

## Minutes



### **NORTH Planning Committee**

**9 December 2020**

**Meeting held at VIRTUAL - Live on the Council's YouTube channel: Hillingdon London**

	<p><b>Committee Members Present:</b> Councillors Eddie Lavery (Chairman), Henry Higgins (Vice-Chairman), Jas Dhot, Becky Haggart, Allan Kauffman, Carol Melvin, John Morgan, John Oswell (Opposition Lead) and Jagjit Singh</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Neil Fraser (Democratic Services Officer), James Rodger (Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration), Glen Egan (Office Managing Partner - Legal Services), Alan Tilly (Transport Planning and Development Manager) and James Wells (Planning Team Leader)</p>
103.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
104.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
105.	<p><b>TO SIGN AND RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.</p>
106.	<p><b>MATTERS THAT HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OR URGENT</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that application 27224/APP/2020/2978 (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>) had been withdrawn by the applicant prior to the meeting.</p>
107.	<p><b>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that items 1-6 would be considered in public, and item 8 would be considered in private.</p>
108.	<p><b>THE WATERTOWER FIELD, DUCKS HILL FARM, DUCKS HILL ROAD, NORTHWOOD - 60901/APP/2020/2979</b> (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p>

Officers introduced the report and highlighted the addendum, which confirmed that following publication, the applicant had submitted an amended application which removed the originally proposed office and toilet. The existing access was to be retained, and the site layout amended so that the proposed bays would be sited to the north of the existing building. In addition, the Planning Statement had been amended regarding traffic and trees, with a scheme in Enfield suggested as a similar scheme that had been approved. Opinions from the applicant's agent regarding development within the Green Belt were also included.

Addressing these points, officers confirmed that, with regard to traffic, the Planning Statement stated that 'the maximum amount of two-way vehicle trips possible per day would be 90'. However, no Transport Assessment had been submitted. The scheme in the London Borough of Enfield was not considered to be a similar proposal for various reasons, including that it was sited amongst existing farm buildings rather than being detached from them. No alternative site analysis had been submitted to support the agent's contention that the proposed development was not possible anywhere else other than a Green Belt location.

Although the removal of the proposed office and toilet reduced the impact of the proposed development, the installation of 3 storage bays and the addition of a fence and gate would have an industrial appearance and still cause substantial harm to the visual amenity and openness of the Green Belt.

As it was considered that the Council's concerns had not been fully addressed, the application was recommended for refusal for the reasons set out in the report (as amended in the addendum).

A written submission was read to the Committee on behalf of petitioners objecting to the application, key points of which included:

- The application was harmful to the Green Belt and did not demonstrate 'very special circumstances' to set aside the presumption against such development, and was contrary to Hillingdon Policies DME1 4 and DME 7.
- It was proposed that the site would become a storage and distribution facility for the raw material biomass, not production. This storage use was very different to agricultural use.
- The proposed use of the agricultural land would be visually intrusive.
- The traffic generated by the site would have an adverse impact on local roads and road users. Traffic generation as a result of the proposal had not been adequately considered.
- The previous application for placing 36 shipping storage containers on the site, with significantly less suggested traffic movement, was refused for similar reasons to those suggested by petitioners for the current application.

A written submission was read to the Committee on behalf of the applicant, key points of which included:

- Following publication of the officer's report, the application had been amended to remove the issues regarding traffic and trees. This also removed the office and toilet block, which were not necessary for the development to function, and made the development less industrial.

- The new site layout kept the existing access and opened the site up, allowing for greater manoeuvrability within the site, removed confusion over the accesses, and set back the concrete bays so they were no longer visible from Ducks Hill Road.
- Regarding the very special circumstances test to overcome harm to the Green Belt, this was met for four reasons:
  - The development was a renewable energy project and could export enough material to biomass plants around London per year to power the equivalent of 19,500 households. A similar development to that submitted had been approved by Enfield Borough Council at Holly Hill Farm within the Green Belt.
  - The development could not be sited elsewhere, as such a development would not be economically possible at a commercial site within the Borough due to high land values and expenses.
  - A large amount of the material would come from trees on land owned by Hillingdon. Red Squirrel Tree Surgery, who currently hold Hillingdon Council's contract to manage the trees in the Borough, had agreed to send all the material produced under their contract, enabling it and the Borough to reduce their carbon footprint instead of sending it for composting.
  - The fourth reason was farm diversification and land use; the use of the land for the proposed development was not very different from what it was currently being used for, and would integrate well with existing operations.
- The development would benefit the farm, as well as the local environment and businesses, and would significantly contribute to renewable energy targets.

Members supported the officer's recommendation to refuse, as it was considered that the proposed development constituted an inappropriate use of the Green Belt. The officer's recommendation was moved, seconded, and when put to a vote, unanimously agreed.\*

*\*Cllr Higgins was present but did not vote, as he joined the meeting partway through the item.*

**RESOLVED: That the application be refused.**

109. **55 NORTHWOOD WAY, NORTHWOOD - 27224/APP/2020/2978** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The item was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

110. **ENFORCEMENT REPORT** (*Agenda Item 8*)

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the enforcement action, as recommended in the officer's report, was agreed; and,
2. That the Committee resolved to release their decision and the reasons for it outlined in the report, into the public domain, solely for the purposes of it issuing the formal beach of condition notice to the individual concerned.

This item is declared as exempt from publication as it involves the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and **paragraphs 1, 2 and 7** of Part 1 of

	Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that the report contains <b>information relating to any individual, information likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</b> and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.
	The meeting, which commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 6.20 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Democratic Services on Telephone 01895 250636 or email (recommended): [democratic@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@hillington.gov.uk). Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

**The public part of this meeting was filmed live on the Council's YouTube Channel to increase transparency in decision-making, however these minutes remain the official and definitive record of proceedings.**