

Minutes from Planning Committee meeting Monday 20th March 2023 7.00pm at Foxton Village Hall Pavilion

Present: Deborah Roberts, Peter Tye, Caroline Ilott and 9 members of the public

1. Appointing Planning Committee Chair

CI proposed DR as Chair. Seconded by PT. Deborah Roberts duly voted in as Planning Committee Chair

2. Declarations of interest

Both CI and DR made declarations of interest in that they had both visited Mrs and Mrs Sanderson at 2 Illingworth Way and viewed the application site at 32 Fowlmere Road from the bedroom windows. No planning comments were made so as not to give any indication of predetermination on any planning recommendations made by the committee on this application.

3. Minutes of Planning meeting 22nd February 2023

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting with no matters arising.

4. Planning Applications

- A. **23/00610/FUL – 32 Fowlmere Road, Foxton, CB22 6RT** Erection of 3no dwellings following demolition of existing bungalow with associated new highway access.

Foxton Parish Council recommend refusal of this application for the following reasons:-

Foxton Parish Council is not against reasonable development of this site in principal but recommends refusal for this application and requests that it go to SCDC Planning Committee if the officer is minded to recommend approval. This the 4th iteration of a planning application for this site.

- i) *The Appeal decision document APP/W0530/W22/3296911 of 6th October 2022, from the previously refused application 21/05528/FUL, states that that application benefits would not 'outweigh the considerable harm to living conditions for neighbouring residents as a result of overdevelopment of the site and a sub-optimal layout'.*

The current application, does not address or mitigate any of the serious issues raised by that appeal decision. The housing design and layouts do not reach

the high quality sought by SCLP policy HQ/1. There are many details of design and layout problems highlighted in the residents' comments on the Planning Portal, especially from No 2 Illingworth Way and Foxton Parish Council supports and echoes these comments.

There are many examples given in residents' comments, of breaches of required 25m distances between windows of habitable rooms, windows directly facing existing residents windows which should be obscured glass, clear privacy issues of overlooking, overshadowing concerns of both neighbouring residents gardens and habitable rooms, poor outlooks created by poor design, lack of natural light to current application designed rooms, lack of windows to habitable rooms ie kitchens and poor design created by the inclusion on the site of too many large dwellings.

- ii) Foxton Parish Council considers that 3 dwellings are a clear over-development of the area, given the restrictions of the site and the fact that it is surrounded on all 4 sides by established roads and dwellings. Changing the site from its current single story bungalow to 2 story dwellings will have a major detrimental impact by way of 2 way overlooking into internal main rooms of the neighbouring properties and their gardens thereby causing an unacceptable loss of privacy.*
- iii) Foxton Neighbourhood Plan policies need to be taken into consideration. Policy Fox10 in the Plan states: 'The mix of market homes on sites of 9 or fewer units will provide at least 50% of 1-2 bedroom units to take into account Foxton's identified need for smaller homes for both first-time buyers and older people downsizing.'*

'In homes intended for the lifetime occupation by the older generation, conformity to Building Regulations Standards M4(2) is encouraged.'

- iv) The housing mix within new residential development schemes should be suitable for meeting the needs within the parish, as set out in the Housing Needs Survey. The existing structure on the plot is a bungalow and housing of this nature would be far more appropriate and acceptable, or properly designed units of 1 or 2 bedrooms which would match the Foxton housing needs as detailed in the Neighbourhood Plan 2017 AECOM Housing Needs Assessment and the 2018 whole village consultation. Properties of 3 to 4 rooms IN TOTAL are needed to provide downsizing provision for many older residents who want to stay in Foxton but have properties which are too large to adequately manage. These smaller properties could also be more affordable for younger residents who wish to live independently.*

- v) *Foxton parish Council, having looked closely at the detailed plans, considers that the internal layouts of the dwellings do not seem to particularly compatible with homes intended for the lifetime occupation.*

On -site parking and hard landscaping issues

- vi) *On-site parking is shown for 6 vehicles but there is no visitor parking provision. Refuse vehicles will not access the site but will instead collect bins from the area near the entrance onto Fowlmere Road. Is there safe access and turning for emergency vehicles, especially fire tenders? The 2m high wall round the rear garden of Plot 1 will mean a possible issue for good lines of sight for incoming and outgoing estate traffic as the wall turns quite a tight bend. This could also pose a problem for pedestrian or wheelchair users.*
- vii) *This application details a large proportion of hard landscaping, which even if conditioned as permeable, will not be conducive to improving the biodiversity of the site. The surface water drainage balance will be permanently altered by any build disturbance. The amount of hard landscaping does not seem to be compatible with the current green policies of the Local Plan or with the stronger environmental policies of the emerging Local Plan. Surface water also has the potential to drain to other neighbouring properties and onto Fowlmere Road.*
- viii) **Soft Landscaping**
The Arboricultural information suggests that many mature trees and shrubs will be lost. There is also a risk of loss to mature neighbouring property trees from cutting back of roots eg for parking spaces. Replacements are suggested but there is no indication on the plans for a water supply to serve the many new plants in what will be a privately managed site. The Soft Landscaping plan should call for supplemental irrigation for at least 2 years with plants requiring watering up to 7 days a week in summer. This matter has not been addressed. The suggested planting of some trees along the boundary of No 2 Illingworth Way into hard surfacing is not a good idea. Apart from the problem of watering and maintenance tree work near neighbouring properties will affect drainage of surface water, as new planting will take a number of years to take up an equal absorption. This could have effect in the run -off of surface water. Any work effecting neighbouring properties 'mature trees could result in ground 'heave' and could have effects on their building foundations.
- ix) **Shadowing**
There are some problems with the building design of Plots 1 and 3 as highlighted in the Design & Access report shadow studies. Plot 1 dwelling

while not having any overshadowing issues during the summer months, will cast significant shadow on No 30 Fowlmere Road property during the winter from approx.. midday onwards. The residents living room faces Plot 1 and there will be considerable loss of residential amenity.

Plot 3 will have the same overshadowing problem on the garden and possibly downstairs room of No 41 St Laurence Road, but to a greater degree. Indeed almost the entire garden will be in shadow for the majority of daylight hours during the winter.

x) Access design and safety on Fowlmere Road

Plot 1 - The proposed dwelling has now been pushed back into the site. There is now a 2 vehicle in line parking space at the front of the plot. This will mean that vehicles egress straight onto Fowlmere Road which could be dangerous if the vehicles are in a reverse position.

An important issue has been omitted from the drawings and designs –namely that the car parking spaces are right on the plot boundary and very close to the living room window of No 30 Fowlmere Road. This could have detrimental effect to the residential amenity of No 30 with vehicle noise etc. Any pedestrian movement to the front door of Plot 1 will also have a direct line of sight into this living room window, again causing privacy issues. Even if a tall fence was constructed, this would mean a loss of light to the existing property.

The following photo shows the living room window at No 30 and although there is much vegetation, as the site has not had any arboreal maintenance, the potential problems of the nearness of the window to Plot 1, can clearly be seen.



Foxton Parish Council request that Cambs County Council Highways take a further on-site look at the problems which would potentially be created by the access to the new dwellings at the rear of the site. There are no parking restrictions on Fowlmere Road and any parking opposite the site entrance will cause ingress and egress issues. The sight lines are not clear at the access and there are boundary and fence issues as highlighted by the residents at No 2 Illingworth Way in their comments.

- xi) If this application were to go ahead in its current form, there would be a serious highly detrimental and unacceptable impact and effect on the surrounding properties. This would cause a significant change and reduction in the quality of life for neighbouring residents living in Fowlmere Road, Illingworth Way and St Laurence Road who will all, have serious privacy and overlooking issues with all the proposed plots. The same will be true for the purchasers of these properties as they will be in a 'goldfish bowl', being overlooked in turn. Foxton Parish Council considers that this application for 2 story dwellings does nothing to overcome the serious problems put forward in the October 2022 Planning Inspectors decision and therefore refusal of this application is recommended.*

B. 23/0271/TTPO – 2 Hardman Road, Foxton CB22 6RN Ash tree crown reduce by 3m to allow more light to rear garden.

Foxton Parish Council recommend approval for this application provided that any work is done by a professional tree surgeon and carried out outside of the statutory bird nesting season.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.