

## **GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

### *MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> 2015 AT 7:30PM IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, GREAT CHESTERFORD*

**Present:** Neil Gregory  
Sharon Tricerri  
Collette Altaparmakova  
Tom Newcombe

Julie Redfern  
Simon Witney  
David Hall  
Matt Rowan (from 8:40)

Alan Cattley – Clerk  
Approx. 20 members of the public.

#### **15/165. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Bevens; Cllr. Rowan sent apologies for an expected late arrival.

#### **15/166. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Redfern declared herself as a member of Uttlesford District Council and Cllr. Altaparmakova a member of the Bowls Club.

#### **15/167. Minutes of the Last Meeting.**

The minutes of the meeting held on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 were signed a correct record of events.

#### **15/168 Proposed Development at Thorpe Lea**

Kate Wood spoke on behalf of Carter Jonas LLP in respect of the proposed development. Questions were taken from the public during the presentation and are included in the following summary.

Comments made by Parish and District in respect of the previous application had been taken on board and an amended application had now been submitted. Account had been taken of matters raised including:

- Highway Safety
- Drainage
- Affordable housing element
- Parking provision

The layout was only outline, but was still considered a useful guide as when the land is sold to a developer it will carry expectations. Nothing outlined was set in stone, but the proposal sought to prove that the scheme fits and is in character.

Q. Does the plan bind future development?

A. No, as all matters are reserved except access. The outline application allows for 31 houses; any more would require a fresh application to be made from scratch.

There had been changes to the parking arrangements; a row had been stretched and the parking court removed. The arrangement met required standards and, in the opinion of CJ, kept character.

It was reported that Anglian Water were satisfied that there was sufficient capacity in the existing infrastructure to accommodate the development.

Surface water was dealt with separately; the SUDS authority was now ECC. In response to their comments, the roads and drives were to be permeable with underground tanks provided to allow water to seep away slowly and roof water was to be channelled to soakaways in gardens.

There were now to be two bungalows, one affordable and one at market rate.

The affordable housing was now to be dispersed within the site and not be a single cluster. It was suggested that releasing market and affordable housing at the same time should be part of the permission conditions.

It was reported that the highways authority had no objection to the proposal as it stood, but efforts had nonetheless been made to improve safety of access. Consideration had been given to road markings, improved signage and possible speed limit reduction to 40mph. It was not possible to make either vertical or horizontal change to the road layout because of County requirements.

Q. Was the possibility of obtaining access from the High Street now discounted?

A. Yes

Q. On what grounds had the PC previously objected?

A. Safety of access, inadequate sewage provision, clustering of affordable housing, phasing of affordable and market price housing release.

It was commented that if Anglian Water had raised no objection, then the opinions of the PC and UDC would not prevail, although we could still register concern.

Q. The existing hedge marks the start of the village at present, and if built the new houses would become the limit. To what extent will the hedge diminish the visual impact of the development?

A. The plans include retention of the hedge, and there was no housing proposed immediately behind it for half of its length as this was to be open space. On the western half it would be at the back of gardens. It might be possible to remove permitted development rights to these properties to protect the hedge in future.

Q. Was there a possibility that the hedge might be reduced in height?

A. It was possible that a pruning regime might reduce the height as a strategy to promote future growth.

Q. Who owns the hedge?

A. The current site owner. There may be a possibility that it could be conveyed with the open space to a management company or the PC.

Q. Are the parking bays shown for residents or visitors?

A. Either. The allocation of two spaces per dwelling meets or exceeds requirements.

A resident commented that he thought the revised proposal was a better scheme as it was accessed from the main road and that the village would be more likely to support it if there were traffic calming measures included. He also suggested that infill was likely to change the character of the village and we needed to think carefully in the light of large proposed developments around the village.

Cllr. Redfern commented that there was a massive need for housing in the district, but any potential developer would need to show sustainability in order to get approval. There is a constant process of change and the District Council has a duty to consider the proposal as it stands.

Q. Where is the visitor parking?

A. There is none.

Q. Why not?

A. The designers did not want to create a sea of parking spaces. ECC have raised no objections to the proposed provision.

Cllr. Gregory extended thanks to Mr. Walker and Carter Jonas. He commented that this was an exemplary case of the consultation process, in which the applicants had listened to feedback and reacted accordingly.

## 15/169 Public Forum

A resident expressed concern about planning application UTT/15/3308/FUL. In his opinion, the objections raised to the previous application were still valid as the proposal for the development was unchanged and the only differences related to access. A request was made for the PC to oppose the application again.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the Local Plan (LP) and the recently closed Call for Sites (CfS).

Opinions and statements included the following:

The call for sites was not the same as the local plan – the inclusion of a site in the CfS did not mean it would necessarily be included in the LP.

The previous withdrawn LP was calling for dispersal; the CfS was alarming in that it suggested that 30% of the total allocation could be around GC.

Q. What is the assessment of the risk of GC doubling in size?

A. It must be regarded as a clear and present danger, but the process is still in its first stage and several other possibilities exist. There are sites all across the district, almost every village has some and there are many more than are needed. UDC will be required to satisfy the needs of the whole district.

It was suggested that the proposed expansion of the Genome Campus might work in our favour in view of the duty to co-operate between districts. The Cambridgeshire LP was expected to be ready before UDC's.

One resident commented that most people were time poor and could not be expected to wade through all the documents. They therefore found it difficult to respond and it was suggested that the PC might prepare crib sheets as some other parishes reportedly did. It was further suggested that the PC website was not as complete as it might be and that the PC could generally improve its level of communication with the village.

It was pointed out that the NP steering group normally met every month, and the PC's meetings were held at predictably regular dates and times with the agenda published via the village Google group enabling residents to plan attendance at meetings.

UDC's Planning Policy working group published its agendas on the UDC website and proceedings were broadcast and recorded enabling the public to listen to meetings anytime.

Further comments included:

- The Residents4Uttlesford group on the council had voted down the consultation document.
- Everyone should reach their own view and put it forward.
- The proposal for 5000 houses was purely opportunistic.
- The proposal on London Road in Little Chesterford was unexpected.
- The main area of concern lay in the area towards Stump Cross.
- The suggestion that GC become a "key village" was not sensible in view of the lack of services available.
- The NP would be evidence led, therefore we would need to explain tangible reasons for objections.
- The PC had made a Freedom of Information request to UDC for details of the CfS. This had been refused which was why the PC had not been able to circulate details.

A link to the LP pages at UDC could be put on the village site – Cllr. Redfern offered to find material. The village response to the LP could be circulated on the Google group – clerk to do this.

The timetable for UDC’s Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG):

- Officers to filter sites
- Decide strategy – single site or dispersal
- List of proposed sites
- Consult again

[Cllr. Rowan arrived at this point]

The LP requires 12,500 houses; 5,000 already have permission, further 7,500 required by 2033 (568/year)

It was suggested that residents might take turns to attend meetings of the PPWG and report back. Cllr. Redfern could circulate dates of the meetings.

## 15/170 Planning

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

**UTT/15/3308/FUL** Demolition of garage. Erection of 1 no. 3 bed dwelling and alterations to access.

**Location:** Land Rear of Dabbs House London Road Great Chesterford Essex CB10 1NY

It was considered that previous objections to the proposal were still valid and the revised access gave grounds for concern.

**Resolved:** Object.

**UTT/15/3390/HHF** Proposed demolition of existing single storey rear conservatory and erection of single storey rear garden room.

**Location:** Dove Cottage High Street Great Chesterford Saffron Walden Essex CB10 1PL

**Resolved:** Support

**UTT/15/3429/HHF** Erection of garden storage shed.

**Location:** Luckfield House Newmarket Road Great Chesterford Essex CB10 1NS

**Resolved:** No Objection

**UTT/15/3430/HHF** Erection of garage and workshop.

**Location:** Luckfield House Newmarket Road Great Chesterford Essex CB10 1NS

**Resolved:** Object on grounds listed below:

“The scale of the proposed development is in our view excessive, and if permission were to be granted we would recommend that conditions be put in place to ensure that use remains garage and workshop only and that permanent development rights be removed. A S.106 stipulation should be that the workshop may not be sold separately from the main building.”

**UTT/15/3481/HHF** Erection of 1 no, dwelling and garage and change of use to C3.

**Location:** The Old Chalk Pit Walden Road Great Chesterford.

It was considered that the grounds for objection to previous applications on the site were still valid.

**Resolved:** Object on grounds of unsafe access, location outside the village boundary and insufficient evidence of removal of possibly toxic waste from the site’s previous use for landfill.

**UTT/15/1789/FUL (Revised)** Erection of 2 no. dwellings with detached garages.

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

**Resolved:** Object on same grounds as previous application.

#### 15/171 UDC Local Plan

Comments included:

- It was disappointing that the village seemed to be “under fire” with development proposals from every angle.
- The CfS is a rolling programme with no closing date until the LP is adopted.
- The PC should explain the position to the village and enlist help wherever possible – a village meeting would be a good way to start this process.
- Work on the NP could be accelerated now that the CfS details were known, but the PC cannot pre-empt the outcome, neither should it lead the NP group.
- Closer consultation with other villages previously engaged in the Stop Hanley Grange project could be beneficial as could links with Linton, Pampisford and Sawston.
- Cllr. Redfern would ask UDC for a clear timetable of events.

#### 15/172 Preschool

Cllr. Altaparmakova had prepared a document setting out the current position and summarising meetings with interested parties. A copy forms an appendix to these minutes.

Comments from councillors included:

- Although happy to support and help with plans to provide a new preschool, the PC does not have a responsibility or the skills to undertake the project itself.
- Adequate market research must be undertaken to ascertain demand for places and ensure the viability of the school.
- We would be allowed to invite commercial involvement.
- It was a concern that by its very nature, parental involvement with a preschool was likely to be only short term.
- Work would be needed to determine access arrangements as the two existing possibilities had not yet been explored in detail.
- If access were to be via Hyll Close, who would be responsible for the costs?
- There was a need to establish requirements first and then to deal with the technical considerations.

It was suggested that the preschool committee be requested to prepare a proposal by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2016 after which time the PC would put the project out to commercial tender.

The PC would be letting the site fully accessed and serviced.

#### 15/173 Greater Essex Devolution

The document was noted without comment

#### 15/174 Trees

It was proposed to commission Bartletts Tree Experts Ltd. to undertake a survey of trees in built-up areas of the village.

This would enable us to have a bank of information to hand in advance of future planning applications, allow a rolling programme of tree work to be implemented and inform possible applications for preservation orders.

It was resolved to approve expenditure of £2,000 for this work.

Thanks were expressed to Colin Day for his work in organising this.

**15/175 Finance**

The report of receipts and payments was noted without comment.  
The expenditure of £2,000 for new toddler swings was approved.  
It was agreed in principle to maintain the precept request at last year’s figure of £52,000, this figure to be confirmed at the January meeting in conjunction with consideration of the budget.

**15/176 Allotments**

It was reported that the previous landowner might be minded to withdraw his objection, but this was still to be confirmed.

**15/177 Neighbourhood Plan.**

This item covered in items 15/169 and 15/171.

**15/178 Bowls Club Lease**

Cllr. Newcombe was in contact with the Bowls Club’s solicitors from whom a response is still awaited.

**15/179 Matters for further discussion.**

Suggestions included:  
Approving work to restore the ditch on Horse River Green.  
Adopting or otherwise facilitating repairs to the memorial bench outside the shop. Cllr. Redfern will make enquiries.

**15/180 Date of Next Meeting.**

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7:30 in the Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 10:35pm

Signed (Chairman).....

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**