

MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

8.00pm, Tuesday 9 Dec 2014
King George V Hall, Browns Lane, Effingham

Present

Cllr Pindar – Chair

Cllrs Bowerman, Hogger, Lightfoot, Martland, Moss, Symes, Wetenhall

Clerk

204 local government electors

SCC Cllr Barker

C.Dick - EFFRA

T.Sokell - Bookham Vanguard

P.Seaward - Bookham RA

T.Harold - CPRE

167.14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Brazil - Family committment

R.McKinney

168.14 REGISTER OF INTERESTS & OTHER INTERESTS AFFECTING THIS AGENDA

Cllr Bowerman declared an interest as a managing trustee of EVRT

Cllr Hogger declared an interest as a managing trustee of EVRT

Cllr Hogger advised that as a Guildford Borough Councillor on the Planning Committee, she was able to give advice but ***no opinion on planning applications.***

169.14 PLANNING

New Application

14/P/02109 - Howard of Effingham School & Lodge Farm, Lower Road & Browns Field, Browns Lane, Effingham

Hybrid planning application for outline permission (only access to be considered) for the erection of a replacement secondary school for Howard of Effingham and up to 258 residential dwellings with means of access at Howard of Effingham School and Lodge Farm, Lower Road following demolition of all existing buildings; and full permission for the erection of 37 dwellings, with access, parking and landscaping works on land at Brown's Field, Brown's Lane, Effingham.

Application History

Cllr Pindar, Chair, gave an overview of the history of the application process and the sources of possible relevant data that could be used in any decisions or responses to the planning application.

It was advised that there had been a Without Prejudice Liaison Group meeting regularly since June in order to provide a discussion forum for issues and areas of concern relating to the proposed application, involving the Parish Council, Borough Council, County Council, EFFRA, the Howard of Effingham School and Berkeley Homes. With Guildford Planning officers in attendance at these meetings, the Without Prejudice status has allowed discussions which are formally considered separate from any Parish Council or EFFRA assessments of the planning application and cannot be considered to have an impact on any decision regarding an application prior to the formal submission.

[1]

It was also advised that the Parish Council had also spent a great deal of time researching and responding to the Guildford BC Local Plan. As well as carrying out a Housing Requirements survey, the Parish Council also set up a Local Plan Community Development Research Group which brought together a group of Parish Councillors and local volunteer expertise to research data that could help inform responses to the Local Plan and to any future major development proposals arising from the Local Plan. Cllr Pindar introduced a presentation from Cllr Moss on data identified by the research group considered relevant to the Berkeley Homes planning application with the aim to brief both Parish Councillors and residents on the data available and give an overview of some of the important factors to consider in responding to any large planning application

Research Presentation

Cllr Moss presented a thorough overview of the research carry out by the Working Group and an overview of the key areas of possible concerns looking at:

- Identified needs of the community
- Stated needs of the school
- Potential harm to the Green Belt
- Appropriateness of the sites for the nature of the developments proposed

The presentation to be made available to all residents. Clerk to make this available electronically through the website and to provide paper copies for reference in the Parish Room.

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STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

Cllr Pindar invited local organisations and residents to give their views and ask questions.

The following points were raised by local organisations:

EFFRA stated their intention to object to the application and invited residents to speak to EFFRA representatives and collect relevant information at the meeting.

Bookham Vanguard express concern about the impact of such a large development on infrastructure which will impact on both Effingham and Bookham.

Bookham RA advised that the future of the school was of great concern to Bookham as over 700 pupils at the current school lived in Bookham and the new development plans may impact on the number of places available within the catchment area.

CPRE also expressed concerns about the catchment area and whether any changes might be made to these in the future. They felt that the research data was a valuable resource for all those wishing to respond to the application.

Surrey CC Cllr Barker highlighted that infrastructure concerns were likely to be key but that the question of demand for school places was a complex question that Surrey CC were continually reviewing.

Local residents raised the following points:

- The Howard of Effingham is a good school and therefore demand for places is high but an increase in places will not address the key areas of demand in the Borough which are centred elsewhere and there are two new free schools proposed in the Borough which will address future demand.
- Surrey CC data on demand and places available may not be accurate as there has been one example of a family in Effingham being unable to gain places at the school in the last five years.
- Any new schools should be built where the demand in the Borough is highest and catchment areas should not be changes to alleviate this sort of problem.
- There are huge traffic issues in the village at present and the scale of the development will cause chaos both during any construction and in the long-term due to the increased number of cars and journeys.
- The carrot of a new school is being used to blind people to the implications of a development of this scale.
- Any school wishing to move, change its site or expand must follow government regulations on consultation and make a strong business case. Consultation within the village seems to have been very low key and it should be verified that all proper procedures have been followed in this case
- The area has a large and varied wildlife population which are bound to be impacted by such a large development
- Verification that an impact assessment has been carried out for Thanet Wood should carried out. There is a requirement for a minimum buffer zone around the site
- There appear to be future plans to move St Lawrence School to the new site as well and if this means more housing to pay for this as well, then the scale of the development could be even bigger.
- There appear to have been no other options considered in this process. A new school could be built elsewhere and some level of housing could be accommodated in the village but less and more tailored to village need not just how many is needed in order to build a new school.
- Covenants on the different bits of land should be looked at to make sure that all processes have been properly looked at.
- It looks as if the school could be refurbished for a reasonable amount of money and it does not appear to be in a desperately neglected state. The prospect of a new school is just an attractive opportunity that is making people ignore the practical and cost benefits of refurbishment.
- If the development goes ahead, what other community benefits will be available. The village needs medical and health facilities and if the village grows by such a huge amount this will be even more vital.

STANDING ORDERS REINSTATED

Cllr Pindar thanked everyone for their views and reinstated Standing Orders for the Parish Council to formally discuss the application.

All councillors, with the exception of Cllr Hogger, stated their views on the application. It was resolved by a unanimous vote that, in principle, the Parish Council would object to the application. Cllr Hogger did not take part in the vote because, as a Guildford Borough councillor she is a member of the Planning Committee.

Next Steps

Cllr Pindar that a draft response to the application would be brought to the next Parish Council meeting at 6 January 2015.

All residents were encouraged to respond to the application. For those who disagree with the application, it was advised that the word '**Objection**' should be used in the letter of response as this is a formal planning term. Responses should be submitted as soon as possible so that Guildford BC officers have sufficient time to review all responses.

170.14

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.00pm, Tuesday 6 January 2015
KGV Hall, Browns Lane, Effingham