

ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Thursday 17th October, 2013

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Bell, Cllr. Beecham, Cllr. Fairweather, Cllr. Redding, Cllr. Lloyd, Cllr. Brock, Cllr. Grotier

District Councillors: District Councillor Rosemary Heaney, District Councillor Fred Nicholls

Clerk: Mrs. A Baxter

Public: Mrs. J Routledge, Mr. D Hinchcliffe, Mr. R Phillips

Meeting chaired by Cllr. Bell

Meeting Commenced at 7.30pm

1. Chairman's welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Gray

3. Mr. Gittins of Charity Field Developments to put forward their updated proposals.

Please see appendix A for information sheet and draft plan provided by Mr Gittins

Mr. Gittins (planning consultant on behalf of Winsley's Charity): This potential development site (Charity Field, School Road) will be put forward during the next round of consultation on the local plan, January 2014. It's a mixed use development including a village hall, playing fields and parkland. The site is approximately 15 acres with housing being 9.6 acres (including the village hall) leaving 4.8 acres for open space. The open space is to be transferred into public ownership for use as a playing field or park.

The only vehicular access is off School Road, the village hall will be an entrance feature and there will be a green and pond in the foreground. There will be a pedestrian/cycle link through into Alfells Road. Mr. Gittins would be interested in feedback as to whether that access should also be vehicular, although the concern is that would possibly encourage a rat run through the development.

The developers will fund a light controlled crossing on Colchester Road as part of the development.

The advantages of this development are that it is contained in an enclave, it doesn't break out into open countryside. There is a long term and defensible boundary and there won't be further sprawl.

At this stage the East of the site has 15 houses per acre and the West has 10 per acre. The higher density housing has parking courts rather than garages, which is common practise.

The Village Hall has 330m²/3552feet² of floor space. The developer will take into account any feedback for the village requirements of the Hall. The car park has 18 spaces but there is scope for more.

The site is not in the village envelope – this would be an objection site.

In response to comments and questions:

The proportion of affordable units will be guided by policy and local need. The emerging TDC policy is 15-20%.

There was a concern about the level of traffic and parking on School Road during rush hour and School drop off/pick up times. Market Field School is being redeveloped in 2014, they are looking at a turning circle.

Mr. Gittins: Acknowledges the point, traffic will be an influential determinate in deciding where growth is best located. Perhaps there could be an off road car park for the Market Field School drop off/pick up, or they could possibly expand the Village Hall car park for this purpose. It could be possible to make more parking provision and improvements along School Road.

The question of allotments was raised as the other development proposals in Elmstead include allotments. Additional parking would need to be considered for allotment users.

Mr. Gittins: Some space could be provided within the parkland, perhaps half an acre. It would need to be hedged off with water provision. With the additional parking it would encroach on the open space.

The site shows 50 units, which is more than the original 40 to reflect 6%.

Mr. Gittins: TDC are reviewing the 6% figure, some key villages could take higher figures. This site is able to deliver 50.

4. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda.

None

5. Co-option of Mrs. J Routledge

Elmstead Parish Council took a vote to co-opt Mrs. J Routledge as a Parish Councillor.

All voted in favour. Cllr. Bell welcomed Mrs. Routledge in joining the Council.

6. Police Report

No PSCO present.

7. Comments from District Councillors

Cllr. Nicholls: Has spoken to the owner of the old Post Office who agrees that the building needs to be demolished and if he could get permission he would. Cllr. Nicholls will try to arrange a meeting between the owner and TDC planners to move the situation forward. Cllr. Guglielmi has been unwell which is why we haven't heard from him on the subject. The owner is aware that TDC own the scaffolding and that he will be charged for it.

Cllr. Heaney: An enforcement officer has said he might be able to remove the rubbish from outside 19 Holly Way. The overgrown tree is a problem as neighbours would have to put in an application to have the tree cut back, but each application costs £450. TDC have tried to contact the owner about the having the car wrecks removed but they don't have a specific address for him, and he hasn't answered their correspondence.

Cllr. Fairweather: Has spoken to a breaker who says that if the Parish Council writes to him he will remove the cars.

Cllrs. Nicholls and Heaney: Don't think you can legally do this, the cars are on his driveway, EPC doesn't have the authority.

Action: Write to June Clare about the environmental health issues, the area is a health hazard. There are vermin present and dried leaves under the car.

8. Matters raised by Members of the Public

Mr. Phillips queried why EPC did not take all the measures recommended by their solicitors with regards to making a contribution to the South Green Residents Association for the repair of the South Green Tracks. The solicitors gave advice on contributing public money to the repair of a private road. Have we got something in writing to say that there is no risk to EPC?

Cllr. Bell: This grant was a different matter, previously EPC were going to pay approximately £12,000 to get the road repaired. This was a grant given to an organisation which was agreed for health and safety reasons. We didn't have all the legal information available to all Councillors, this should have been done. The SGRA does have public liability insurance.

Mr. Phillips: Originally this was to be a one off grant. Why was there mention in the August meeting of further funding?

Cllr. Redding: The finance committee met this week with no mention of any provision for a further grant in the next budget. It was a comment made (in the August meeting) not a commitment.

Mr. Phillips/Mr. Hinchcliffe: Are frontagers aware that the villagers are entitled to use the track? They know of someone who parked and was not blocking a driveway and a frontager had a go at them. It looks like SGRA had the money and now the village can't use the road.

Cllr. Beecham: The bollards are a traffic calming measure to help the repairs to the road last longer, and stop big lorries destroying the road. The frontagers' objection is to people who park blocking the driveways.

9. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting from Thursday 19th September 2013.

It was proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Meeting from Thursday 19th September 2013 be agreed and accepted as a correct record.

Proposed Cllr. Lloyd Seconded Cllr. Beecham Carried

10. Clerk's Report

On matters from the last meeting. Any business requiring a decision is listed on this agenda.

Cllr. Redding: The risk assessment is still outstanding, I will contact Cllr. Gray.

Cllr. Bell: We need an airtight inspection cover on a manhole in the Community Centre car park. I've called TDC but they've not come back.

Cllr. Beecham: It's on our land so it's our responsibility. There's a breakers yard in Clacton which may have one.

Cllr. Bell: There was an accident with putting the posts in on North Green. Our handyman struck an electricity cable when digging the first hole position. Our insurance company is speaking directly to the power company.

11. Financial

11.1 Finance Report prepared by Clerk

It was proposed that the Finance Report (copy distributed to the Council and attached to the Minutes) be agreed.

Proposed Cllr. Bell Seconded Cllr. Beecham Carried

Cllr. Grotier queried the cost of cutting the grass in Dene Park (located in Wivenhoe but owned by Elmstead).

Cllr. Fairweather suggested turning it into allotments. Cllr. Routledge said there is a large waiting list in Wivenhoe for allotments.

Cllr. Heaney advised that if you let Wivenhoe residents use the space for allotments make sure EPC keep control.

Action: Look into the possibility of using Dene Park for allotments and ask those people on the Elmstead allotment waiting list if they would be willing to travel to Wivenhoe.

11.2 Any information to be reported from the Finance Committee Meeting on Tuesday 15th October?

Cllr. Redding: We reviewed the expenditure for the first half of the year and we are where we'd expect to be. The finances are sound and we discussed the budget for 2014/15 and the grants to local organisations. The draft budget for 14/15 shows no increase in precept at this stage.

12. Personnel

12.1 An update on the fixed term replacement cover for the Clerk's maternity leave.

We now have somebody to take on this role.

12.2 The resignation of Cllr. Sly.

Councillors expressed their regret and disappointment at this resignation. It was agreed that we should buy a gift to show our appreciation for Cllr. Sly's hard work and contribution.

13. Planning

13.1 New Planning Applications Received

13/01078/FUL Shaftesbury House, Clacton Road – Proposed replacement dwelling with new vehicular access

Cllr. Bell suggested that one entrance is enough on a busy road with fast traffic. This comment will be made to TDC.

Bluegates Farm, Alresford – Intention to submit a planning application in October for a proposed solar farm development. Mr. Leyland has contacted EPC with information and an offer to answer any questions or show Cllrs the site.

Cllr. Heaney advised EPC to think about this, it's on good agricultural land and the panels are 3m high, black and a bit shiny. They should be removed after 25 years, ask that this is a planning condition.

It was commented that the land area for the solar development is very large.

Any Others

None

13.2 Decisions in the Month

13/00926/FUL 29 Hatchcroft Gardens – Proposed rear extension – Full Approval

Any Others

None

14. TDC Local plan

Is any further information available regarding the plan?

Cllr. Nicholls: The plan has to be approved by cabinet. It will go before TDC full Council at the end of November. It will go to public consultation in January. They will only be able to consult on the amendments to the plan.

15. A Crossing or Speed Reduction for Colchester Road (near the junction with Oatlands)

The Tendring LHP recommended a survey into the consideration of a crossing or speed reduction on Colchester Road, and this will take place from 14th October for a period of 7 days.

This is the information we have received about the survey:

“The manual aspect of a standard PV2 survey is undertaken for 12 consecutive hours between 07:00 and 19:00, whilst the automatic count is for 7 days, coinciding with the manual count. This ensures that all typical pedestrian and motorised traffic is recorded.

The PV2 process then extracts the four busiest motorised traffic hours (regardless of vehicle class) within the 12hr period and performs comparative calculations against the pedestrian counts for those hours (even if a busier pedestrian hour exists). Additional factors are taken into consideration (road width, posted speed limit, collision data, etc.) to provide a final PV2 score.”

We have been told that if the results do not support a crossing or speed reduction they will look at our evidence that there are pedestrians who would use a crossing at that location but do not because it is too difficult or dangerous at the moment to do so. We would therefore need to consider how to obtain that information if necessary.

Cllr. Fairweather noted that the wires had been put across the road on Tuesday but that there had not been a manual count as of yet. He will keep a check on this.

16. Moto Cross Activity in Church Road

A letter has been sent to Catherine Bicknell, Head of Planning at TDC to register the concerns of EPC.

Cllr. Nicholls: TDC enforcement are sending a planning contravention notice to the owner of the land. The owner has to supply information to TDC; confirmation that he owns the land and his intentions regarding the use.

Cllr. Redding said that the use of the land for motocross has gone beyond 14 days, and children are now using bikes. He has kept a log of the times of use.

17. “Part Night” Street Lighting

Essex County Council has agreed an extension of time for the consultation period through to October 27th. To date the clerk has not received details of any streetlights which EPC feel should be subject to the exception for part night lighting. Please consider this before the consultation expiry date.

Cllr. Bell informed the meeting that the Parish Council owned lights will remain on all night.

Cllr. Nicholls: The traffic lights on Colchester Road will have their street lights on all night at the junctions.

Cllr. Grotier: Elmstead Primary School has been broken into previously so request that the local street lights remain on for reasons of crime prevention.

It was suggested that by doing a similar “part night” street lighting scheme with the Parish Council street lights we could save money on the costs of street lighting.

Action: Establish what savings could be made by implementing this scheme.

18. 19 Holly Way

The appearance at the front of this property has been a long standing issue in Elmstead with regular complaints received regarding the overgrown nature of the plants, particularly the very large leylandii tree, the rusting cars and recently there are bags of rubbish collecting at the property. Cllr Heaney has been working hard to try and get some action from TDC. Is there anything that we can do as a Council to support Cllr. Heaney in her efforts?

Previously discussed by Cllr. Heaney at item 7.

19. Clacton Road Travellers site

The travellers site called The Willows in Clacton Rd has been let to new travellers. They have a static caravan and 2 mobile caravans which is one more than they are allowed.

Cllr. Nicholls met with TDC enforcement and insisted they take action. Enforcement Team Leader Chris Stathers tells us that a Planning Contravention Notice was issued 9th October and has been served by hand in the letterbox. The reply to the Notice is due back by 1/11/2013.

The application for a permanent site was refused mid June which gives the applicant until mid December to appeal. The Clerk contacted Chris Stathers to ask if they are planning to take action to remove the residents come mid December, but has not heard back.

The travellers/residents of the site left 16th October, although Cllr. Grotier noted that a School application had been made for that address.

An appeal against the planning decision that the site not be made permanent would have to be made by the 3rd of December.

20. Matters Raised by Councillors for the next agenda or for information only

None

**There being no further business Councillors were thanked for their attendance.
Meeting closed at 9.38pm**

**Date of next Parish Meeting: Thursday 21st November, 2013
To be held in the Community Centre, School Road CO7 7ET**

Minuted by Mrs. A Baxter

17th October, 2013

Contact: elmsteadparish@btconnect.com

Telephone: 01206 827139

Appendix to the original Minutes:

Appendix A Presentation to Elmstead Parish Council on behalf of Winsley's Charity

Finance Report prepared by the Clerk.

All other relevant correspondence has been circulated prior to the meeting and available upon request.