring new employment opportunities to the area. The applicant was keen to progress the development and, if permission was granted, would hope to be on site as soon as possible with a view to bringing the development into use by the end of 2018. He therefore asked the Committee to support the Planning Officer's recommendation that planning permission be granted.

The Chairman thanked Mr Sutton for his presentation.

The Committee was supportive of the application. Members felt that the scheme would have a limited impact on the Letchworth Town Centre. They accepted that the existing building on the site was not appropriate for modern needs, and considered that the supermarket, hotel, takeaway and coffee house uses proposed, together with the level of parking advocated, would result in a successful regeneration of this derelict site.

As well as supporting the Development and Conservation Manager's recommended revised Condition 4, the Committee agreed to additional conditions (Nos. 20 and 21) regarding details to be provided in respect of external litter bins and the location and distribution of electric vehicle charging installations.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the completion of a satisfactory Section 106 Obligation, application 17/00477/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager, and with the following amended Condition 4 and additional Conditions 20 and 21:

4. Prior to the commencement of groundworks, full details of landscaping phasing will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details will identify at which stages the different aspects of landscaping, as shown on drawing numbers NCSP 508/1-002E and NCSP 508/1-003E, will be carried out and completed as part of the development site. The approved phasing of landscaping will be provided in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and visual amenity of the locality.

20. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted full details of external litter bin installations associated with the proposed restaurant and cafe shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such works shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details or particulars prior to the first use of the restaurant and cafe and thereafter retained and maintained for that purpose.

Reason: To ensure suitable litter bin facilities are available in the interests of public amenity.

21. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted full details of the location and distribution of electric vehicle charging installations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such installations shall be provided in accordance with the approved details or particulars prior to the first use of each relevant part of the development and thereafter retained and maintained for that purpose.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, public convenience and environmental gain.

55 17/00442/1 - 67 HIGH STREET, WHITWELL, HITCHIN

Change of use from Public House (Class A4) to use as a single dwelling house (Class C3); Single storey rear extension following part demolition of existing rear extension; Insertion of dormer window to rear roof slope; Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing single storey lean-to extension. Front canopy following demolition of existing front porch.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Development and Conservation Manager, supported by a visual presentation consisting of plans, drawings and photographs of the site.

The Area Planning Officer advised that Members of the Committee had been copied in on a message by Councillor John Bishop, who considered that the Maiden Head Public House would under progressive management still be viable as a public house. Councillor Bishop was concerned that no viability figures were available to support the officer recommendation. Councillor Bishop requested that the Committee refuse planning permission on the same grounds as the refusal of planning permission for a change of use of the White Horse at Kimpton to a dwelling. The application was refused by the Planning Committee in August 2015, and Councillor Bishop had attached the Decision Notice regarding that decision to his e-mail for the Committee's reference.

The Area Planning Officer reported the formal comments of St. Pauls Walden Parish Council. The Parish Council referred to the listing of the Maidens Head as an Asset of Community Value and the significant level of financial support that may be available within the local community that could be invested. The Parish Council considered that the retention of the property as a public house would help maintain the strong community values within the Parish and they pointed to the Red Lion at Preston as an example of a successful community pub. The Parish Council considered that the retention of the No. 67 High Street, Whitwell as a public house was of considerably more community value to the village than a private residence.

The Area Planning Officer reported a letter received from Mr Widdowson on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Pubs in Whitwell representations not being on the Council's website and the inability of the Society to see the viability reports.

The Committee was addressed by Mr David Widdowson (Society for the Protection of Pubs in Whitwell), supported by Mr Kai Allen (local resident), in objection to application 17/00442/1.

Mr Widdowson began by referring to the key point of viability. He understood that the applicant had submitted a report and the Planning Officer commissioned an independent review of that. He had seen neither of those so he could not possibly challenge some of the assumptions that they may contain. However, the question of viability depended on a number of factors including personal perception:

- this was clear from the fact that the independent report apparently rejected a number of the conclusions drawn by the applicant's report; and
- Also, as to the CAMRA Public House Viability Test referred to in the Planning Officer's report at Paragraph 4.3.5. He was of course unable to comment on how the viability reports had applied this test. He had applied it and had come down overwhelmingly in favour of viability. Time did not permit him to go through this in detail.

Essentially, however, Mr Widdowson considered that viability turned on two points, namely demand and cost. The conclusions of the independent viability report on which the Planning Officer had relied in reaching his recommendation that this application be granted were set out in Paragraph 4.3.6 of his report. Dealing with each bullet point in turn:

- 1.(a) The Society accepted that there was substantial capital investment involved – as the Planning Officer noted and did not challenge. The Society had set this at £200,000. The Society's Business Plan had not been put together on the back of a fag packet. It had been compiled with the assistance of experienced accountants, licensed trade managers, current and former landlords and, in particular, the owners and operators of the Red Lion at Preston. It is a credible plan which will be financed almost wholly from members of the community at the level stated. Our costings have factored in the possible cost of loan finance solely for working capital and we have had positive discussions with commercial lenders based on this business plan;
- 1.(b) Crucially, of course, the Society's Plan did not depend on returning a profit for the owners. The vehicle used would return any profit made to the community, but did not depend on it. The Society had the funds to purchase the property and saw no reason why they should be deprived of this opportunity;
2. As to local support, this was set out in greater detail in the Society's submission. However, the decline in the trading was a succession of disastrous tenants following Mike and Barbara Jones. He challenged one point in the Planning Officer's report – trade was emphatically not declining during Mike's time – indeed he won North Herts Pub of the Year in the year before his retirement. He left because he was old and wished to retire. What was key, however, was providing what the community wanted. The two surveys carried out by the Society had indicated this was good quality food, decent beer and good wine. The Red Lion at Preston and the Horns at Bulls Green were two examples among many others who did that brilliantly. The projected growth in population should also be taken into account. Once the Maidens Head was gone it would not be coming back;
3. The fact that there was another pub in the village was, he suggested, irrelevant both because people wanted choice and because it catered for a particular and small section and did not relate well to the wider community. The population of Whitwell was very similar to Pirton, which maintained two successful pubs;
4. The vague unevidenced assertion that people's drinking and eating habits had changed was not a basis for concluding that was the case in this community. He could hardly leave his house without being asked about the pub. This was direct evidence as against vague assertion;

5. The same would be true of supermarkets' competition. A village pub was not just a drinks dispensary – it was a time honoured social hub which provided much much more to social cohesion – as set out in the Society's submission;
6. The argument that the fact the property had been on the market for some time and there had been no interest was, he felt, entirely specious. It would drive a coach and horses through the Asset of Community Value scheme if an owner was able to set a residential price on a pub and then say when he had no takers at that price that it showed no demand for it as a pub.

The Chairman thanked Mr Widdowson for his presentation.

The Committee was concerned that it had not seen full versions of the various viability reports referred to by both the Area Planning Officer and Mr Widdowson in their presentations. The Committee discussed the possibility of deferring the application until such time as they had read and digested the various viability reports. However, Members were advised that there was no guarantee that they would be able to see the full viability reports as some of the information may need to be redacted on the grounds of commercial sensitivity. On this basis, the Committee felt that the applicant's evidence on sustaining a viable business had not been demonstrated to its satisfaction, and considered that the proposed change of use of the public house to residential use would not promote the retention of this important local facility. It was therefore

RESOLVED: That application 17/00442/1 be **REFUSED** planning permission, for the following reason:

1. The proposed change of use of the public house to residential use would not promote the retention of this important local facility. Moreover, the applicant's evidence on sustaining a viable business has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. The proposal therefore conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Proactive Statement

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

56 17/00443/1LB - 67 HIGH STREET, WHITWELL, HITCHIN

Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear extension, shed and front porch. Consequential internal and external alterations to facilitate change of use from Class A4 (Drinking Establishment) to use as a single dwelling house Class C3 (Dwelling House).

The Committee considered the report of the Development and Conservation Manager in respect of application 17/00443/1LB, seeking Listed Building Consent for works to 67 High Street, Whitwell.

In the light of the previous decision (see Minute 55 above), the Committee debated the merits of refusing or deferring this application. Members concluded that the application should be deferred until the outcome was known of any appeal against the Committee's decision to refuse permission for the change of use application for 67 High Street, Whitwell (ref: 17/00442/1).

RESOLVED: That application 17/00443/1LB be **DEFERRED** until the outcome is known of any appeal against the Committee's decision to refuse permission for the change of use application for 67 High Street, Whitwell (ref: 17/00442/1) set out in Minute 55 above.

57 17/01214/1 - CALDERS COTTAGE, PUTTERIDGE PARK, LUTON

Timber clad barn.

The Development and Conservation Manager presented a report, supported by a visual presentation consisting of plans, drawings and photographs of the site.

The Development and Conservation Manager commented that the applicant had set out in his letter appended to the report as to why the proposed building was required, namely due to the fact that he had been the victim of crime and hence needed to store vehicles and equipment in a secure manner. Whilst the site was in the Green Belt, the Development and Conservation Manager did not consider that it would be inappropriate development as it would be associated with the normal rural use of the land and was important for security purposes.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Richard Langeveld (Applicant) in support of application 17/01214/1.

Mr Langeveld advised that he had bought Calders Cottage in 1999, and what had attracted him was its semi-isolated rural location. When he and his family were at home it was a lovely, but when they were at work or on holiday then anyone else who should not be there was also on their own to do whatever they wanted without being disturbed.

Mr Langeveld stated that he had been the victim of criminal activity over the past 7 years on 10 separate occasions, all reported to the Police. These included a stolen trailer; stolen motorbike; garage broken into and £10,000 worth of equipment stolen; stolen car trailer; house broken into and arson attack on house whilst it was being extended; copper theft whilst house was being extended; attempted theft of trailer; copper theft from garden; vandalism; and trespassing. In addition, he had lost count of numerous fly tipping incidents, sometimes of hazardous materials, on the lane blocking the track for both he and his family and emergency vehicles.

Mr Langeveld commented that he had assisted the Police wherever possible, and they actually installed CCTV at his property a few years ago. Hertfordshire County Council had recently installed a number of gates on the Putteridgebury Estate in an attempt to reduce crime levels and fly tipping, and to make criminal "get-aways" harder.

Mr Langeveld explained that the purpose of the proposed barn was for safe secure storage of belongings and equipment. Necessary security demanded that it was positioned as per his application and he wanted it in the proposed location for the following reasons:

- It was relatively close to his house;
- He could keep an eye on it because of its close proximity;
- If it was a distance away he would not keep a regular/daily check on it;
- If it was a distance away he would not hear anything untoward;
- It was easily accessed from his track and drive; and
- The existing security alarm could be easily extended to cover the proposed barn.

Mr Langeveld took the opportunity to reassure members that he had absolutely no intention to convert the barn into a residential dwelling either now or in the future. It was to be a secure storage facility that was attractive and in keeping with the rural surroundings and other storage barns in Hertfordshire. He confirmed that he had given all aspects of the proposal a great deal of consideration regarding materials and positioning, including consultation with his neighbours, and had concluded that the current proposed location was the most sensible.

The Chairman thanked Mr Langeveld for his presentation.

The Committee was supportive of the Development and Conservation Manager's recommendation for approval, and following brief debate, it was

RESOLVED: That application 17/01214/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

58 PLANNING APPEALS

The Development and Conservation Manager presented the report entitled Planning Appeals. He advised that, since the last meeting of the Committee, two planning appeals had been lodged and one planning appeal decision had been received, all as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the report entitled Planning Appeals be noted.

The meeting closed at 9.52 pm

Chairman at the meeting on
Thursday, 14 September 2017