

Minutes

Meeting name	Planning Committee
Date	Thursday, 13 March 2025
Start time	6.00 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 1GH

Present

Chair Councillor A. Thwaites (Chair)

Councillors

J. Mason (Vice-Chair)	I. Atherton
S. Atherton	P. Cumbers
M. Glancy	M. Gordon
D. Pritchett	M. Brown (Substitute)
S. Butcher (Substitute)	

Officers

- Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy (Monitoring Officer)
- Planning Development Team Leader (MK)
- Planning Development Team Leader (CP)
- Planning Officer (AC)
- Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer
- Democratic Services Officer (SE)

Minute No.	Minute
PL78	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allnatt, Browne and Higgins.</p> <p>Councillor Mike Brown was appointed as substitute for Councillor Allnatt and Councillor Butcher was appointed as substitute for Councillor Higgins.</p>
PL79	<p>Minutes</p> <p>(a) The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2025 were confirmed as a true record;</p> <p>(b) The minutes of the special meeting held on 5 February 2025 were confirmed as a true record.</p>
PL80	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
PL81	<p>Schedule of Applications</p> <p>The Chair announced that Application 21/00405/FUL (agenda item 4.2), Jeld Wen, Snow Hill, Melton Mowbray, had been withdrawn from the agenda to enable more information to be included in the officer report and the item would be presented at a future meeting.</p>
PL82	<p>Application 23/00999/FUL</p> <p>Location : Red Lion Inn, 2 Red Lion Street, Stathern, LE14 4HS</p> <p>Proposal : Partial demolition of Red Lion Inn and conversion to 1 dwelling; conversion of outbuilding to 1 dwelling & construction of no. 4 new dwellings to the rear together with associated boundary treatments, parking & landscaping</p> <p>The Planning Officer (AC) addressed the committee and provided a summary of the application. He advised the application was before the committee as more than 10 objections had been received as well as two further objections had been received since the agenda was published, the concerns of which were already included in the report. He stated there was a minor clerical error in the report at paragraph 8.2.23 this should state ‘as detailed within paragraph 8.2.13’ instead of 8.2.10. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.</p> <p>Pursuant to Chapter 2, Part 9 Paragraphs 2.8-2.28 of the Council’s Constitution in relation to public speaking at Planning Committee, the Chair allowed the following to give a three minute presentation:</p> <p>Councillor Ken Bray of Stathern Parish Council made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council had a strong objection to the application as it went against

- the major policies and was of poor design
- The report consistently admitted conflict with policies and then chose to ignore or excuse
 - Haphazard parking arrangements were shown in the plans with no parking for visitors
 - There was no access to maintain the beck which was known as a flood risk
 - The site was in a conservation area and there was an impact on the historical core of the village
 - The existing building had been deliberately allowed to deteriorate and had not been maintained
 - The site and the pub were listed as Assets of Community Value and this had not been taken into account
 - 25 years ago a similar application with arguments of non-viability and high refurbishment costs was refused and in that case the pub had been opened within a year
 - The application should be refused

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

Sally Fagan of Stathern Community Benefit Society made the following points:

- The Community group focused on 3 aspects, these being why the applicant's report should be disregarded, why they believed the pub to be viable, why the marketing was not consistent with ACV policy
- The application conflicted with the Local Plan policies and the NPPF
- The applicant's viability reports were flawed and the community group had challenged the assumptions and commissioned an independent assessment and produced a robust business plan
- The Council's independent review was not truly independent
- The damage to the building was from wilful neglect and not vandalism
- The pub was viable when taken over yet went into insolvency within 9 months with no evidence that the business was unviable
- Community owned pubs had a high success rate and the community group had a business plan and expertise to ensure it would thrive
- Due to new homes being built in the area, the village could support 2 pubs
- The car park alone was a community asset
- It was felt the attempt to sell had been a 'sham sale' as the price and period of time being marketed were not reasonable and 2 serious offers had been rejected
- The planning process had been inconsistent and biased
- There was no case to grant change of use

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

Sachin Parmar, Agent of Marrons made the following points:

- The applicant had poured money in to make the pub work but it was not viable

- and the Council's viability expert had also concluded that the pub was unviable
- The Red Lion could only draw custom locally which was not enough to make the pub viable
 - Due to the soaring energy costs, the price of food and drink, payroll, business rates, inflation, limited space and the need to have the quality of chefs to cook the standard of food required, the figures did not stack up
 - Since closure the site had been subject to vandalism, there had been issues with squatters and drug users which had been reported to the Police, with no heating on parts of the building had deteriorated and given way, this had been added to by bad weather which meant the building was now in a state of disrepair
 - Given the applicant was conserving the pub it would be to their advantage that the building was in better order so that there was less to repair
 - The test under national policy of deliberate neglect had not been engaged
 - The applicant sought to retain the building and the heritage asset
 - Requested that the application be approved

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

There were 5 minute adjournments at 7:13pm and at 7:56pm.

During debate, Members had concerns regarding whether there was proven need for the development, over intensification of the site and the development not being in-keeping with the area, the impact on neighbouring buildings of heritage significance as well as there being no visitor parking and the likelihood of overflow onto Red Lion Street which was already heavily used for parked vehicles.

Councillor Ian Atherton proposed that the application be refused for the reasons as set out below. Councillor Glancy seconded the motion.

RESOLVED

That contrary to the officer recommendation, the application be REFUSED for the reasons given below.

(For 9, Against 1, Abstentions 0)

(Councillors Butcher and Cumbers requested that their vote for the motion be recorded.)

REASONS

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the development would result in less than substantial harm to the associated designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets, specifically less than substantial harm at the lower end to the Church of St Guthlac, The Red Lion Inn and the Conservation Area; less than substantial harm at the intermediate level to Old Rectory and Church Cottage; and less than substantial harm at the

	<p>higher level to The Beeches, due to the design and over intensification which would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the redevelopment of the site and would be contrary to Policy EN13 of the Melton Local Plan and paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024)</p> <p>2. In the opinion of the local planning authority, the proposal is not in keeping with the character of the area and would, if approved, result in the overprovision of additional dwellings that are not needed in the village of Stathern. Furthermore, the proposal fails to secure sufficient, suitable on-site parking to ensure that residents and their visitors can safely park. The proposal would therefore lead to additional on-street parking on Red Lion Street which is a narrow, historic lane with an inadequate width footway and would have an unacceptable impact on the safety and movement of traffic and pedestrians on the highway network. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy H2 (parts b, c, d and f) of the Stathern Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
PL83	<p>Application 21/00405/FUL This application had been withdrawn from the agenda.</p>
PL84	<p>Urgent Business There was no urgent business.</p>

The meeting closed at: 8.15pm

Chair