

PLANNING COMMITTEE



WEDNESDAY, 5 MAY 2021 - 1.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D Connor (Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor Mrs M Davis, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor Mrs K Mayor, Councillor N Meekins, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor M Purser and Councillor W Sutton, Councillor A Miscandlon (Substitute)

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor C Marks and Councillor R Skoulding,

Officers in attendance: Alison Hoffman (Senior Development Officer), Jo Goodrum (Member Services & Governance Officer), Sheila Black (Principal Planning Officer), Carol Pilson (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer), Nick Thrower (Senior Development Officer) and Chris Gordon (Legal Officer)

P92/20 F/YR20/0963/F
LAND NORTH OF ELBOW COTTAGE, ELBOW LANE, CHURCH END, PARSON DROVE. ERECT A SINGLE-STOREY 2/3-BED DWELLING INCLUDING CONVERSION OF EXISTING STABLES TO PLANT ROOM

Nick Thrower presented the report to members.

Members received a presentation, in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure, from Tim Slater, the Agent.

Mr Slater stated that he is representing the applicant, Mr Crowson, and his family as an advocate for, in his view, the specially designed and stunning bungalow proposal before the committee. He added that he is aware of the general policy provision that apply in this location in terms of principle of development and flood risk, as reflected in the planning history in the officer's report.

Mr Slater stated that in developing the concept for the design he has sought to address these in an innovative and design led way and there are 2 key elements to their argument. He added that in Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework it does provide a pathway to achieve new development in isolated locations, provided that it is exceptional and it is contended that the design of this home is ground breaking in 2 key aspects design concept and dealing with flood risk.

Mr Slater stated with regard to design, the proposal is designed specifically to meet the needs of Mr Crowson's son James, who needs a quiet and isolated location, and with the home designed around his needs in terms of mobility and space requirements. He added that the scheme was designed inside out with the form of the home following its function to address the applicant's sons individual needs, a quiet and isolated location, sufficient space to not feel closed in, a simple palate and design on interior to avoid sensory overload and a chillout/sensory room.

Mr Slater added that the external appearance of the building is unrepentantly striking and will be finished in a bright blue render. He added that it is noted that the officer concludes that the proposal is not sympathetic to local distinctiveness, but in his opinion the design and built form of Elbow Lane is not particularly distinctive and the site is visually separate from the development along Elbow Lane, with the approach being always to deliver a sculptural architectural form and as such it is not intended to replicate the surroundings, but to be distinctive in its own right.

Mr Slater stated that in relation to flood risk, the issue of dealing with development in flood zones is very important in planning, but of particular significance to Fenland and a number of the coastal districts of Lincolnshire and Norfolk, which the Environment Agency identify as being at particular risk. He is aware that members of the committee are frustrated at the blanket approach to flood risk planning advocated at a national level and are looking for a design solution that can allow development in parts of the district that lie within Flood Zone 2-3 and otherwise would fall foul of national policy.

Mr Slater expressed the view that the jacking system proposed to raise the home in the event of flood is genuinely innovative and added that he is aware of the Larkfleet example. He stated that this proposal is innovative through evolution as the home is significantly larger than the experimental home built in Bourne and the technology has moved on in the intervening years.

Mr Slater expressed the opinion that the personal circumstances associated with the application, the medical condition of the applicant's son in combination with the medical needs of the applicant, is a material consideration in decision making, with the weight to be attributed to material considerations is a matter for the decision taker and whilst he notes that the officer has not given this significant weight he asked the committee to give weight to the particular medical circumstances of this family. He stated that it is considered that the proposal is consistent with material policy that can allow special homes in isolated locations and in combination with the very unfortunate medical circumstances of the family, he would hope that that members can support this much needed and innovative proposal.

Members asked Mr Slater the following questions:

- Councillor Benney stated that the proposal has not been accompanied by any technical figures to state that the land would be suitable for a hydraulic jacking system and he expressed the view that, in his opinion, it appears to be an expensive way of mitigating the risk. He asked Mr Slater to clarify whether the technical data has been provided to demonstrate that the jacking system will work in the area and to confirm the associated costs to deliver the jacking system? Mr Slater stated that he does not have the details of the cost, but with respect to the engineering of the jacking system, he is sure that it can be achieved and it is a case of building a raft foundation where the jacking system will sit and he is sure it can be done but is unaware of the costs.
- Councillor Meekins stated he appreciates the medical conditions of both the applicant and his son and added that he notes that inside the property there will a low level muted colour scheme to avoid sensory overload, however, the external colour scheme proposal is going to be a vivid blue colour scheme, and he asked whether there is a reason why it needs to be that colour and not a more sympathetic colour? Mr Slater stated that potentially it could be any colour, however, the applicant has chosen blue, but if members are concerned over this aspect of the proposal, then another colour could be considered.
- Councillor Connor asked Mr Slater to clarify whether the proposal is viable if he has no detail of the technical data or associated costs? Mr Slater stated that he has been advised by the architects that it is a viable scheme.
- Councillor Miscandlon asked whether there has been any investigation into the depth of the earth before bedrock is reached in order to facilitate the jacking system? Mr Slater stated that it is his understanding that the rafting system does not need to hit bedrock as the jacking system effectively sits on a raft. He added that if it is a matter that members wanted more information on then they could look to defer the application.
- Councillor Mrs Davis asked Mr Slater to confirm why there has been no sequential test and why is the applicant so insistent on this particular location, bearing in mind that it is in Flood Zone 3? Mr Slater stated that in terms of viability of the project, the applicant owns the site and if he is to deliver it, it does need to be at this location. He added that the reason that they have gone for the unique jacking system is because there is no need for the sequential test and a house can be delivered which is safe for the duration of its lifetime within an area of land in Flood Zone 3. He added that the applicant wishes to build a property in an

isolated location to assist with the needs of his son and a built up location would not suit the personal requirements of the family.

- Councillor Purser asked for clarity that the proposal site is very isolated and stated that he had noted that the distinct colour of the proposal could be seen as a distraction to passing traffic, however, due its remoteness this may not be the case. Mr Slater stated that he agrees and he does not foresee any issue with passing traffic, with the prerequisite for a Paragraph 79 house is that it needs to be in an isolated location.

Members asked officers the following questions:

- Councillor Benney asked officers to confirm that if the application was passed in its present form, with the hydraulic jacking system, would it then give the land status in terms of development and could another application be submitted, once the principle of development had been established on the site, with another simpler scheme to deliver, which could not be refused because development rights had already been given on the land? Nick Thrower stated that the granting of consent for a residential dwelling on the land would give the site a residential use and it could not be precluded the possibility of an application coming back in the future with an alternative proposal for mitigating the flood risk. He added that the application before members is based on the jacking proposals, which form part of the application, and should a further application be submitted with alternative flood mitigation the decision on that day would be based on that proposal with the alternative schemes. Nick Thrower explained that a subsequent application could not be prevented from coming back with an alternative scheme for flood mitigation if the application before members was granted consent based on the principle of a residential development on the land.
- Councillor Connor asked for clarity that if the application was approved against the officer's recommendation and it proved to be non-viable, it is his understanding, that a condition could not be added to the application. Nick Thrower stated that the approved plans are based on the information supplied under the current scheme and it would not be possible to require the jacking system to form part of any subsequent planning application on the site. Sheila Black stated that the agent has already made reference to a Paragraph 79 house as opposed to an elsewhere location house and part of that is innovative and if it is approved, members are probably looking at how innovative the house is. She added that if the applicant comes back without the jacking system then the question would be is it still innovative enough or is it just a house that does not fit Paragraph 79.
- Councillor Meekins asked whether any details were available concerning the research that had been carried out following the Larkfleet Homes scheme? Nick Thrower stated that the consent was granted in 2016 with a test bed property implemented in 2019 and, therefore, any results from that as a trial would be sensitive information and there is no evidence to substantiate that the jacking system would work.
- Councillor Mrs French stated that the actual cost of the building is not a material consideration, if the application is approved and then the applicant comes back and states that the proposal is no longer viable, then it is a different planning application. She stated should the application be approved and then it is deemed as not cost viable, she would hope that the applicant would not come back with a proposal for a dwelling due to the fact that planning permission has already been approved. Councillor Mrs French added that the proposal involves modern residence solutions and in the Fens lots of the land is in Flood Zone 3 and under National Guidelines there is a steer to build and sometimes Flood Zone 3 is the only place to do it. She expressed the view that if the application is approved, and the applicant decides that their proposal is not viable, then it is unfortunate, but they should've carried out extensive research prior to submission of the application.
- Councillor Mrs Mayor questioned if it was in the remit of the Planning Officer to ask for engineering details concerning an application such as this? Nick Thrower stated that a detailed engineering specification was not asked for on the jacking system and he added that he would expect that to form part of the building regulations process as planning is more related to land use. He stated it is something that could be requested, but the proposal that is before members details the system that is going to be used and if it does not work it

will not pass the building regulations and if it is too expensive it will not be undertaken. Nick Thrower stated that officers had concluded that it was not a material consideration to understand the engineering system in order to make a recommendation on the application.

Members asked questions, made comments, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Murphy stated that the proposal is a very expensive way of getting an application passed. He added that the application goes against all policies and recommendations and he will support the officer's recommendation.
- Councillor Meekins stated that at paragraph 10.22 it states that the 'design and access statement states that the external appearance of the building is considered to be intentionally striking, such that the bungalow will be visible within the open landscape and that this will raise design standards in the area and enhance its setting.' In his opinion a bright blue bungalow in the open countryside will not enhance the landscape and enhance design standards. Councillor Meekins stated that there is not enough information concerning the jacking system and, in his view, officers have made the correct recommendation and he will be supporting them.
- Councillor Sutton stated that the issue concerning whether the jacking system will work or not is of no consequence to the committee and that is down to whoever may build the property. He expressed the view that the design is not innovative, it is in an elsewhere location and he will support the officer's recommendation.

Proposed by Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mrs Davis and agreed that the application be REFUSED as per the officer's recommendation.

P93/20 F/YR21/0015/F
LAND SOUTH OF 20, PRIMROSE HILL, DODDINGTON. ERECT A DWELLING
(SINGLE STOREY, 3-BED)

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

P94/20 F/YR21/0059/F
LAND SOUTH OF 63, CREEK ROAD, MARCH. ERECT 1 DWELLING (2-STOREY 3-BED)

Nick Thrower presented the report to Members.

Members received a presentation, in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure, from Shanna Jackson, the Agent.

Mrs Jackson stated that the proposal is for the construction of a new dwelling on land that is currently occupied by an existing outbuilding, with it being used, pre-Covid, as a gym by the applicant and he would travel on a daily basis from his house in Wimblington. She expressed the view that the proposal site is in the built-up settlement of March where the principles of development are supported by the policies in the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Mrs Jackson explained that the site is located in the town centre where residents will have the opportunity to walk or cycle to the amenities in the market town and, therefore, it represents sustainable development which should be seen as a significant benefit as it will result in new housing in a town centre location. She added that concerns have been raised with regard to the appearance of the development and the impact on the character of the area, however, the proposal represents residential development in a residential location and, therefore, in principle would appear to conform with its surroundings.

Mrs Jackson added that there are many existing structures positioned to the rear of the existing

dwellings and, therefore, the dwelling would not look out of place, making the point that the proposal has been specifically designed to be three quarter style in order to have less of a visual impact, so that it does not compete with the other two storey dwellings in the area. She explained that, following the survey work carried out on site, it was noted that a small bin collection lorry could access the site, which already services the neighbouring properties to collect the refuse and recycling bins and she added that with this in mind there is no need for future residents to drag a wheelie bin for collection.

Mrs Jackson referred to some concerns that have been raised with regard to parking and highways safety and made the point that the highway authority have raised no objection to the proposal on technical grounds and the parking spaces have been set back to allow for a six metre clearance from the other side of the road and measure 2.55 metres, with this arrangement being accepted across the board and is the same arrangement that is found in supermarkets. She expressed the view that the point raised with regard to increased traffic as being unreasonable, given that the site is already frequented by the applicant and is an area which is already trafficked by existing users, with the traffic generated by the existing gym being offset by the dwelling and the vehicular movements will be easily absorbed into the existing situation and the Highway Authority have raised no issue.

Mrs Jackson stated that there are no technical objections to the development, there is community support for the proposal and the application is a sustainable form of development which represents a benefit to the area by introducing a new dwelling in a town centre location and she asked members to consider approval of the application.

Members asked Shanna Jackson, the following questions:

- Councillor Mrs French asked whether the road is a public right of way? Mrs Jackson stated she is not sure that it is an official public right of way, although it is used by residents. Councillor Mrs French stated that she noted from the officer's presentation that it showed a number of parked vehicles at the top and she asked whether the piece of land was in general use for the residents of Creek Road or is it residents land which backs onto Nene Parade. Mrs Jackson stated that she is aware that residents along Creek Road do use the access, but she cannot confirm whether they are their vehicles. Councillor Mrs French stated that is an important factor to consider because should the application be approved it may restrict other people from parking. Mrs Jackson stated that the land in question is owned by the applicant and, therefore, he would have control over the land, making the point that it is not an official parking space.

Members asked questions, made comments, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Mrs French stated that the proposal site is in Flood Zone 1 and she referred to the flooding episode in December 2020. She expressed the view that as the proposal site backs onto Nene Parade she has concerns over the noise disturbance and vibration of building the property as Nene Parade is falling into the river and the Highway Authority along with the County Council have to spend a significant amount of money in order to protect it. Councillor Mrs French stated that she is also taking into consideration the residents' concerns.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that he has noticed from the presentation that the piece of land is grossly overgrown and in a dilapidated state, and he cannot see it used as a parking space. He added that the officers have made the correct recommendation and expressed the view that the owner of the land should be looking to tidy his piece of land up as it is an eyesore.
- Councillor Mrs French stated that she agrees with the comments made by Councillor Miscandlon and added that she is surprised that there have been no complaints from the residents. She added that the Council do have the authority to serve a notice on the landowner to request that the area is tidied up. Councillor Mrs French reiterated her concerns over Nene Parade road falling into the river and added that the issue has been

ongoing since a burst pipe in November. She expressed the opinion that the officers have made the correct recommendation.

- Councillor Mrs Davis expressed the view that she does not believe that the dilapidated building is being used as a gym. She added her main concern is the dog leg in the road and access for emergency vehicles, which could be an issue. Councillor Mrs Davis stated that she will support the officer's recommendation.
- Councillor Sutton stated that should the application be approved; he cannot foresee any issue that the building works would impact on the ongoing problems in Nene Parade. He expressed the view that if approved, a precedent would be set and, in his opinion, a further 3 or 4 dwellings could be built on the site. Councillor Sutton expressed the view that it needs to be recognised that there are some locations which are just not developable, and, in his opinion, this is one of them. He added the only way to turn around is in somebody's driveway as access is so tight and he expressed the opinion that officers have made the correct recommendation and he will be supporting them.
- Councillor Purser stated that he agrees with the concerns raised by Councillor Mrs French with regard to Nene Parade and stated that the lane is not wide enough for emergency vehicles to access should the need arise and he will support the officer's recommendation.

Proposed by Councillor Miscandlon, seconded by Councillor Mrs Davis and agreed that the application be REFUSED as per the officer's recommendation.

(Councillors Mrs French and Purser registered that they are members of March Town Council, but take no part in planning matters)

(Councillor Mrs Mayor took no part in the debate or voting on this item due to having lost internet connection)

P95/20 F/YR21/0060/F
LAND WEST OF, 25 LINDEN DRIVE, CHATTERIS. ERECT A SINGLE-STOREY 3-BED DWELLING WITH DETACHED GARAGE

Alison Hoffman presented the report to members.

Members received a presentation, in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure, from Mr Matthew Hall, the Agent.

Mr Hall explained that the applicant for the site is 77 years old and has owned the land for a significant number of years, prior to selling the majority of the land, which is now Linden Drive, and then re purchasing the application site land in 1998, with the site having always been under private ownership and has never been owned by the Council. He stated that the application members are considering, had previous approval for two bungalows and garages in 1998 and he has reviewed the application which was refused in 2018, which was for two dwellings set close to boundaries, reworking the proposal and reducing it to a single storey three bed roomed bungalow in similar appearance to others on the estate.

Mr Hall added that there have been a number of letters of support received and no letters of objection. He made the point that the Council have recently granted permission in principle for a dwelling at 10-14 Bedford View in Manea on a piece of land, which was agreed in 2005 as a public play space, but was never used for that purpose and that proposal has two storey dwellings either side and is only approximately 9 to 11 metres wide, where this proposal being determined is in excess of 20 metres.

Mr Hall referred to the officer's report and stated that the applicant is happy for conditions to be applied with regards to landscaping and materials. He added that members will note that all of the existing properties have a driveway but do not have a turning area and reverse out onto the road.

Mr Hall stated that discussions have taken place with numbers 25 and 26 Linden Drive, with both properties having written a letter of support and have been kept fully informed and following the discussions the garage has been moved. He stated that the proposal is for a single storey dwelling with no overlooking concerns, the site is in Flood Zone 1, there are no highway objections and adequate parking provision.

Mr Hall stated that there are no objections from the Conservation Officer, or any other consultees and Chatteris Town Council are in support of the proposal along with much local support from the residents in Linden Drive.

Members asked Mr Hall the following questions:

- Councillor Meekins stated that within the officer's report it makes reference to a map of the area and behind the proposal site there is a square area, which is unmarked and has no access to it, and he questioned whether it is a parcel of land in the ownership of the applicant? Mr Hall stated that the land directly behind the proposal site, which is shown as Chatteris on the plan, is not owned by the applicant and it is his understanding that the land is owned by 16 London Road.
- Councillor Meekins referred to the amenity land and asked whether those individuals who have been using the land have been trespassing on the land belonging to the applicant? Mr Hall stated that some members of the Planning Committee were on the committee in 2014, when the application was previously discussed and he added that at the time the application was delayed, whilst a land search was carried out to ascertain whether the land was in the ownership of the Council or in the ownership of the applicant and, in his view, the land has always been in private ownership and never in the ownership of the Council. Councillor Meekins stated the photograph of the site shows the land to be in an overgrown state and he asked that should the application be refused, is it the intention of the applicant to tidy the site? Mr Hall stated that there is a 6ft high fence at the back of the site which has been erected as a deterrent as people have been using the area as a cut through. He added that the site was a grassed area, however, the applicant found the area too large to maintain and has been paying other people to cut the grass, which has now been scraped off to negate the requirement for ongoing maintenance. Councillor Meekins asked if the grassed area will be reinstated should the proposal fail? Mr Hall stated that he would hope so.
- Councillor Murphy asked Mr Hall to confirm why the residents at number 24, 25 and 26 are all in agreement with the proposal? Mr Hall stated that he has been present when discussions with the applicant have taken place with the residents at number 25 and 26 and they are not against the application. He added that number 25 did set out distances where he wanted the dwelling to be sited away from his bungalow as he has a conservatory based on the south elevation and they wanted the fence that is in place to be maintained. Mr Hall added that the resident at number 26 has written to the Council to state why she wants the application approved, but he has not met the residents at number 24.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that he recalls the application from 2014 where the application site at that time was in a very good state of repair and he expressed the opinion that he is disgusted that the site has been allowed to fall into such a state of disrepair. He expressed the view that the residents possibly want the site to be developed so the eyesore is removed as it currently looks like a ploughed field. Mr Hall stated that the applicant has been paying for maintenance of the area to be cut and he expressed the opinion that he thinks the applicant has got fed up paying for it to be maintained.
- Councillor Mrs Davis referred to the fence which had been erected at the back of the land and asked Mr Hall to clarify that it had been erected to act as a deterrent as a cut through? Mr Hall stated that in the letter of support from number 26 it refers to people who have been using it as a cut through on foot. Councillor Mrs Davis asked whether this was access from Linden Drive into the land owned by number 16 London Road? Mr Hall

confirmed that was correct and that a relation of the applicant erected the fence.

Members asked officer's the following questions:

- Councillor Sutton stated that he recalls the site from 2014 and he agrees that the area has deteriorated. He asked officers to confirm that if it was designated amenity land, why was it not adopted previously? Alison Hoffman stated that having looked back at the planning history on the site, that information is not available and she added that the lack of adoption does not override the availability of the land as a visual amenity and also as a public amenity space. She added that it maybe that the developer retained it, however, the planning use of that area is shown as an open green space. Alison Hoffman referred to the letters of support that had been received and added that she notes that the resident at number 25 has no objection and states that the applicant has kept them fully informed and discussions have taken place and agreements have been reached with regard to the fencing and landscaping. She added that the resident at number 26 has identified issues concerning waste, appearance of the land and anti-social behaviour that has been undertaken on the site and the other letter is a standard proforma letter of support.
- Councillor Mrs French stated that an application was passed in 2014, with a condition that area is going to be public open space and now seven years later this has come forward. She added that going forward any planning application that comes forward where there is public opens space involved needs to be carefully considered and conditions added that are in perpetuity.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that the application was not approved in 2014, it was refused, with the open space being part of original Linden Drive estate approval. Alison Hoffman stated that she has looked back at the planning history for one of the withdrawn applications and has noted that there is an officer communication to the Agent at that time, which states that 'there is a complicated planning history dating back to 1988 and legal agreements relating to public open space contributions and noted that the original agreement in 1988 did not require the provision of public open space and, therefore, this will not be the case should the development prove to be acceptable on the site'. Alison Hoffman stated that the key aspect to consider regardless of the use of the site is whether the development that is proposed is acceptable and in the officer's report it states that notwithstanding the loss of the visual open space area it does have an impact on the residential amenity and the visual amenities of the area by virtue of the layout and constraints of the site. She added that it would appear that the Linden Drive Development was 1988 and the land was not secured as public open space at that time.
- Councillor Murphy expressed the opinion that there is no impact on the local residents as the residents that live in the closest proximity are in agreement with the proposal and there are 17 other people who reside in Linden Drive, who are also happy, and he cannot see any reason why the committee should oppose it.
- Alison Hoffman stated that the planning considerations need to be factored in and it is the opinion of the officer that the scheme will cause harm to the residential amenity. She added that residents have written in advising of their support to the proposal and in many cases it may appear that a bungalow is preferable, rather than what is currently on site, however, it would be remiss of officers to recommend a scheme for approval merely on the basis that local residents see no objection to the proposal, whereas professionally, officers consider that real harm will occur to the residential amenity and visual amenity.

Members asked questions, made comments, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Benney stated that he has known the area and the site all of his life. He added that the residents in Linden Drive all strive to keep and maintain their properties in a very good condition, but the one thing that would cause him concern if he resided in the road, would be if the land behind the application site was ever brought back into use. Councillor Benney expressed the view that if he lived in Linden Drive, he would be more than happy to see a bungalow built at the bottom of the road to ensure that that the road maintained its status of a cul de sac. He added that there are no letters of objection and only letters

received in support of the proposal and he will support the application.

- Councillor Miscandlon stated that he fully sympathises with the applicant and the wish to put a bungalow on the site. He added that the bungalows in the road are beautifully kept and they are a credit to the owners, with the piece of land at the end being a green amenity space and it was used as such for many years. Councillor Miscandlon added that the amenity space is needed, but there is also the need for the space to be blocked off to stop the possibility of a road going through into the open field.
- Councillor Sutton stated that there appears to be a big focus by members on the letters of support and objections received and the committee must remember that letters of support and objection are not a material consideration when determining planning applications. He added that the two neighbouring properties may be quite happy with the proposal, however, any future occupiers may have a different opinion.
- Councillor Benney stated that Huntingdon Road Recreation Ground is in proximity of Linden Drive, which is full of amenity space for residents.
- Councillor Murphy stated that the piece of land in question has never been a public open space and has been left dormant for many years and will never be an open space again. He expressed the view that a bungalow will complete the road.
- Councillor Mrs Davis questioned the width of the space between the fence and number 25. Councillor Sutton stated that the width is 7.2 metres and Mr Hall stated that the distance from the side wall of the bungalow to the face of number 25 bungalow will be a fraction shorter than 10 metres.
- Councillor Meekins stated that the proposal of a bungalow is shoe horning a property into a confined area. He added that if you have a piece of land which is a private amenity, then the owner, also has the responsibility of keeping that private amenity space in a decent condition, which does not appear to have been happening. Councillor Meekins added that if permission is not granted then consideration should be given to the fact that landowners have a responsibility for the upkeep of their land. He added that it is pure speculation to say that by erecting a bungalow it will stop development on the field belonging to 16 London Road and this proposal cannot be determined on something that may or may not happen in the future.
- Sheila Black stated that it has been acknowledged that it is not a large piece of open space, it is a piece of green space, which is acknowledged in the officer's report. She added that when determining the application, members need to be satisfied that due to the constraints of the site, the siting of the bungalow is going to be prominent and members need to be certain that they are satisfied that the siting of the bungalow will not impact on the nice character of Linden Drive and will fit into the existing streetscene and that residential amenity will not be affected. Sheila Black added that it has already been mentioned that there will be an impact on number 24, due to vehicular movements, and an impact on the two dwellings at the back, both visually and by being hemmed in.

It was proposed by Councillor Sutton, seconded by Councillor Meekins to refuse the application as per the officer's recommendation. This proposition failed on a majority vote by members.

Following advice from the Legal Officer, it was proposed by Councillor Benney, seconded by Councillor Murphy to approve the application against the officer's recommendation, which was AGREED with the use of the Chairman's casting vote.

Members approved the application against officer's recommendation as they feel the development makes a positive contribution to the street scene and does not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring users and future occupiers.

(Councillors Benney and Murphy registered that they are members of Chatteris Town Council, but take no part in planning matters)

(Councillor Benney declared that the agent has been previously been used by him, but was open minded on the application)

P96/20

F/YR21/0199/F

**106 CAVALRY DRIVE, MARCH.ERECT A 2-STOREY SIDE EXTENSION,
FORMATION OF A PITCHED ROOF TO EXISTING GARAGE AND REMOVAL OF
EXISTING CONSERVATORY.**

Alison Hoffman presented the report to members:

Members received a presentation, in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure, from Shanna Jackson, the Agent.

Mrs Jackson stated that the application is for the erection of 2 storey side extension and the formation of a pitched roof above the garage, with the proposal following a previous application for an extension, which have been completed and the previous application also included a pitched roof over the garage, but this aspect had been removed following concerns raised by the officer at the time with regard to it being out of keeping with the area. She stated that the dwelling is not a Listed Building and the site is not within the curtilage or the setting of a Listed Building or a Conservation Area, therefore, there are no strict guidelines governing the site and there is no complete uniformity amongst properties within the area.

Mrs Jackson expressed the view that the flat roof at the dwelling is in need of replacement, hence the pitched roof application and typically a flat roof would have a 10 -15 year life span and a tiled pitched roof typically is 60 years. She stated that the applicant wishes to invest in his property to ensure it remains a quality property, which he can continue to reside in and the new pitched garage roof will not only function better and result in a higher quality property, but will also be visually appealing and add to the character of the property and these additions outweigh any concerns of the roof not matching the one next door.

Mrs Jackson made the point that that proposal had initially received the officers support, but once further investigative work had been carried out on the planning history of the dwelling, the positive recommendation was changed to the refusal. She stated that there are 12 letters of support from local residents and support from the Town Council and, in her opinion, the formation of the pitched roof on the garage will not appear incongruous and will enhance the character, function and quality of the dwelling, which will benefit the occupiers.

Members asked Mrs Jackson the following questions:

- Councillor Sutton referred to Mrs Jackson stating that the life expectancy of a flat roof would be ten years and he asked whether she would agree that there are materials available nowadays for flat roofs where a longer life expectancy would be the case? She stated that she had sought guidance and had been advised that a typical industry standard flat roof would have a 10 -15 year life expectancy, however, a tiled roof would certainly outlive a flat roof in terms of its functionality and performance.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that he is aware that the installation of a recent flat roof, has a guarantee of a minimum of 20 years, however, he agreed a pitched roof will last longer. He added that although it is not in a Conservation Area, there are certain criteria within the area which standardise the buildings within that area and he asked Mrs Jackson whether she would agree that the proposal is out of character Mrs Jackson stated that there are other properties which are the same, however, there are bungalows within the street scene and a dwelling with a 2 storey side extension and, in her opinion, the character is not as strict as is made out. Councillor Miscandlon stated that he is not against a pitched roof.

Members asked questions, made comments, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Mrs French stated that there are a mix and match of designs on the Cavalry

estate. She added that if the applicant wishes to add a pitched roof to his dwelling, she cannot see any problem with the proposal, and she will be going against the officer's recommendation and will support the application.

- Councillor Sutton stated that if you isolated numbers 98 – 108, then the proposal would stand out, but taking the proposal in context of the wider area, it would not be highlighted quite as much. He stated that number 80, a similar designed dwelling, with a similar forward projection, does have a pitched roof and questioned whether the proposal should be looked at in isolation or in a wider perspective.
- Councillor Benney stated that a pitched roof does have a longer life expectancy, can be insulated well, and negates noise pollution. He added that the bungalow opposite the application site has a pitched roof over its garage and there are other dwellings on the estate that also have pitched roofs. Councillor Benney expressed the opinion that if the proposal is approved, the neighbouring properties may choose to do the same. He expressed the view that when first developed housing estates are all uniform in their design, but in time alterations are made to the individual dwellings, which adds character to the area and this is what the applicant is choosing to do to their property.
- Councillor Mrs Davis stated that she agrees with the comments made by Councillor Benney and she will be voting against the officer's recommendation.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated a pitched roof will enhance the property and will make it individual. He added that he can see other properties deciding to do the same and he will also be voting against the officer's recommendation.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs French, seconded by Councillor Benney and agreed that the application be APPROVED against the officer's recommendation.

Members did not support the officer's recommendation of refusal as they feel the proposal makes a positive contribution, is not detrimental to the street scene and does not have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

(Councillors Mrs French and Purser registered that they are members of March Town Council, but take no part in planning matters)

P97/20 F/YR21/0229/F
LAND NORTH OF, 39 MARCH ROAD, RINGS END. ERECT A 2-STOREY 3-BED DWELLING INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF OUTBUILDING.

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

3.38 pm

Chairman