

Minutes of a site meeting held on **Thursday, 8 September 2016 at 2.33pm**  
at 5 Vicarage Lane, Mettingham, Bungay

9

Members Present:

Councillors P Ashdown (Chairman), S Allen, G Elliott and M Pitchers.

Apologies:

Councillors N Brooks, A Cackett, J Ceresa, M Cherry, J Ford, I Graham, J Groom, L Harris-Logan, and T Mortimer.

Officers Present:

M van de Pieterman (Area Planning and Enforcement Officer), D Wicks (Assistant Planning and Enforcement Officer) and S Carter (Democratic Services Officer).

Others in Attendance:

Mrs Toplis, Applicant

Mr Shiplee, Neighbour/Objector

---

The Chairman welcomed Members to the site meeting and reminded those present that the purpose of the meeting was a 'fact finding' exercise only and to provide Members with an opportunity to view the site and its surroundings.

The application had been deferred by the Committee at its meeting on 16 August 2016 in order to allow for a site visit to take place to enable Members to fully assess the configuration of the site and any subsequent implications of the visual amenities of the area and the potential impact on the amenities of adjoining neighbours.

No decision would be made before the application was reconsidered at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 13 September 2016.

The Assistant Planning and Enforcement Officer explained that the application was for the construction of single and two storey rear extensions. The proposed single storey extension was 6m deep and the two storey extension was 3.3m deep and 0.5m lower than the existing ridge height. She explained the precise location of the extension which was 6m distant from the boundary with the adjoining neighbour on the ground floor outer edge of the proposed sunroom extension. The boundary hedge itself had been recently cut by the neighbour in the applicant's absence. The agent had provided a detailed diagram of the sight line which showed that the proposal was well within the 45 degree element.

The Assistant Planning and Enforcement Officer explained that the issues to be addressed were whether the proposal would have a harmful impact and if the extension was on the front or rear of the property.

Note: Councillor Pitchers arrived at 2.38pm.

Questions

Members raised questions on the following issues:

- Side facing windows.
- Height of the two storey extension.
- The definition of a rear garden.
- The original configuration of the dwellings and size of the property.
- Policy DM21.

The Assistant Planning and Enforcement Officer explained that there were no side facing windows and Members noted the height of the two storey extension would be 0.5m lower than the existing ridge height. The side of the property facing the road was now the principal elevation and the garden area opposite the proposal was laid out as a more private, back garden area. The two semi-detached dwellings had originally been four cottages. It was understood that local policy DM21 relating to modest size extensions on rural dwellings was under review and would possibly no longer stipulate any specific size.

The fall back position was that the extension would be allowed under permitted development if it was at the rear of the property and not positioned within 2m of any adjoining boundary.

### Comments from the Applicant

Mrs Toplis explained that the proposal was for a south facing garden room; the current playroom would be extended into a family room on the ground floor and the first floor extension would increase the size of the master bedroom. The architect had advised that it would be more difficult to extend on the west side because of the chimney and some of the current parking spaces would be lost. The door facing north was their rear entrance and used for letters. Mrs Toplis further stated that they did not have access rights over the track on the southern boundary, thus resulting in the need to retain the side for parking.

Members walked the footpath on the northern boundary and also the track on the southern boundary to get a more detailed understanding of the whole site and its layout. It was noted that there was little depth of garden between the rear of the dwellings and the footpath on the northern boundary.

On entering the garden of No. 6, Mr Shiplee showed photographs and also pointed out the location of the setting sun and resulting loss of light if the extension was approved. Members noted that the entrance from the track did lead through to the front entrance at that property.

### Questions

Specific questions were asked with regard to:

- The view of the Parish Council.
- Clarifying the precise size of the extension.

The Assistant Planning and Enforcement Officer advised that the Parish Council had no objection but had commented on the overhead telephone wire, which might need to be moved. The proposed two storey extension was 3.3m; permitted development would allow a 3m deep two storey element on a rear elevation.

There being no further questions, the Chairman stated that it had been a worthwhile site visit to give the Committee the opportunity to see and understand the perceived differences between the front and back of the properties. He thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The site visit concluded at 3.03pm.