

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

Held on 3rd April 2018 at 7:30pm in the Parish Council Office.

Present: Malcolm Bore, Liam Elliott, Caroline Ilott, Simon Buggy.

Apologies: None.

District Councillor Deborah Roberts was also present, along with six 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 12th March 2018 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Application S/0839/18/FL – 2 Hardman Road, Foxton (Mr & Mrs Patel)

This is an application for a garage conversion and single-storey side extension. This will reduce the parking space available to the property, but will still leave two spaces on the drive.

The Parish Council recommend approval.

Application S/0894/18/OL – Land adjacent to 62a Fowlmere Road, Foxton (Mr Matthew Miller, M M Developers Ltd)

This is an application for outline planning permission for the erection of 5 dwellings and associated development, including demolition of existing structures on site, with all matters reserved apart from access, layout and scale.

Although this site is currently outside the Village Development Framework, planning permission has already been granted on the site for two 5-bedroom houses. The frontage of the original application kept the street scene largely consistent with the rest of Fowlmere Road, but this new application is horribly designed and overdevelops the site.

The six members of the public in attendance were all present to object to this application, including the residents of 62a, on whom this new development would have a hugely detrimental impact in terms of loss of privacy and light.

The Parish Council recommend refusal.

Although permission has already been granted for two 5-bedroom houses on this site, this original application (S/1763/16/OL) reflected the scale and form of Fowlmere Road, whereas this new application is simply overdevelopment of the site and is completely out of scale with the street scene. The indicative housing design appears urban and not suited to Foxton's rural

form, and when viewed from Fowlmere Road, creates a visual mass that would dominate the area and be at odds with the general open and spacious character of Fowlmere Road. This is contrary to emerging policy S/7 (Development Frameworks) which states that development must be "...of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location." This development would result in material harm to both the character and appearance of the area, and the adjoining single-storey property at 62A Fowlmere Road. In fact, the delegation report from the original application states that "the site is bounded by residential properties to the north, a working farmyard to the west and Fowlmere Road to the east; as such an in-depth development would give rise to potential overlooking and noise impacts to existing amenity".

The development would cause great detriment to the residents of the adjacent single-storey dwelling at 62A Fowlmere Road, whose light comes mainly from 3 south-facing downstairs windows, all of which would be overshadowed by the dwelling on plot 4 of the application site. This was demonstrated by a document showing a comprehensive shadow modelling by the occupant of no. 62A, which the Parish Council have suggested that he forward to SCDC. Plot 4's skylights would allow direct overlooking of the upstairs windows of 62A, and with the application site being uphill from it, would overlook the garden. The trees to be planted along the northern boundary of the application site, although currently only indicative, would be far too close to the existing dwelling at no. 62A.

Parking is clearly inadequate within the proposed development. The two 2-bedroom houses have only a single parking space each, and it is not unreasonable to assume that at least one of these dwellings will have 2 cars. This will require overflow parking on Fowlmere Road just inside the entrance to the village.

*The application is misleading in several places. This development does **not** count as in-fill, since it is outside the Village Development Framework (VDF), and the previous permission granted for two 5-bedroom houses does **not** alter the VDF to include this site. The application claims that Foxton's status as a "Group Village" should allow building of up to 8 houses, but clearly ignores that fact that this is specifically **within** the VDF. The emerging Local Plan (in which this site is still outside the VDF) is imminent, and despite the application's claim to the contrary, it is clear that the district now **has** a 5-year housing supply, by the Liverpool method (to which the inspector has clearly indicated her agreement).*

Residents of the adjoining Chalk Hill development to the south of the site were not notified of this planning application, which has not given those living adjacent to the application site the chance to comment on the application.

For these reasons, the Parish Council recommend refusal, and ask that the application goes to the full planning committee, due to its location outside the Village Development Framework. They also recommend a site visit, to see the effect this development would have on the street scene of Fowlmere Road.

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 agreed to re-iterate the Parish Council's 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 feels that the amendments to this application do not alter the unsuitability of this site for development, and would like to reiterate their reasons for recommending refusal, which can be found in our previous response to this application. In summary, these are:

- *It is clear that the district now **has** a 5-year housing supply, by the Liverpool method (to which the inspector has clearly indicated her agreement). The imminent completion of the Local Plan should now carry enough weight to dismiss speculative applications such as this, since the lack of housing is no longer an issue.*
- *A recent briefing made by senior planning officers to District Councillors indicates "...particular circumstances where a prematurity argument may be able to be successfully made: 1. Applications for relatively substantial housing or housing-led development on land outside a proposed settlement framework in the Local Plan, and at a **scale** which is above the threshold of new development which the Local Plan sets for that settlement." The existing and emerging Local Plans both designate Foxton as a "Group Village", so any development of more than 8 houses, or outside the village development framework, is above this scale and should be refused.*
- *An application of this magnitude should be a full application, to enable all the design implications to be fully assessed.*
- *The site is isolated from Foxton, and has no connectivity to the rest of the village. It is therefore unsustainable, as all pedestrian and vehicle movement into Foxton will need to go via the busy A10.*
- *The access will cause danger and inconvenience to other road users, given its proximity to the level crossing and Foxton's Station Road exit to the A10.*
- *Previous applications for this site, and other sites in the immediate vicinity, have been refused based on traffic issues.*

For these reasons, the Parish Council strenuously objects to this application and requests that it be decided by the planning committee, after a site visit.

Application S/0117/18/OL - Land south of Shepreth Road, Foxton (Turnwood Ltd)

This is an amendment to a previously-discussed application for 32 dwellings together with a new access, infrastructure and landscaping.

The committee agreed to re-iterate the Parish Council's 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 feel that the amendments to this application do not alter the unsuitability of this site for development, and would like to reiterate their reasons for recommending refusal, which can be found in our previous response to this application. In summary, these are:

- *It is clear that the district now **has** a 5-year housing supply, by the Liverpool method (to which the inspector has clearly indicated her agreement). The imminent completion of the Local Plan should now carry enough weight to dismiss speculative applications such as this, since the lack of housing is no longer an issue.*

- *A recent briefing made by senior planning officers to District Councillors indicates “...particular circumstances where a prematurity argument may be able to be successfully made: 1. Applications for relatively substantial housing or housing-led development on land outside a proposed settlement framework in the Local Plan, and at a **scale** which is above the threshold of new development which the Local Plan sets for that settlement.” The existing and emerging Local Plans both designate Foxton as a “Group Village”, so any development of more than 8 houses, or outside the village development framework, is above this scale and should be refused.*
- *An application of this magnitude should be a full application, to enable all the design implications to be fully assessed.*
- *The site is an unnatural projection into the countryside at the edge of the village.*
- *The Parish Council’s own Conservation Area Appraisal, the final stages of which have been agreed by SCDC, values the setting of Shepreth Road, stating:

 - *“The wide medieval verges along Shepreth Road... are a prominent feature on the approach to the village and are important to the setting of the conservation area.”, and*
 - *“The view out of the conservation area and village edge is also important along Shepreth Road, over the wide verges and back drop of trees.”**
- *The Landscape Character Assessment, carried out for the Foxton Neighbourhood Plan, clearly indicates this edge of the village as “a sensitive urban edge to be retained”.*
- *The Parish Council is concerned about access onto Shepreth Road, which according to a recent independent traffic survey carried out on their behalf, is the busiest ingress to/exit from Foxton.*

For these reasons, the Parish Council strenuously objects to this application and requests that it be decided by the planning committee, after a site visit.

Correspondence

None.

AOB

- Mrs Ilott agreed to speak on behalf of the Parish Council at the SCDC planning meeting on 4th April, to reiterate their objections to the new technology centre at Faraday House based on its location in the Green Belt.
- The Thriplow Farms Grain store (and associated housing application) is due to be discussed at the SCDC planning meeting on 24th April. Once this has been confirmed, the planning committee will discuss a plan of action with Philip Kratz. Mr Bore noted that he and Mr McCreery would both be away on the 24th.
- As this was potentially the last planning meeting before the May 3rd elections, Mr Bore thanked the committee for their hard work over this last Parish Council term.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.