

Planning Committee
Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting held at 7.00 pm on 5th March 2009

Present: Mr Salisbury (Chairman), Mrs Revell, Mr Blanch, Mrs King, Mr Mercer
In Attendance: Mr Gallagher, Mrs Jones (Clerk)

Public Question Time

Numerous members of the public were present with regard to the development of new housing in Chatfield Road. The Chairman introduced the members of the Committee and set out the parameters of the meeting, explaining the role of the Parish Council and that the Council would not be discussing the background to the inclusion of the site in the development plan but to the actual application as submitted. Mr Dickie, Chairman of the Chatfield Road Residents Association then read a short report summarizing local objections to the application. Mr Crouch made an additional statement regarding the existing problems with traffic in London Lane and the conflict with County Council road safety policy.

241. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Gregory and Mrs Burgess

242. Declarations of Interest: Mr Mercer declared a personal interest as a member of the Chatfield Road Residents Association and a near neighbour to the development. There were no other declarations of interest.

243. Planning Application 09/00014/FUL:
Development of land to the North West of Chatfield Road for 44 dwellings

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council's response would be based on the policies as set out in the Local Plan and these would now be examined on a policy by policy basis:

Policies B1 & B2: It was agreed that the planning application did not meet the criteria as set out in this policy. The importance of the built environment was not addressed and the new development did not respect the character of local buildings. The design was considered pedestrian and there were concerns over the height of the new houses as these would have a significant impact on neighbouring properties. The tallest houses had been placed to the rear of London Lane and use had not been made of the slope. The ridge line would have a major impact and the roof pitches were too high. No information had been submitted with regard to materials. The layout would have a detrimental impact on the views into and out of the development. No colour detail had been provided and there had been an unnecessary mixing of materials. The buildings were out of keeping with the surrounding housing. The applicants had also failed to provide a full ecological survey.

Play Area: Considerable concern was expressed with regard to the location and maintenance of the play area. It was agreed that, by siting this at the far corner of the development, this would be poorly supervised and would lead to problems similar to those experienced at Chapelfields. The current site was in the wrong location and a green open space in the centre of the development would be the preferred option. It was also agreed that there was too much emphasis on hard landscaping and insufficient detail provided with regard to the soft landscaping.

Policy B3: The development would result in a reduction of outlook for residents and an increase in traffic noise and disturbance. The amenity of existing residents would be adversely affected as there was already insufficient parking and the new development would contribute to this problem. The roof lines for loft living will overlook and have a major impact on neighbouring properties. A large number of residents, including the residents of Horsgate Lane, would be adversely affected during the building works.

Policy B4: It was considered that the plans did not address the issues of energy and water conservation. Emerging legislation places far more importance of this aspect of a development and the developers should be looking at modern technology. No firm statement was included in the application with regard to these issues and greater detail should be provided. No indication was given with regard to natural drainage, use of land water, etc. The residents had highlighted the Environment Agency's concerns over flooding and there were concerns regarding inadequate drainage. Currently, surface water from local roads was taken to the field which, as a result was very wet. This issue would need to be addressed.

Policy B5: It was noted that the one disabled property was situated at the *bottom* of the hill, i.e. not easily accessible.

With regard to pavements, roads and street furniture, there were concerns that the design incorporated two cul-de-sacs. Insufficient detail was given with regard to the layout of pavements, street furniture and lighting. An appropriate level of lighting would need to be agreed.

Policy B9: Security - concern was expressed that there was no provision for fencing along the north-west boundary stream to protect the school. It should be a requirement that the developers agree security with the school. The issue of an access for pupils from the site to the Primary School was outstanding. It was also considered that the siting of the play area in a poorly supervised location would have a major impact on security.

Policy H3: It was considered that neither the character nor the form of the development respected the locality and the scene was therefore inappropriate for the site.

Policy H4 and Supplementary Planning Policy (April 2006) regarding affordable housing stated that this should be "well integrated" into the development. This development failed to meet this criteria as the application placed the thirteen units in one area and the houses were also of a different design and style to the private sector homes. It was important that the development was built in the best interests of the residents not that of the builder.

Traffic: This was a key issue for the development. Parish Councillors had undertaken surveys of traffic and pedestrian movements and details of these would be provided in an appendix when the response was made to MSDC. The figures provided by the developers were considered inaccurate and these would be challenged. The safety audit now on the website did not address several crucial issues including traffic entering Chatfield Road and increased traffic using Horsgate Lane. The driveways and sight lines for houses in Chatfield Road would be affected by the development. Although it might not be a requirement of the safety audit to address pedestrian movements, there were long running concerns for the safety of children using London Lane, crossing Chatfield Road. There were further concerns that the pavements and their links in the new development were inadequate. Heavy goods vehicle movements were an additional danger to pedestrians and this situation would worsen during the building works. It was agreed that the safety audit was inadequate and far more information was required.

Other areas of concern included the lack of public transport as the existing services did not meet the government's requirement for sustainable transport. Also, the intermittent electricity supply which would not be helped by additional housing.

There were many serious objections to the application which was considered to be poorly thought through with the level of detail expected in an outline application. The Parish Council would respond to the District Council accordingly.

The public were thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.