

Minutes of a site meeting held on **Wednesday, 7 March 2018** at **2.30pm**
at Land at Church Lane, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft.

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Members Present:

Councillors J Groom (Chairman), P Ashdown, N Brooks, J Ceresa, G Elliott, R Neil and C Rivett.

Apologies:

Councillors S Allen, M Cherry, T Goldson and I Graham.

Officers Present:

P Rowson (Planning Development Manager), L Martin (Senior Design & Conservation Officer),
P Perkin (Development Management Team Leader) and S Carter (Democratic Services Officer).

Others in Attendance:

Mr E Gilder, Badger Building (E Anglia) Limited
Councillor P Light, Ward Member
Mr J Rodwell and Mrs J Tyler, Carlton Colville Town Council

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.

No decision would be made before the application was considered at the next meeting of the Planning Committee on 13 March 2018.

The Development Management Team Leader explained that the outline application was for residential development including access roads, on a site that extended to 3½ hectares. The application had been deferred at the last meeting of the Committee held on 13 February 2018 to enable the site visit to take place.

The application sought outline planning permission for up to 78 dwellings, including 35% affordable housing, open space, a car parking area for the church, along with improvements to the local road and footpath network. The site was within the setting of the Grade II* listed Church of St Peter which was currently bounded by residential development on three sides. The site itself was outside the defined settlement limits formed by the boundary of Church Lane and Chapel Road.

The Development Management Team Leader explained that the Council was slightly below its five year requirement for housing land supply and, as such, planning permission should be granted unless there were significant impacts. In this case, it was considered that the proposal would have a negative impact on the setting of the church, particularly as it was the last remaining piece of undeveloped land within sight of the church. Historic England had expressed their concerns and, in particular, that the proposed housing development would change the character of the rural landscape. The Council's Senior Design & Conservation Officer was of a similar view. Therefore, due to the high level of harm, the proposal was contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework. There were some benefits because of the provision of affordable housing; however, the harm caused would outweigh the benefits and the application was recommended for refusal.

An illustration of the proposed layout of the site showing the open space and the car parking for the church and a plan of cross sections showing the relationship between the proposed dwellings and existing bungalows were circulated to Members on site.

Members toured the site and observed the views from Church Lane, the footpath between Hall Road and Chapel Road, and also from Chapel Road proceeding towards the Grade II* listed church. The vantage point from the existing footpath showed a clear view of the church which it was considered would be lost if the site was developed. It was noted that the setting of the church and views from Mutford Wood were significant but due to mature trees the church was hardly visible from the footpath where it joined Chapel Road. The cross sections submitted with the outline application were indicative only and levels were around 1m higher than the bungalows on Church Lane.

Members raised questions relating to:

- Flooding.
- Zebra crossing(s).
- Upgrading of the footpath to include a cycle route.
- The red and white pole markers on the site.
- Boundary planting.
- Type of properties proposed adjacent to the boundary with Church Lane.
- Parking allocation.
- The nearby Anchor Way development.

Members were advised that the applicant had provided a drainage strategy which was on the website; a link could be provided to the Ward Member.

Mr Gilder explained that they would consider the upgrading of the footpath to include a cycle route, subject of course to the relevant approval from Suffolk County Council, and there would be no objection to the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing over Chapel Road between the end of the footpath and Carlton Manor. The marker poles on site showed the divide between the proposed open space and the building area. As yet, no consideration had been given to the boundary planting. The access to the proposed new car park for the church would be from Church Lane. Mr Gilder confirmed that the proposal was for dwellings of 1½ storey with dormer windows fronting Church Lane; he would have no objection to those properties being single storey. The number of parking spaces would depend on the size of the dwellings and would be in accordance with the County Council's specifications. Two spaces would be provided for two bedroomed properties and more for three and four bedroomed dwellings, with garages not being classed as parking spaces.

With regard to Anchor Way, Mr Gilder understood that planning permission had commenced with a number of houses having already been taken into account. The rest of the site was to be developed at some future date.

In addition, the Town Council confirmed that the nearest primary schools were a mile or so distant and full with no capacity for new pupils. The former school premises adjoining the site was now used for special needs and those with social problems or learning difficulties.

The Planning Development Manager reminded Members that it was an outline application only and he advised that some issues raised with regard to drainage, cross sections of the site, height of buildings and floor levels could be addressed in the update report which would be circulated prior to the Committee meeting.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The site visit concluded at 3.09pm.