



LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

18 OCTOBER 2018 AT 12:30

Agenda Item No:

6

Report No:

RP/22/18

**PLANNING CONSULTATION BY EPPING FOREST DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

**FORMER HAULAGE YARD, SEWARDSTONE ROAD, WALTHAM ABBEY,
ESSEX.**

**OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS EXCEPT ACCESS RESERVED
FOR DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING STRUCTURES EXCEPT THE
FARMHOUSE AND ERECTION OF UP TO 40 DWELLINGS (50% AFFORDABLE)
WITH ANCILLARY PARKING, ACCESS AND GARDENS, ALONG WITH THE
ERECTION OF A COMMUNITY BUILDING.**

Presented by the Head of Planning and Strategic Partnerships

SUMMARY

The application site comprises 3.6ha and lies south of Gunpowder Park, accessed from Sewardstone Road. The whole site is within the Regional Park and is designated as Green Belt. The southern half is largely developed comprising commercial properties and two residential properties whereas in contrast the land to the north comprises open pasture land and a former orchard. This application seeks outline permission to redevelop the southern part of the site with up to 40 residential dwellings with parking but with landscape enhancement proposals including play for the northern part of the site.

Given that the proposals will broadly cover the developed part of the site it is considered that the principle of this form of development is acceptable. However the application does not include up to date and adequate ecological surveys and these are required before the impacts of the development can be assessed. Assuming that these either identify no adverse impact and/or sufficient mitigation has been included in a revised application in the event of planning permission being granted then conditions are suggested for inclusion in the decision covering improved perimeter planting to screen views into the site, retention of the Sewardstone Road frontage planting and opening of the northern open area to public access. It is also recommended to request £75,000 in developer contributions for improvements to adjacent parts of the Regional Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Approve:
- (1) that Epping Forest District Council be informed that the whilst the Authority does not object to this application, up to date ecological surveys are required in advance of further consideration by the local planning authority.

The Council should consult with the Authority on the revised ecological Surveys.

In the event that the surveys are adequately planned and do not identify adverse impacts which cannot be mitigated then conditions should be included in any decision granted to address the following:

- a) a detailed landscaping plan for the proposed open space and boundaries of the 'developed' areas;
 - b) that details of proposed lighting for the cycle/pedestrian route on the southern boundary;
 - c) directional signage to the Regional Park is included in the new junction design; and
- (2) if the Council are minded to approve the planning application, planning obligations are required of £75,000 for improvements to nearby parts of the Park to account for the additional usage which would occur from the additional residents living at this site. An indicative list of measures is included at Appendix B to this report.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1 The site is located on Sewardstone Road just south of its junction with Hawes Lane with Gunpowder Park rising to the north. Residential properties lie along Butlers Drive to the south, agricultural fields lie to the west and a ribbon of housing and commercial development to the east. It comprises 3.6ha with the southern half largely developed for storage and workshops although just 0.45ha is open and partially used for open storage. This part of the site includes two residential properties one of which is locally listed. Many of the buildings are visible from Gunpowder Park to the west. The northern part of the site comprises an open field and former orchard. Other site boundaries are vegetated, with large trees along the Sewardstone Road frontage; these have recently been protected.
- 2 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt just within the Regional Park boundary. There is a permissive pedestrian and cycle pathway just beyond the southern site boundary that leads to Knights Pits and Enfield Island Village. There are other publicly accessible routes to the north of the site at Gunpowder

Park.

- 3 The Authority owns and manages Gunpowder Park and Knights Pits as publicly accessible open space. It has recently invested in both areas, including improved pathway routes, and ecological enhancements.
- 4 In 2014 an application for 72 dwellings was refused by the local planning authority on the following grounds:
 - that although it is 'previously developed land' within the Green Belt the density of development would adversely impact on 'openness';
 - the development would be 'unsustainable' in transport terms given its remote location; and
 - the scheme would result in loss of employment land.

An appeal against this decision was dismissed.

The Authority did not object to this application recognising the site as 'previously developed' but instead sought improvements through conditions and planning obligations of £75,000 for a range of enhancement works to Gunpowder Park.

- 5 The Park Plan (2000) adopted area proposals for this site identify it as Landscape Conservation Area which requires that landscape features which make a positive contribution should be retained and strengthened. The Authority's Landscape sensitivity study recognises that this part of the park is sensitive to large scale development. The draft Landscape strategy included in the PDF identifies the site is linked to the belt of land extending through Gunpowder Park forming 'Valley Terraces containing industrial legacy'. Adopted proposals seek to improve boundary treatment to assimilate 'developed sites' into the Regional Park.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 6 The application seeks outline permission to redevelop the site through demolition of the existing commercial buildings (but retaining an existing locally listed dwellinghouse), and the erection of up to 40 residential dwellings, ancillary gardens, parking and access arrangements. There are separate proposals for the landscaping of the northern portion of the site and improvements to the adjacent footpath that runs along its southern boundary which would include lighting. The only reserved matter is the means of access for which detailed junction improvements are included with the application.

7 Proposed Layout

The existing vehicular access from Sewardstone Road would be retained and a revised layout would allow for right turning movements into the site. The scheme is designed around a series of short cul-de-sac serving terraces and semi-detached of 2 storey dwellings. It is stated that 50% of the dwellings would be affordable.

8 Public Open Space

The northern 'greenfield' portion of the site would remain as open space, with additional tree planting and children's play equipment. The applicants propose

that the open space would be made publicly accessible improving the 'sustainable development' 'credentials' of the proposal.

9 Landscaping of developed part of the site

It is stated that the main areas of dense or mature planting on the existing site would be retained, but the submitted plans show the existing mature vegetation retained 'wherever possible'. It is stated that the applicants propose improvements to the east-west track, to make it more user-friendly for future residents of the scheme and other visitors, but no details are provided other than a statement that this would be lit. Conditions requiring a detailed landscaping plan and details of the extent of illumination of the lights are requested.

PLANNING APPRAISAL

10 This is a significant application located within the Park that raises a number of issues for the Regional Park which can be assessed under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Ecological Impacts
- Access
- The need for s106 Park Improvements

11 Principle of Development

Whilst the proposed residential use is not a use that complies with the provisions of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966, the development proposals would be confined to the portion of the site where existing commercial uses are located and where undeveloped areas are partially used for open storage. Given this context it is considered that residential development would be acceptable. Given the Authority's adopted proposals for this site and the issues identified by the recent landscape study the impact of new development on the amenities of the Park should be limited. Whilst it is recommended that no objection is made sufficient landscape mitigation is required to limit the impact of new development on the 'openness' of the Regional Park; this would reflect green Belt policy.

12 Ecological Impacts

The application is accompanied by an ecological survey undertaken in 2013 this does not provide the required up to date information upon which a decision can be made and a further reassessment should be undertaken. Following Government advice the presence or absence of protected species and the extent to which they could be affected by the proposals should be established prior to granting of permission to ensure all material considerations are considered.

13 Access

The proposed access point for part of its way share access to an existing pedestrian route into Gunpowder Park. It is recommended that conditions are included in any permission requiring clear demarcation and directional signage to direct Park visitors to this public footpath as part of the proposed

development.

14 The need for S106 Park Improvements

Funding in the region of £75k for Park improvements is considered appropriate for a scheme of this scale, although the amount and distribution would be subject to discussion between the applicants and the Council as Local Planning Authority. It is recommended to provide the Council with a draft list of schemes with rough costings of projects within adjacent areas of the Park. Officers have prepared a draft list of projects, attached at Appendix B to this report, and, this should inform the Council's negotiations on the content of the contributions.

CONCLUSION

- 15 The principle of housing development on this site is accepted. It is suggested that the proposed layout would need to be amended to safeguard planting on the Sewardstone Road boundary and perimeter landscaping would need to be improved. The improvements to nearby parts of the Park are necessary in achieving wider enhancements which are proportionate to the proposals.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 16 The Environmental Implications are discussed in the main body of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17 The Financial Implications are discussed in the main body of this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 18 Planning applications referred to this Authority are submitted under the consultative arrangements of Section 14 (4-7) of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The Act requires a local planning authority to consult with the Authority on any planning application for development, whether within the designated area of the Park or not, which might affect any part of the Park.
- 19 The Park Act enables the Authority to make representations to the local planning authority which they shall take into account when determining the planning application.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 20 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

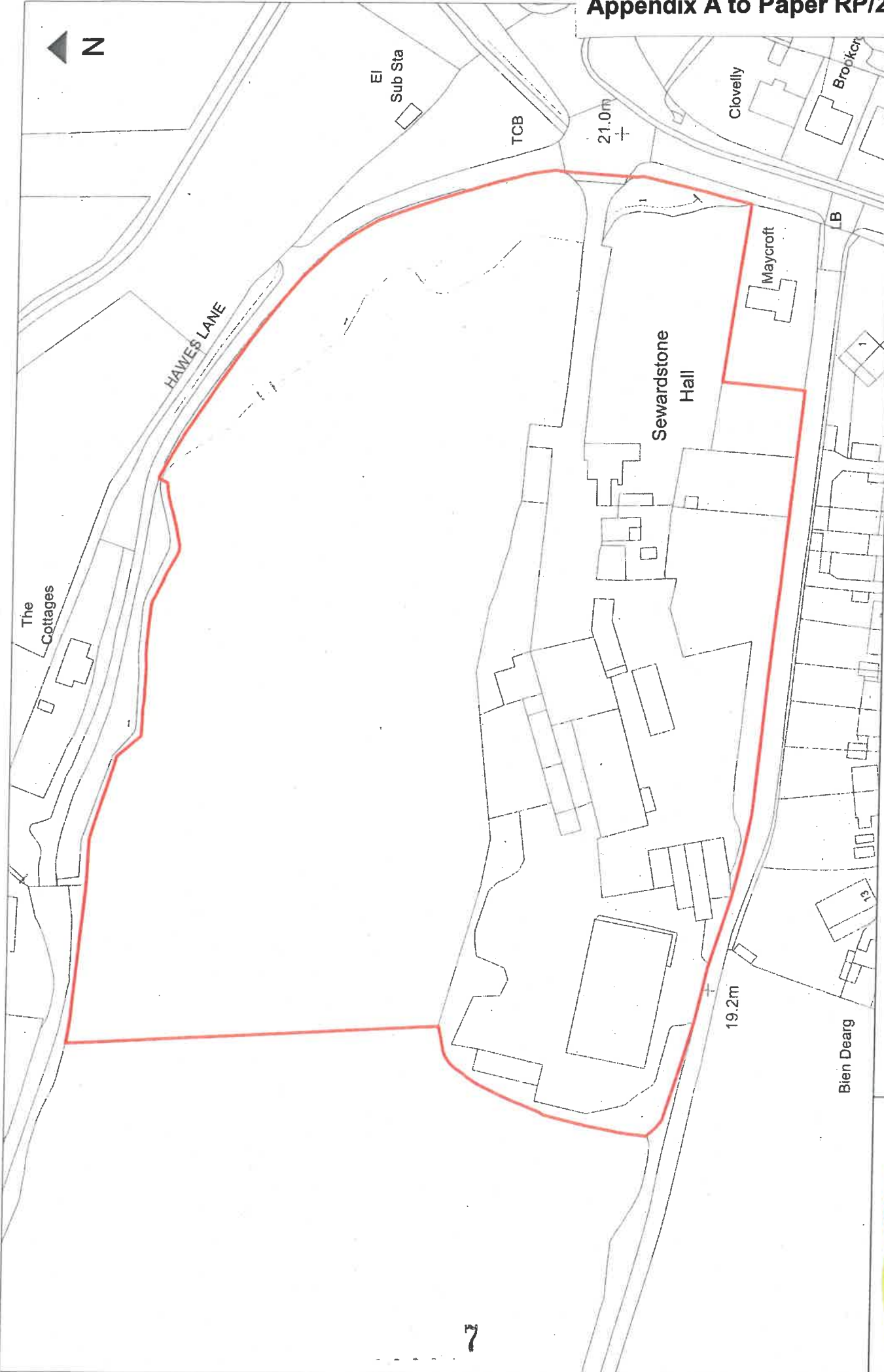
EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 21 There are no equalities implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

Author: Stephen Wilkinson, 01992 709 828, swilkinson@leevalleypark.org.uk

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A	Site Plan
Appendix B	Draft list of Park Improvements or S106 Funding



Former Haulage Yard, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex

1:1250 @ A4
05.10.18

Produced by: Corporate GIS (SA)
T:\User Specific Files\Departmental Maps\Planning\18.089\Former Haulage yard, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex (SA) 051018 - PT

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Application Site

Appendix B to Paper RP/21/18

List of potential projects for section 106 contributions

- Knights Pits wooded area: Access improvements of coppicing of trees by paths - £5k
- Knights Pits lakes: Tree removal and bankside habitat improvements – £10K
- Opening up waterways for Water Vole habitat – £5K
- Remove fence round lake and make safe banks and habitat management, creating a new circular pedestrian route - £30k
- If we owned the fields we may need to install fencing - £10k per field (including cattle corral)
- Desiltation of pool in front of viewing screen (Osier Marsh) - £10K (Dependant on contamination study on material)