

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING MEETING HELD ON

22ND OCTOBER 2021 AT 7.00 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Cllr D Pryke - Chair
Cllr A Abram
Cllr J Bailey
Cllr J Mann
Mrs Angie Buggs Clerk

Apologies

Cllr D Long (sickness)

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

Members of the Public

There were sixteen members of the public present which included three people representing Eastern Structures.

PLANNING APPLICATION DC/21/4413/FUL Change of use from former agricultural use of B2 and B8 – Part of Land South Side of A14 Felixstowe Road Levington IP10 OLT

Cllr D Pryke opened the meeting by stating that the Parish Council Planning Meeting had been called to discuss the latest Planning Application DC/21/4413/FUL which had been submitted by Eastern Structures.

Cllr D Pryke welcomed local residents and also Ben Willis (Eastern Structures Agent), Davin Pack (Eastern Structures) and Kieron Pack (Eastern Structures).

Cllr D Pryke stated that the first part of the agenda was an open forum which enabled residents to make their views known to the Parish Council and the second part was for Parish Councillors to debate and make a decision on the planning application.

Open Forum

Ben Willis the agent for Eastern Structures explained that the purpose of attending the meeting was to primarily answer any queries from the parish. We have been having discussions with East Suffolk Council Case Officer to try to address the reasons for refusal of the previous application (DC/20/4526/FUL). Eastern Structures

have been working with G H Bullard to assess and address the highway issues. We are looking at third party comments which have been uploaded to the East Suffolk Planning website for this application and the reason for those objections in an effort to address them.

Kieron Pack stated Eastern Structures are a local family business whose business is primarily steel construction although they do have a number of cranes and lorries and various pieces of plant and equipment. Part of the planning application was to estimate the maximum number of movements the company is expected to have in a day. Ben Willis stated that the planning authority puts conditions on an application as to the maximum number of movements a day and if that estimated number is exceeded the company would be in breach of that condition.

Several villagers asked about noise pollution and Ian Angus commented that there would be noise that the village does not currently experience and Eastern Structures needs to prove that noise will not have an adverse impact on the village.

Keiron Pack stated that Environmental Health have no objection to the application in terms of noise. Ben Willis commented that Eastern Structures may be prepared to conduct a noise survey/report and could then provide further correlative information. Peter Allen asked whether sound proofing would be installed. Ben Willis stated that the noise will be contained within an insulated workshop. Peter Allen expressed concern about noise in the early morning or later in the evening and whether Eastern Structures had plans for future expansion to the site. Ben Willis replied Eastern Structures have no plans to expand at the moment but there is space for potential growth.

Peter Allen expressed concern regarding working hours and whether ultimately the working hours would be extended. Keiron Pack reported that their working hours are 7.30 am – 5.00 pm 5 days a week with the occasional Saturday morning. Ben Willis replied extension of hours would not be allowed and inevitably Environmental Health would recommend a set of conditions concerning working hours which would have to be complied with, unless there are special circumstances.

Cllr D Pryke asked about the number of employees and Kieron Pack replied 10. Chris Yeo commented that this is a small family business so there will be no local employment benefits.

Ian Angus said there are two criteria which go with an exception site. One is that it should not have a detrimental impact on the existing land and adverse impact on the characteristic of the land should be avoided and, two should not have an adverse impact on the characteristics of the ANOB. Ian Angus said that those two are not adhered to in the current planning application. No comment from Eastern Structures. Cllr D Pryke commented that the environmental impact on a rural area is huge and suggested that the bund far from being protective is an eyesore.

Chris Yeo asked whether Eastern Structures were being forced to leave their current site in Ipswich. Ben Willis said that Ipswich Borough Council are currently redeveloping the dock area. Storage is a problem at their current premises as is the vehicle movements of HGVs out of Ipswich. Eastern Structures are not being forced to move premises but they need to consider the longer-term viability of the business. Any comments which are received that we can act on we will to alleviate any concerns.

Ian Angus asked what is the material difference between this application and the one that was refused last year. Ben Willis replied stating that the two reasons for refusal by East Suffolk Council have been addressed; highways and the approach to the location of the development. Additional information has been provided to address those two specific reasons for refusal. Ian Angus asked why Eastern Structures had not produced an assessment of the environmental change which will take place. Ben Willis stated the assessment remains the same as the previous application however as stated earlier in discussions Eastern Structures are prepared to produce a noise report with further correlative information.

Cllr D Pryke concluded the open forum by stating that many people have asked what is the material difference between the last planning application (DC/20/4526/FUL) and the current one (DC/21/4413/FUL). Cllr D Pryke said there were no differences except that extra paperwork has been provided to try to answer the reasons for refusal of DC/20/4526/FUL. Ben Willis stated that this was correct.

Closed Session which means members of the public are not allowed to take part in discussion is around this table.

Parish Council Discussion

Cllr J Bailey proposed Cllr D Pryke as Chairman for Parish Council Planning meeting, seconded Cllr J Mann – all in favour.

Cllr D Pryke opened the Parish Council's discussions by stating that it appears that the latest Planning Application (DC/21/4413/FUL) has no material differences to the previous Planning Application (DC/20/4526/FUL). The only difference being the extra documentation which attempts to address the reasons for refusal by East Suffolk Council. The Parish Council's list of issues and objections remain the same as detailed in our previous objection in November 2020.

Cllr J Bailey commented that in Eastern Structures Supporting Planning Statement (Vision) conclusion Section 7.2 they state:

In this instance the development of the site is in keeping with the surrounding area, that other businesses are located along the A14 corridor between Ipswich and Felixstowe. It is capable of being accommodated without any harm to the countryside, residential amenities or highway safety;

There are no other businesses of an industrial nature in the area under consideration, ie between the old A45 and the A14. To the east of the Gun Shed/Eye a planning application was refused for a lorry park as it would be unsuitable for this environment and could harm the countryside setting, residential amenities, and be a problem for highway safety.

In 6.28 the applicant states that "Overall the development of the site would not cause significant impact upon the wider character and appearance of the area." This is an unsupported assertion. I believe the development of the site would impact significantly on the wider character and appearance of the area. For example, the height of proposed buildings would project well above a proposed bund, light pollution, noise pollution, particulate/atmospheric pollution and be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.

In the applicant's previous submission, the Environmental Officer drew attention to the lack of detail in Easter Structures' submission about operating hours and other basic information and the problem this represented if an accurate assessment was to be made about the pollution that would result from the proposed operations. The environmental report of the current application still lacks these basic details and the Environmental Officer remarks on this.

Highways Statement 3.2 The access to the application site is on the former strategic corridor route. This road was once a much busier route (pre the current A14) route) it is now a lightly trafficked road.

The highway statement describes the traffic on the old A45 as being light but does not provide any explanation of what constitutes light.

The measurements made by the traffic consultant (Bullard) on behalf of the applicant claims that around 60% of the traffic passing the proposed site travels at or below the 85th percentile of the speed limit of 60 mph. This means that a large percentage of the traffic passing the monitoring point currently exceeds the speed limit of 60mph, so an HGV pulling out slowly into the traffic stream would present a real hazard.

To access the site, HGVs travelling from the A14/A12 junction, will approach from the north-west and will have to cross the carriageway of the old A45 to make a right turn into the proposed industrial site. Again, with the mean speed of vehicles at around 60mph this constitutes an unacceptable danger, not only to traffic but also to pedestrians who regularly use this route, bus services being infrequent.

The applicant records that if permission is granted, the site would provide employment for 20-30 staff over the next few years as it expands. If this is the case, then there would be an associated increase in traffic flow to enable these employees to access this remote site.

Cllr D Pryke proposed that the Parish Council's objection to this application comprises firstly of the details that were included in our objection to the previous application (DC/20/4526/FUL) and secondly the extra points that Cllr J Bailey has raised in his report to the Parish Council Planning Meeting on the 22nd October 2021, seconded Cllr J Mann – all in favour.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.59 pm.

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council
October 2021