



Westbourne

Parish Council

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Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's meeting which took place at 7pm on Thursday 24 January 2019 at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Chris Eaton, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr David Mack, Cllr Piers Mason, Cllr Nigel Ricketts, Cllr Syd Smith, and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Hitchcock. Mr Frank Campbell, non-council member of the Council's Planning Committee, was present. No other members of the public were present.

1. Declarations of interest: None.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Val Owen.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 January 2019: The minutes were agreed as a true record and were signed as such by the Chair.

4. Updates and issues from the minutes of 10 January 2019: It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting on Thursday 14 February 2019 in order that the public, who may attend the meeting, can hear about any updates.

5. Chichester Local Plan Review: The Parish Council considered the revised draft Plan which was circulated before the meeting and agreed to make representations on a number of policy areas, a summary of which is included in Appendix 1.

6. Havant Borough Council planning application APP/18/00672, land off Westwood Close, Emsworth. Erection of 36 dwellings with associated parking, access from Westwood Close, diversion of Havant Footpath 73, landscaping and surface water drainage. Felling and works to trees within Area A1, subject to TPO 2071. Members agreed to object to the planning application. The full objection is available in Appendix 2.

7. Announcements and items for the next meeting: None.

8. Date of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 14 February 2019 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Appendix 1: Local Plan Review 2035

Key points for consideration in response to Chichester DC

Following a meeting on 21 December 2018 with Mike Allgrove (manager responsible for the Local Plan) at CDC regarding the Local Plan Review, Roy and Frank have identified the following key points for consideration. They can be used as a basis for the PC response. Obviously, these are not the only matters which Parish Councillors may be concerned about but they do provide a starting point for a discussion. They also represent the key points that are already known to be of concern to the Parish Council.

GTTS issues: Policy S7 and DM5

There is concern that the policies as drafted are based on an inadequate or even flawed evidence base. From an assessment of the approach to the evidence base it would appear that there is no authentication or validation that persons occupying existing GTTS accommodation are either true gypsies / travellers or of GTTS heritage. From experience locally in Westbourne it is believed that many occupants of accommodation intended to be reserved for the GTTS community are in fact occupied by non GTTS persons who simply seek affordable accommodation. The additional levels of occupation by non GTTS persons exaggerates the true level of need leading to an inflated assessment of what is actually required.

We would urge CDC to challenge the accuracy of the original GTTS needs survey on this basis in order to avoid over provision. Once GTTS dwellings are actually provided on site there would appear to be inadequate enforcement of occupation restrictions. In effect this results in the creation of what could be classified as “Park Home Communities” by default.

Another significant concern based on the experience of WPC is to ensure that a policy provision is included in the range of GTTS policies to avoid over concentration of GTTS dwellings in one location. This is a particular concern for Westbourne but it probably applies to other communities such as Funtington where there are already significant numbers of GTTS dwellings in existence. The concern is that the existing policy S7 includes a sequential approach that tends to favour intensification or extension of existing GTTS sites as a means of providing the total numbers of dwellings considered to be needed within the District. In some situations, this may well be satisfactory but where the existing settled community would be adversely affected by increasing the size and scale of an existing GTTS site, the impact on its social infrastructure and its community cohesion / balance can be a significant problem. Therefore such additional intensification should be resisted. It is recommended to CDC that a criteria based approach to extension of existing GTTS sites should be included so that further expansion can be resisted, where it can be demonstrated that there would be a harmful impact on the settled community particularly in terms of social infrastructure and community cohesion / balance. These qualifying criteria may best be included in a revised Policy DM5.

Settlement and housing issues: policies S1 to S6 inclusive

The overall settlement hierarchy identifies Westbourne as a Service Village and in these locations neighbourhood plans are encouraged. The distribution of new dwellings over and above existing allocations or permissions confirms that there are

no new allocations planned for Westbourne. The Parish Council can endorse this with enthusiasm. The approach seems to recognise that there are limits to what can be achieved by way of new allocation sites within and around Westbourne and the Parish should confirm that this is a position that we have also found to be the case in our work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy S6 sets out an approach to affordable housing with a series of criteria. Again, these seem sensible and can be endorsed by the Parish Council.

Supporting community land trusts and exception sites: policy DM4

There are new policies included in the Local Plan Review that encourage the formation of Community Land Trusts as a way of providing affordable housing and low cost workspace within local communities where traditional policies have previously failed to meet these local needs. These seem to be innovative and welcome approaches that strongly support the objectives of the Parish Council as set out in its Neighbourhood Plan and in its Business Plan and they should be supported.

Policy DM4 is also a new policy approach that seeks to allow the approval of development for affordable housing on exception sites provided that they are outside the settlement boundary but not remote / isolated and they are modest in scale and 100% affordable houses retained in perpetuity for this purpose. This is again directly supportive of the Parish Council's objectives and should be welcomed.

The shopping centre hierarchy: policies S9 and S10

The Local Plan Review includes a Shopping Centre Hierarchy in Policy S9, with a sequential approach to the provision of new retail floor space. Westbourne is included in this hierarchy as a village centre, to be defined in the subsequent Neighbourhood Plan. This seems like a sensible approach and can be supported by the Parish Council. It will encourage the safeguarding of Westbourne as a village centre and supports its vitality and viability as a local centre for services and shopping. Policy S10 is a complementary policy and again should be supported. However there is one policy issue that could be raised by the Parish Council and included either in Policy S9 or S10 which is to actively encourage the physical improvement or enhancement of the public realm in Village Centres. Especially for villages like Westbourne with heritage buildings and a Conservation Area which suffers from through traffic and a lack of effective management of the use of its main public space, i.e. The Square.

Biodiversity and Strategic wildlife corridors: policy S30 and DM 29

These policies S30 and DM29 are intended to protect and enhance biodiversity. The policy includes the concept of strategic wildlife corridors that are intended to protect biodiversity and provide protected routes along which wildlife can easily move. These corridors tend to link the coast with the South Downs and there is one which comes directly through the Westbourne broadly following the line of the River Ems. We should welcome the concept of wildlife corridors which will not only assist in preventing unsuitable dense development, lacking in open space but will also actively promote the protection of species such as birds and bats that are a feature of local biodiversity in the village and need protected habitats and quality open space to pass through.

Appendix 2: APP/18/00672: Erection of 36 no. dwellings with associated parking, access from Westwood Close, diversion of Havant Footpath 73, landscaping and surface water drainage. Felling and works to trees within Area A1, subject to TPO 2071. Land off Westwood Close, Emsworth.

Westbourne Parish Council strongly objects to this planning application.

The Parish Council's objection to the proposed development has already been provided at a Development Consultation Forum at Havant Borough Council in January 2018 where it was invited to make a representation, as well as in its response to Havant Borough Council's Draft Local Plan Consultation in February 2018. The Parish Council has also objected to a previous planning application for 46 properties at this location. Although some modifications have been made to the current development proposal, the Parish Council considers that these minor changes do not in any way overcome the objections it has previously made to both the strategic principles and to the details of the scheme. Copies of these objections are included.

As a Parish located within West Sussex, but immediately adjacent to the county boundary with Hampshire and Havant Borough, Westbourne is directly affected by the proposed development.

The details of our concerns are set out in the attached previous objections but in summary the Parish Council would reiterate that we object because

- The countryside gap in which the site lies should continue to be protected
- The proposals would have a detrimental effect on wildlife and biodiversity
- The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan contains policies to protect the open land in the countryside around the village and to protect wildlife and biodiversity. This should be afforded significant weight given its endorsement by an examiner following a public hearing.
- The proposal is located within an area at risk of flooding and would increase flood risk more widely
- The proposed urban drainage systems are unsatisfactory and will be a long-term liability without being adopted
- The existing rural footpath would be relocated and subject to flooding / waterlogging in winter conditions making it unusable
- The appearance of the development would detract from the rural setting of the open land along the River Ems
- The proposals make no contribution to infrastructure requirements within the village of Westbourne and yet any future occupants would rely on that local centre as a sustainable location for shopping and services

There are some additional points that the Parish Council would wish to include in its objections to the proposed development which relate to changed circumstances since the earlier objections were lodged to proposals for this site.

Chichester District Council has in its recently published Local Plan Review 2035, designated as a wild life corridor all of the open meadow land alongside the River

Minutes

Ems up to the county boundary. Wildlife corridors are intended to protect and enhance biodiversity. (Policies S30 and DM29 of the Local Plan Review refer)

It is acknowledged that this policy position can only affect land on the Chichester side of the county boundary but all of the open land on both sides of the boundary contributes significantly to these wildlife and biodiversity objectives. The proposed development will seriously harm these policy objectives. Historically both Havant BC and Chichester DC have acknowledged the importance of this open land and the need to protect it from development in the interests amongst other things of protecting wildlife and biodiversity. The Parish Council would urge the Borough Council to maintain this protective policy position.

The Parish Council also understands that the Environment Agency is currently reviewing the function of the River Ems floodplain, including the application site, in terms of its potential to mitigate flood risk. This is a significant long-term issue that must be given full and proper consideration in order to alleviate flood risk in the context of climate change. The current application should be refused as premature until the outcome of this reappraisal is known.

In conclusion the Parish Council would strongly request the Borough Council to give careful consideration to its objections and concerns in respect of the proposed development and refuse the planning application.