

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 34th meeting of the Little Hadham **Parish Council Planning Committee** (2015-2019 Session) held on Tuesday 4th September 2018 at 8:00 pm in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mrs M Wilkinson** **Chair**
 Mrs E Lloyd-Williams)
 Mr G Pearson) **Councillors**
 Mr N Wardrop)

Mr B Evans – Acting Clerk, Ms Carole Page – incoming Clerk and 12 members of the public including EHC Cllr Geoff Williamson.

Before the meeting, Cllr Lloyd-Williams said that she was sorry to say that Cllr Will Wright had given in his resignation from the Council. She thanked Cllr Wright for his time and efforts – particularly on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Lloyd-Williams welcomed Ms Carole Page who was in the process of taking over as Clerk from Mr Evans.

33.1. **Absent** Cllr Hoodless [holiday] and Cllr Tooke [holiday].

33.2. **Declarations of interest.** Cllr Pearson said that his occupation meant that he was unable to comment on planning applications. Cllr Wardrop expressed an interest in the application for Ashcroft Farm as he was a near neighbour.

33.3. **Democratic 10 minutes.**

A resident spoke about the application for stables on Millfield Lane. She thought the site unsuitable for 22 stables as there was no space for grazing, fodder storage, waste disposal or parking. Access from Millfield Lane was restricted and unsafe for horses being taken for exercise and for large horse boxes entering and leaving the site. She thought the waste for the large number of horses would affect ground water and pollute heavy rain runoff water that pooled at the bottom of the hill in Bury Green hamlet. She thought that the light pollution would have a harmful effect of local residents.

A resident of Church End spoke against the office block at the Industrial Estate. He thought there had been too much development at the site. The traffic was already excessive and the development would have a harmful effect on local residents and on the quiet rural atmosphere of the parish church.

33.4. **Minutes** of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd July 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record.

33.5. **Matters arising from the minutes.**

33.6. **Planning applications considered by the Council.**

33.6.1. 1490/18 Chalk Pit Cottage, Stortford Road. Demolition of garage and erection of detached 1 no. 3 bedroomed dwelling. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Tooke and Cllr Wardrop. Now withdrawn.

33.6.2. 1533/18 Silver Leys Polo Club, Bury Green. Construction of outdoor polo arena surrounded by fence and new car park - (amended site layout to approval 3/17/2500/FUL). Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Wright and Cllr Hoodless. Already granted.

- 33.6.3.** 1544/18 Unit 2A Hadham Industrial Estate, Church End. New B1 Office building with associated parking. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Tooke and Cllr Wardrop. Cllr Wardrop said that consent had already been granted for a large industrial building on the north of the site. The new office block would be on the existing car park next to the bridleway to Hadham Hall. He thought it would have a detriment effect on local residents and that access via Church End Lane was not suitable. Cllr Lloyd-Williams said there had been 14 objections from local residents on the EHC Planning website. She thought there was no clear need for office space. If there were, she thought existing builds could be converted. The building would be too close to existing homes. Cllr Wardrop proposed the Council object on the grounds of location, dominance and access. Agreed. [Appendix 1].
- 33.6.4.** 1552/18 Ashcroft Farm, Stortford Road. Replacement dwelling with detached garage. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Wright and Cllr Hoodless. Cllr Wilkinson proposed there be no objection. Agreed.
- 33.6.5.** 1605/18 Land West of The Grove, Bury Green. Erection of nine dwelling houses. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Wright and Cllr Hoodless. From the floor, Cllr Williamson said that in the new Local Plan, Bury Green was a Group 3 village which excluded new developments. This meant the application was against policy. Cllr Wilkinson proposed that the Council object to the application and that the letter drafted by the Acting Clerk be sent to the Planning Office. Agreed. [Appendix 2].
- 33.6.6.** 1609/18 Land at Bury Green Farm Millfield Lane, Bury Green. Erection of proposed stable building comprising 22 stables. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Wright and Cllr Hoodless. Cllr Wilkinson said there was not enough land for 22 stables and there were many issues including access, drainage, light pollution and disposal of effluent. She noted that 28 local residents had objected. She proposed that the Council object to the application and that the letter drafted by the acting Clerk be sent after some small amendments. Agreed. [Appendix 3]. From the floor, Cllr Williamson said that, as the site was outside the hamlet of Bury Green on Land Beyond the Green Belt, it should not get approval. The only question would be whether it could be considered as an agricultural building.
- 33.6.7.** 1819/18 Home Farm, Chapel Lane. Erection of 4 2 bedroomed dwellings (2 x affordable). Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Tooke and Cllr Wardrop. Cllr Wilkinson said there had been many letters of objection from local residents. The site was outside the development boundary of The Ford on the busy Chapel Lane. Extra building would increase the risk of flooding from rainwater runoff. She proposed that the Council object to the application and that the letter drafted by the acting Clerk be sent to EHC Planning. Agreed. [Appendix 4].
- 33.6.8.** 1717/18 High Oaks, Pigs Green, Westland Green. Demolition of two storey house and 2 outbuildings. Construction of 1 part single and part two storey house with detached garage. Considered by Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Tooke and Cllr Wardrop. Wilkinson proposed there be no objection. Agreed.
- 33.7. Planning decisions received from EHC.**
- 33.7.1.** 0540/18 Ashcroft Farm, Stortford Road. Erection of 8 dwellings, change of use of land to school playing fields and associated works. Granted.

- 33.7.2.** 1310/18 Congregational Church, Chapel Lane, The Ford. Installation of two air source heat pumps and timber enclosure to east elevation, of existing residential property (3/14/0126/FUL). Granted.
- 33.7.3.** 1490/18 Chalk Pit Cottage, Stortford Road. Demolition of garage and erection of detached 1 no. 3 bedroomed dwelling. Withdrawn.
- 33.7.4.** 1354/18 Blakeney, Stortford Road. Proposed ground floor rear extension. Granted.
- 33.8. Appeal to enforcement received from EHC**
- 33.8.1.** E0330/18 Valley Fields, Westland Green. Appeal against: Enforcement action against the creation of a hard standing within the past four years.
- 33.9. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2nd October 2018.**
- 33.10. The Chair closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 8:48 p.m.**

Letters to the Planning Office.

Appendix 1 Re. 3/1544/0154/FUL Unit 2A Hadham Industrial Estate, Church End, Little Hadham. New B1 Office building with associated parking.

This planning application was considered at the Council meeting held on Tuesday 4th September 2018. The Council agreed to object to the application on the grounds of location, size and prominence and access.

Church End was a quiet rural hamlet containing the parish church, Church End Farm and a number of homes. This ‘industrial estate’ was created by stealth when a small number of redundant farm buildings were granted consent for industrial use. Since then the site has expanded to dominate what is still a farm. At no point has the suitability of this site as an industrial estate been considered.

Until now, the buildings at the site are converted farm buildings. The proposed office block will be a significant step in the urbanisation of the site. It will be very prominent and will dominate the view for the church, local residents and many residents of Hadham Hall. It will adversely affect walkers, cyclists and horse riders using the bridleway and footpath that pass along the site. The Council considers that there should be no more buildings given planning consent at the site.

Church End Lane is a narrow public road leading to the church, a number of homes and the farm. Users of the church and local residents frequently park in the road making access for the large lorries visiting the industrial estate very difficult. It has been known for drivers to interrupt church services in order to get cars moved. The Council believes that the road is unable to cope with the traffic already accessing the estate. The many extra vehicle movements generated by the office block will make the situation worse.

The Council is not aware of any local need for this office space. If the owners wish, they could convert some of the existing buildings to office space. The Council understands that the owners plan to build a large store to the north of the site for which consent has already been granted.

Appendix 2

Re. 3/18/1605/OUT Land West of The Grove, Bury Green. Erection of nine dwelling houses.

The Council considered this application at its meeting on Tuesday 4th September 2018. The Council agreed to object to the development on the grounds of location, poor access, poor services and lack of sustainability.

Bury Green is a small rural hamlet with most homes scattered round a large village green. The hamlet is surrounded by agricultural fields some of which are Green Belt and others, like this site, Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.

Bury Green is not a sustainable site for new housing – it has no shop, pub, bus service, doctors' surgery, school or village meeting place. All services have to be reached by private car along single track roads.

The proposed new housing would be on Bury Green Farm which includes the former GSK site. When the site became vacant, EHC produced a Design Brief for the site in 2005. The Brief recommended most of the site should not be used for new homes but only about 15 homes should be built on the edge of the site. The Bury Green residents reluctantly agreed and subsequently new homes were built at Farm Place and the Grove.

This application is to build still more houses on the former GSK site while others are considering applying to build up to 70 new home on the rest of the site. The Council considers the building of any new homes in Bury Green will irreversibly change the rural nature of this small hamlet.

In the draft Local Plan, Bury Green is designated as Group 3 which means there should be almost no development unless some limited infill is specified in a Neighbourhood Plan. Although a Plan is being developed it is far from complete and as yet no development sites have been named. EHC has identified a 6.2-year housing supply so the provisions of the Local Plan should apply.

Bury Green is served by three roads all of which will be used by the residents of any new houses. Millfield Lane and the road through Cradle End are single track roads with passing places. They are already very busy in the mornings and evenings. Acremore Street is a very narrow lane down a steep hill with few passing places and many blind bends. The road is very slippery in winter when it is covered in mud. There have been many accidents and numerous near misses on this road. The extra cars and delivery vans serving the new homes can only increase the danger.

Bury Green is not served by a mains sewerage scheme. The older homes have septic tanks while the newer homes use the sewage system left on the old GSK site. This system has repeatedly broken down and there have been disputes among residents about the cost of repairs. The system is unlikely to be able to cope with nine extra homes.

The Council believes that Bury Green is not a suitable place for building new homes on this scale. It is unsustainable and extra homes will alter the rural nature of the hamlet and turn it into a suburb of Bishop's Stortford. Almost all journeys by new residents will be by car and there will many extra delivery van visits.

Appendix 3

Re. 3/18/1609/FUL Land at Bury Green Farm, Millfield Lane, Bury Green. Erection of proposed stable building comprising 22 stables.

The Council considered this application at its meeting on Tuesday 4th September 2018. The Council agreed to object to the development on the grounds of location, scale and dangerous access.

This application is for a very large building containing stables on a small field well outside the small hamlet of Bury Green which is a small rural hamlet with most homes scattered round a large village green. The stables will be clearly visible for some distance around this hilltop site.

The field is on Rural Land Beyond the Green Belt on which there is a presumption of no development. Despite what the owner says in the application, the stables have nothing to do with the Silver Leys Polo Club who consider this an unsuitable site for polo stables.

The stables will occupy most of the small field leaving little room for horses to be allowed outside and no room for the storage of fodder and disposal of waste. There is no indication in the application where the horses will be allowed to exercise. The concentration of waste is likely to affect the groundwater and the rainwater runoff that pools in the hamlet at the bottom of the hill.

The stables would be sited on Millfield Lane which is a single-track road with passing places. The road is unsuitable for large horse boxes turning into and out of the site. There is only one access to the site and the busy road would make it very dangerous for so many horses being lead out for exercise twice a day.

The Council considers this to be a totally unsuitable site for the large stable building planned and would ask that the application be refused.

Appendix 4 Re. 3/18/1819/PIP Land adjacent to Home Farm, Chapel Lane, The Ford. Erection of 4 no. 2 bedroomed dwellings (2 x affordable).

This application was considered at the Council meeting held on Tuesday 4th September 2018. The Council agreed to object on grounds of location, flooding and prominence.

The site where this development is proposed is Land Beyond the Green Belt and is in the designated conservation area of The Ford. The existing homes on the site consist of the old Home Farm farmhouse and converted historic farm buildings. New buildings will have a detrimental effect on this conservation area.

The new District Plan, which is close to being adopted, designates The Ford as a Group 2 hamlet which allows for limited infill within the village boundary. This site is outside the development boundary of the village. The District Council has identified a 6.2-year housing supply meaning that the District Plan restrictions on developments should apply.

Little Hadham is a remarkable parish, in that, it is made up of nine hamlets. Each hamlet has a definitive “start” and a definitive “end”. Such features make our village special thus we feel very strongly that the “gaps” between the hamlets should be protected and are not appropriate areas for development. The above site forms a significant “gap” between the end of the hamlet of The Ford and the start of the next small residential settlement along Chapel Lane. To allow such a development would set a precedent which other developers would see as a clear signal to propose development in other “gaps” in our village.

There is a need in the parish for affordable homes for rent. These homes are said to be for local people but the homes would be beyond the price affordable by most residents – even the “affordable” homes at 80% of market price.

The site is clearly visible from New Road and Chapel Lane. The new homes will dominate the rural nature of the site.

Sustainability issues are also brought to the fore in terms of flood risk in particular to the area of The Ford (where Chapel Lane meets with the C15). Flash flooding was experienced in the

area recently. The increased flood risk is brought about because the River Ash (a very small stream) already cannot cope as it gets inundated quite quickly when there is heavy rainfall. It is felt that if more and more naturally draining land is covered with tarmac and concrete the risk of flooding in this part of our village would be greatly increased.