

MINUTES of a Special Meeting of the COUNCIL held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11 July 2012 in the Day Centre, Crafton Green, Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

PRESENT: Cllr C Dean (Vice Chairman), Cllrs M Ambrose, M Caton, N Collingwood, S Dunn,
B Gott, J Hudson, D Oliver, J Savopoulos and V Trundle

ATTENDING: Mrs R Clifford – Clerk
Cty Cllr R Gooding
Dist Cllrs A Dean and J Rich
Representatives of The Pines Hill Consortium – item 3
Representatives of Taylor Wimpey/Bidwells – item 4
18 members of the public

131 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Freeman, P L Jones, F Richards, J Salmon and G Sell.

132 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

Mr Woodcock – addressed members regarding locations STA8 and STA13 of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). He reminded members of the policies in the Local Plan particularly with regard to the capacity of local road networks.

133 PINES HILL CONSORTIUM

The Chairman introduced Tony Collins (Pines Hill Consortium), Adrian Ball and Robert Church (Linden Homes), Stephen Adams (EAS) and Geoff Leyland (Bidwells).

Mr Collins gave some background information regarding the site at Pines Hill – referred to in the SHLAA document as STA8 – the former Christmas tree site. He stated that the Consortium believed that Uttlesford had under-estimated the housing numbers for Stansted (at 60) and would be required to bring forward other sites – they hoped that this would be one of them. He showed a conceptual site layout and indicated that any development would include a new access from Pines Hill, thereby allowing the inadequate Stoney Common Road junction to become one-way or closed off altogether. The fact that the site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt was, Mr Collins believed, the only reason that the site had not come forward previously for development but it was noted that the Inspector at a previous Plan Inquiry believed that the site was suitable for development.

The Chairman asked whether any consideration would be given to improving the road network further along Stoney Common Road. Cllr Dunn asked about the type of housing being proposed. Mr Collins replied that all of these could be addressed if the scheme progressed. His intention was to draw up more detailed plans for submission to the Local Plan Inquiry and these, together

with other concerns about car parking (Cllr Caton) the ability of the GP surgery to cope with greater numbers (Cllr Trundle), would be considered then.

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Dist Cllr Rich stated that he had concerns about development within the MGB – it has protected the village from coalescence with Birchanger and Bishop’s Stortford. He asked the Consortium not to under-estimate the efforts of local people to keep the housing allocation numbers low. Mr Collins stated that the 60 units suggested by Uttlesford did not offer sufficient choice – something the Inspector would be looking for at the Inquiry.

Cllr Oliver asked why the Consortium believed this to be a good site for development – Mr Collins replied due to its size, good boundaries (preventing sprawl), the fact that the site is ready and could come forward quickly and the village is in a desirable setting making properties saleable. Cllr Savopoulos asked about density, especially compared with Foresthall Park. Mr Ball replied that Linden Homes build bespoke houses of low density and the Government has changed the rules on density since FHP was granted permission.

In response to Cllr Hudson, Mr Adams confirmed that no discussions have yet taken place with ECC Highways but he had undertaken his own traffic counts and speed assessments on the B1383. With no further questions, the Chairman thanked the representatives for attending and they left the meeting.

On the subject of the Local Plan, members then heard an appeal from Don Sturgeon of the Joint Parishes Group, asking for assistance in rejecting large numbers of houses at Elsenham and Henham. It was agreed that the Parish Council would publicise this where possible and encourage residents to make their comments known.

134 LAND NORTH AND WEST OF BENTFIELD GREEN

The Chairman introduced Andrew Blackwell (Bidwells), David Edwards of Taylor Wimpey and Clive Self (CSa – Environmental Consultants).

Copies of a site plan showing an area of proposed development were circulated to members. The proposal included housing, football pitches and changing rooms, Village Green, informal “kickabout” area, footpaths and allotments. Messrs Blackwell and Edwards explained why they believed that this was an appropriate area for development and offered substantially more than the previous planning application to site junior football pitches on the adjacent land.

Cllr Trundle voiced her concern that this would be the start of a sprawl towards the north of the village. Mr Blackwell stated that they would put strategic landscaping in place to prevent that and to the west the playing fields and Village Green would be given to, or leased to, perhaps the Parish Council. There is a natural limit on the road infrastructure also. The proposed access would be from Pennington Lane. District Cllr Dean believed that use of Pennington Lane would undoubtedly increase and this could open the door for further development on land to the east of the Lane, ie the “Bloor Homes” site.

In response to Cllr Collingwood, it was confirmed that the surface water would drain to the pond and swale shown on the plan. Dist Cllr Rich asked if the allotments and green spaces areas would be transferred to the Parish Council freehold? This was considered likely.

Cty Cllr Gooding asked about primary school provision as Bentfield primary is at capacity. Mr Blackwell confirmed that they have not yet discussed this with the Education Authority.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked these gentlemen for attending and they left the meeting.

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135 BELLWAY HOMES

The Clerk had established that the revised planning application for the Cambridge Road site would be determined by the UDC Planning Committee on 25 July and as there was no other Council Meeting between now and then, the Chairman asked members to establish their position.

The revised application included a pedestrian link to the Crafton Green car park, and the gates at the entrance had been omitted. Further details regarding a study on commercial/employment sites had been submitted also. The Clerk reminded members of the comments they had made to the first application – primarily that they did not wish to lose this employment site from the village. Members agreed to reiterate this comment and Cllr Dean was asked to represent the Parish Council at the UDC meeting.

136 JUBILEE GRANTS

The Clerk had obtained estimates for the play equipment at Bentfield Green, commemorative seats and a mechanical litter collecting machine. No quotations had been received for Christmas lights (insufficient specification available) or for maintenance to footpaths (several issues outstanding). Agreed that applications should be submitted for the three items listed above, with Christmas lights and twichels being added if sufficient information was forthcoming before the deadline.

137 LETTER RE STANSTED YOUTH SERVICE

The letter from Linda Barnes and Jem Free – former youth workers in Stansted – had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was known that attendance at the youth centre has dropped since the restructuring of the service had been implemented, and Mrs Barnes and Mr Free had offered to come to run sessions on two evenings per week for the six weeks of the summer holidays, at a cost of £1,*** to the Parish Council.

Cllr Jones, Chairman of the Finance Committee, had asked the Clerk to express his great support for this proposal and to confirm that there were funds available in the Council's budget to cover the cost. Dist Cllr Dean added his support and believed that this would be a good opportunity to find out just what is available currently at the youth centre. Cllr Dunn said she had noticed, as a nearby resident, that the centre is not as well attended as it was previously.

Cty Cllr Gooding stated that the aim of the Youth Service now is to seek out the youngsters who do not engage. He has made a request for a representative of the Youth 2000 Group to sit on the newly constituted group and it has recently been established that the Stansted Youth Centre will become the main hub for Uttlesford's youth services. In Cllr Gooding's opinion, the service offered by Mrs Barnes and Mr Free works well with the County's aim to tie in other organisations.

Having been proposed by Cllr Dean and seconded by Cllr Dunn, it was

RESOLVED that the Council should accept the offer from Mrs Barnes and Mr Free as detailed in their letter.

Meeting closed 9.12pm