

GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL

*MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12TH 2015 AT 7:30PM IN THE
COMMUNITY CENTRE, GREAT CHESTERFORD*

Present: Gareth Bevens
Tom Newcombe
Sharon Tricerri
Collette Altaparmakova

Simon Witney
David Hall
Julie Redfern
Neil Gregory

Alan Cattley – Clerk

Approximately 30 members of the public.

15/104. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Rowan.

15/105. Declarations of Interest

None.

15/106. Minutes of Previous Meeting

After amending item 15/098 to read “Cllr. Bevens *was asked* to prepare a paper” in place of “Cllr. Bevens *agreed* to prepare a paper”, the minutes of the meeting held on July 8th 2015 were signed as a correct record of events.

15/107 Public Forum

A member of the public thanked the council for acquiring caps to plug the sockets in the Multisports area and requested that more be provided to serve as spares.

Several members of the public commented on the planning applications on the agenda.

UTT/15/1789/FUL Smock Mill

The owner of a neighbouring property objected that the site was outside the village and that S7 of the Local Plan applied. The application implied that it had the support of the planning officer and it was felt that the response to the pre-application was inappropriate. The speaker felt that development should not be allowed in this area as there would then be nothing to prevent further development.

The applicant replied that he believed the proposed development was in the countryside and was sustainable.

UTT/15/2436-2442 Chesterford House

It was asked why there were seven separate applications for one site and concern was expressed the proposal would significantly change the character of the High Street conservation area.

It was also asked whether the tree works which had already taken place had been given permission. This was not known as the PC had not been consulted.

UTT/15/2310/OP Thorpe Lea

A speaker commented that he thought the proposed building density was too high and was concerned that the access on to the main road was dangerous.

Another speaker said that the village had to be realistic; if UDC requirements were met then we could not object.

It was observed that some of the houses had no garage and others had non-contiguous parking and that given the problems caused by on-street parking elsewhere in the village it would be a disservice to the village if this were not the subject of an objection. There was a high likelihood of archaeological findings on the site, and the trees and hedgerows were protected and should not be subjected to interference without a specific application being made. The PC was urged to make representation to protect them.

Cllr. Gregory replied that the PC would seek conditions. He had had a meeting with the Chief Executive of UDC to complain about poor enforcement and had been assured that extra time, effort and money were to be allocated to this.

It was also suggested that the question of visitor parking should be taken into account.

UTT/15/0643/DFO Amended Bartholomew Close

The following points and opinions were made:

- The layout plan does not line up.
- The public meeting had been glossily presented, but there were already 124 houses on a closed road and any more is too much.
- It was not understood how the construction and vehicles carrying soil could be satisfactorily managed.
- The site was a metre higher than the surroundings.
- An attempt had been made to address the height difference but concerns about overlooking remained.
- The proposed layout did not encompass the trees.

Cllr. Newcombe commented that the question of the trees could be dealt with under reserved matters.

- It was felt that the developers had implied that the trees were of poor quality, but it was asked that if this were the case why had they not been removed as dangerous; even a survey from two years ago had proposed their retention.
- The cycle access hits plot 8.
- The s106 cycle path does not meet the road.
- The Local Plan encourages communities to accept a share of additional housing, but the greenhouse site and Bellway included around 100 houses and the new proposal amounted to around 140 which represented a disproportionate increase over the existing.
- The District Council is dealing only with planning without considering questions of infrastructure.
- The Church Street 6" sewer frequently blocks and this is not taken into account anywhere.
- The issues are not joined up, and there is no proper plan for village facilities.

Cllr Gregory believed these points to be well made, and that the proposals on tonight's agenda alone represented an 8½ % increase.

Cllr. Redfern believed that the cause was not the DC or the Local Plan but government presumption in favour of sustainable development. All applications were considered on their merits irrespective of the Local Plan.

Cllr. Newcombe stated that in the case of an absent, silent or out of date Local Plan all applications should be granted unless there was a strong reason otherwise, and the lack of

a five year land supply implied an open season. It would be good if these applications could be assimilated into the Neighbourhood Plan, but this would not be possible.

15/108 Planning

To consider any comments to be returned to Uttlesford District Council (UDC) on the following applications:

UTT/15/0643/DFO Amended Details following outline application UTT/14/0425/OP for residential development - details of access, scale, landscaping and layout for 12 no. dwellings
Location: Land North Of Bartholomew Close Great Chesterford Essex

It was commented that the applicant had revised the scheme, apparently with more thought and detail and had sought to address some of the previous objections, and there were four additional parking spaces although no turning head. There were draft planning conditions on:

Trees

Deliveries

Timing of work

The height of plot 1 (a bungalow)

Retention of garages

It was questioned why all matters were reserved except landscaping and it was noted that comment on the trees was not possible in the absence of specific details.

It was thought that there should be a condition removing all permitted development rights.

If the belief that the plans did not marry up turned out to be justified this would be so significant that all other objections would appear trivial.

It was still thought that the access did not meet County standards, and if this were the case it would give the right of challenge. There was a potential for judicial challenge if the District had failed to consider material issues. Highways have the right to comment; if they have no issues this implies acceptance but this is not explicitly stated. It would have to be left as a matter for UDC to decide whether access was safe.

The PC could not recommend approval in view of the perceived flaws.

It was observed that the site was not included in the Local Plan as a separate development.

It was **resolved to strongly object** on the grounds of layout, access, landscaping and trees. The PC would seek further involvement from ECC and request a site visit by UDC's planning committee.

UTT/15/1789/FUL Erection of 5 no. dwellings with detached garages.

Location: Land At Smock Mill House Whiteways Ickleton Road Great Chesterford Saffron Walden Essex CB10 1NX

It was observed that there were two sites backing on to each other, both joining on the Ickleton Road. The houses were of modern design, the majority of which were two storey.

Points raised included:

- It was unclear where responsibility for maintenance of the access would lie or whether it was to be adopted.
- It was also not known whether it fell within the settlement boundary.
- The site would not be sustainable unless footpath provision was significantly improved.
- There was no affordable housing provision.
- The choice of materials was crucial – this should be a condition of any approval.
- The proposal ran contrary to policy S7.

It was **resolved to object** on the grounds that the proposal was contrary to policy S7.

UTT/15/2310/OP Outline application, with all matters reserved except for access, demolition of existing dwellings and residential development of up to 31 dwellings.

Location: Land At Thorpe Lea Walden Road Great Chesterford Essex CB10 1PS

It was pointed out that this was an outline application.

Points raised included:

- Was the link to the sewer in Rose Lane adequate? More detail was required.
- What are the protected species to which reference was made?
- It was not clear which trees were to be retained.
- The affordable housing was in two blocks rather than integrated.
- It was asked whether there was any prospect of a requirement for the affordable housing to be for local people only, but this was felt to be unlikely.
- It was thought that the site needed a footpath or cycle path link to the village, but it would need a change of status to allow this.
- There were numerous design assumptions in the proposal but these would have to be ignored in an outline proposal.
- Access – the visibility splay was acceptable at 160m in each direction. This was unlikely to be a problem for the safety point of view and if ECC deemed it acceptable the PC would not be able to object.
- There was a question over the safety of the narrow footpath along the main road towards the High Street
- It was important that the hedge be retained as a natural boundary, and this should be a condition.

It was **resolved to object** on the grounds of sustainability, access, sewerage capacity, access, overdevelopment and affordable housing provision.

UTT/15/2436-2442 Proposed alterations, extension and conversion of existing house to create new dwellings. (Seven separate applications)

Location: Chesterford House High Street Great Chesterford Saffron Walden Essex CB10 1PL

It was commented that the PC should consider all of the applications, but there remained a question over why they were presented separately. It would be the case that an affordable element would be required from a single application.

Comments on plot 1 comments included:

- The orientation seemed odd.
- There was a proposed new access for six vehicles.
- The barn-like nature of the proposal was not in keeping with existing.
- The brick wall was not in keeping with existing flint.

It was felt that it was not possible to form an opinion in the absence of a full picture to give an impression of the overall impact, although due to the particularly sensitive location of plot 1 at the entrance to the village this was the most significant of the proposals.

It was **resolved to strongly object** on the grounds of insufficient detail, lack of clarity on provision for trees and hedges, inadequate sewerage capacity and absence of affordable housing provision.

15/109 Lighting in access alley to Pilgrim Close.

It was **resolved** to decline a request to remove lights from the part night lighting scheme.

15/110 Bowls Club lease.

Work to resolve this was ongoing; the clerk was asked to write to the Club to explain the situation

15/111 Finance

The receipts and payments made since last meeting were noted without comment.

It was not considered necessary to review the budget provision for the RoSPA recommendations since the existing provision was already adequate.

15/112 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

There had been no meeting of the group since the last PC meeting. Handover documents had been received from Joanna Francis who had stood down from the group. Cllr. Rowan had agreed to be vice-chairman of the group and it was agreed that Gabrielle Rowan should be engaged on a paid basis to provide professional advice.

It was resolved to meet the costs of professional and administrative support subject to the existing budget provisions.

In the absence of details of the call for sites by the promised date of July 31st, **it was resolved** by a majority vote to submit a Freedom of Information request for this information. Proposed by Cllr. Gregory, seconded by Cllr. Newcombe. Cllr. Hall voted against the motion, Cllr. Redfern abstained and all other councillors were in favour.

15/113 Allotments.

The PC had received a counsel's opinion on the terms of the covenant on the land and this had been considered by Cllrs. Newcombe, Hall and Witney. The letter previously approved would be sent to Mr. Robinson (who was acting for the covenantees).

It was resolved to authorise the funding of further legal advice, if needed, subject to a maximum of £1500.

15/114 Police and Crime Commissioner's Proposal.

It was felt that our local police were making a huge contribution in the village. Cllr. Gregory would write a letter of objection.

15/115 Matters for further discussion.

Cllr. Gregory had met John Mitchell of UDC. Mr. Mitchell had agreed that drafting and communications on S106 agreements could be better and that there had been problems with enforcement. The flow of information on the implementation of planning permissions needed clarification. We would receive a letter in due course.

A planning application at 37 Jacksons Lane had been received but had been inadvertently omitted from this month's agenda. The clerk was asked to request an extension to the comments date to allow its consideration at the September meeting.

It was noted that UDC appeared uninterested in the complaint from a member of the public about the decking outside the shop. Cllr. Redfern commented that the PC was supportive of the shop.

15/116 Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Wednesday 9th September at 7:30 in the Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 10.40pm

Signed (Chairman).....

Date: 9th September 2015