

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee of Foxton Parish Council**

Held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 8:00pm in the Parish Council Office

**Present:** Malcolm Bore, Liam Elliott, Caroline Ilott.

**Apologies:** Simon Buggey.

District Councillor Deborah Roberts was also present, along with two members of the public.

### **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

### **Application S/0604/18/OL – Burlington Park, 1 Station Road, Foxton (Mr P Ridgeon).**

This is an application for a new two-storey office building with associated car parking and landscaping.

Although the committee felt that expansion of business premises in Foxton should be supported, there were far too many problems with the application to do with the design and effect on the surrounding area.

*The Parish Council's response is contained in Appendix 1.*

### **Application S/0087/18/OL – Land off Royston Road, Foxton (Laragh Homes / Villers Park).**

This is an amendment to a previously-discussed application for the erection of up to 20 residential units, including affordable housing provision, open space and associated access, infrastructure and landscaping. All matters reserved except for access.

The committee will re-iterate their previous objections, with additional comments particularly regarding the weight that should be given to the imminent completion of the emerging SCDC Local Plan.

*The Parish Council's response is contained in Appendix 2.*

### **Correspondence**

James Fisher at SCDC has repeatedly asked the Parish Council for a list of projects for S106 money, should the applications at Villers Park and Shepreth Road be approved. The Parish Council have so far put off responding, in order not to weaken our case for refusal of these applications; however, due to the imminence of an SCDC meeting to discuss the subject, Mr Bore has now replied to Mr Fisher simply to say that we have a long-term aim to expand our recreation ground space.

### **AOB**

None.

The meeting closed at 8:50pm.

## **Appendix 1: Foxtton Parish Council's response to application S/0604/18/OL**

*Foxtton Parish Council recommend refusal of this application, based on its design, traffic implications, its location outside the Village Development Framework, and its effect on the Conservation Area and adjacent heritage asset of Foxtton House.*

### **Design:**

*The design of the proposed building is inappropriate for this site. It is a simple "business park block", which takes no account of its semi-rural situation, and the proposed building is taller than the existing adjacent buildings of Burlington Park.*

### **Traffic:**

*The problems that will be caused by intensification of the access off Foxtton High Street are dismissed by a wholly inadequate and unqualified statement on page 5 of the Design, Access and Planning (DAP) Statement. This takes no account of the narrow High Street or the adjacent junction with Station Road (which has no visibility when turning right out of Station Road towards the Burlington Park access). The DAP statement makes no mention of the relevant planning history on this site – planning permission for application S/1043/09/F (access from Foxtton High Street) was granted subject to stringent conditions, which renders intensification of this this access inappropriate.*

*Access and egress from the site onto Station Road (via the existing large commercial access) would be more appropriate, but the Parish Council would highlight the current problems and safety issues currently experienced by residents, which is clearly shown on the following photograph:*



### **Location:**

*Despite claims in the DAP Statement, the application site is actually **outside** the Village Development Framework, and is therefore contrary to both the current and emerging Local Plans.*

Effect on Conservation Area and adjacent heritage asset:

The application site is adjacent to the open parkland which constitutes the setting of the Grade 2 Listed Foxton House. The importance of this setting is demonstrated in the Appeal decision APP/W0530/W/15/3084325, to dismiss residential development on the adjacent land.

The extension of the Foxton Conservation Area to include the open parkland to the west of the site has been prepared in consultation with SCDC, and is scheduled for adoption at the Planning Portfolio Holder's meeting on March 20th. A plan of the proposed Conservation Area is shown below:



The Parish Council feel that the scale and inappropriate design would adversely affect this new Conservation Area, and the setting of Foxton House.

In addition, the application does not include a Transport/Traffic assessment, Heritage/Visual Impact assessment, Archaeological assessment or Health assessment, all of which should be required for a development of this size.

For these reasons, Foxton Parish Council recommend refusal, and ask that the application be decided by the planning committee.

## **Appendix 2: Foxton Parish Council's response to application S/0087/18/OL**

*Foxton Parish Council reiterate their reasons for refusal of this application, for the following reasons:*

1. *The Annual Monitoring Report, considered by the Planning Portfolio Holder's meeting on 11 December, considered the district's position on the housing trajectory and five-year housing land supply. It is clear that the district now has a five-year supply of housing land, and continued consideration of sites outside of defined settlement frameworks (such as this one) is simply not necessary. In the meantime, the corollary of the AECOM/Locality Housing Needs Assessment for Foxton, based on need and/or demand, suggest a housing requirement beyond existing commitments of only 9 dwellings for the period to 2031 (which also reflects the status of Foxton in the settlement hierarchy as a "Group Village").*

*This has been reinforced by a briefing by senior planning officers to District Councillors held on 22nd February, at which it was emphasised that the Local Plan is now imminent, and should be given significant weight when deciding planning applications. This briefing also indicated that applications for relatively substantial housing should be refused when outside the proposed settlement framework, and at a scale which is above the threshold of new development which the Local Plan sets for that settlement. Foxton is designated a "Group Village" in the present and emerging Local Plans, with no change to the village development framework, so any development of more than 8 houses, or outside the framework, should be refused. The cumulative impact of large-scale developments in Foxton over the last five years cannot be ignored (39 houses have been built and another 26 have been granted planning permission), but it is inappropriate for this scale of building to continue in a "Group Village".*

2. *The application is in outline only (apart from access), although this is to some extent obfuscated by the plethora of supporting details. An application of this type, on the edge of the village and potentially very visible, ought to be a full application to enable the visual and character implications of the design to be properly assessed.*
3. *With regard to the access, the Parish Council is not convinced that the details would cause no conflict with the proposed improvements to the nearby railway crossing; this is not necessarily a matter of highway safety, but one of the impact on the convenience of existing residents and other road users.*
4. *Most importantly, the site has no appropriate connectivity with the remainder of the village; rather, it is in the nature of an isolated stand-alone development, on the edge of the village and with its only access being direct to a busy major road, with no natural pedestrian, cycle (or come to that, vehicular) connection with the heart of the village and the services and facilities that are there; the necessary route to those - joining the A10, and skirting the edge of the village - accentuates the isolation of this proposal from the remainder of the community. The Parish Council feels that this epitomises bad planning, and reinforces the unsuitability of the site for providing such a village housing development.*

5. *The Planning Statement included in the application, submitted by Bidwells, states that 'There are no historic applications that have been submitted or determined in respect of this site.' This is incorrect and misleading, as the following are relevant:*
  - 5.1 *A planning application S/0255/89/F, specifically for a new access at the same location as that proposed by this application, was refused and the subsequent Appeal APP/W0530/A/89/123288 was dismissed.*
  - 5.2 *A more recent application S/2294/13/FL, dated 28 October 2013, included access onto the A10 (albeit on the opposite side of the road, but within 50 metres of the proposed access) was refused. The subsequent appeal APP/W0530/A/14/2214899 was dismissed; the Inspector included traffic safety issues as a contributing factor in the decision.*
  
6. *In support of its objection, the Parish Council would draw attention to the failure to comply with:-*
  - 6.1 *Development plan policies DP/1: Sustainable Development, DP/2: Design of New Development, DP/3: Development Criteria, DP/7: Development Frameworks and NE15 Noise Pollution (which can only be addressed by an incongruous acoustic fence on the road frontage); and*
  - 6.2 *NPPF paragraphs 17 (core planning principles), 56 (requiring good design), and 64 (refusing poor design).*