

Minutes of the Meeting of the Great Burstead and South Green Village Council,
held at South Green Memorial Hall, Southend Road, Billericay,
on Wednesday, 6 January 2010 at 7.30pm

Present: **Councillor Aly Khan (Chair)**
Councillors Cundy, John Dear, Marie Dear and Wakelin.

In Attendance: **Mrs. Kim Barford, Clerk to the Council**
7 members of the public

9/144 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr's Kelly, McConnell and Saunderson.

9/145 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

The meeting was adjourned for public participation.

9/146 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matter which are of mutual interest?

Members of the public commented on:

- A. Item 7a - Planning application no. 09/01083/REM
The Billericay School former farm site
Approval of reserved matters for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale on a scheme for 51 dwellings
- B. Item 8 - Coxes Farm Road

The meeting re-convened.

9/147 Minutes

Members received the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 2 December 2009. Cllr. Marie Dear proposed the minutes be approved as a true record, which was seconded by Cllr. Dorothy Cundy and agreed by all present.

9/148 Committee minutes

Members received for information the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 2 December 2009 and Cllr. Wakelin updated members on recent applications considered.

9/149 Planning Applications

Members considered the following applications:

- a. 09/01083/REM
The Billericay School former farm site
Approval of reserved matters for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale on a scheme for 51 dwellings

The Village Council responded as follows:

Proposed construction

Property style, scale and site layout - Of particular concern are the three storey dwellings planned for site no's 15, 18, 19, 42, 43 and 46. Members would like to object to these on grounds of overlook and the overbearing nature of their design to neighbouring properties. Even more importantly in the case of the south side plots no's 42, 43 and 46 is the effect to existing residents in Longrise, whose rear gardens average 9m in depth. The downward slope of the land on the site to the gardens of Longrise is substantial,

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between 3m to 3.5m so these planned properties would not only overlook but also be overbearing and make a considerable difference to natural sunlight for those residents with their gardens being south west facing.

Parking - The parking provision was felt by members to be questionable and inadequate. The road is of a narrow width, additional parking would be required by visitors and of major concern was the question of through access particularly for fire and emergency vehicles should there be inconsiderate additional parking in the cul de sac and possible effect of overfill parking in existing neighbouring roads which are already under pressure.

Drainage - Reference was noted by members on the Planning Inspectorates report to drainage. This is of major concern. Two natural springs originally existed at the top of Bell Hill; sumps are felt to be an insufficient measure to deal with water drainage at the site. The Village Council would like to underline the concern of local residents, that properties in Longrise, Leaway and beyond are not affected by the excess surface water from the hard landscaping and construction of the development, being on what is natural farmland.

Access - Although aware that the awarded OPP included access to the development via Bell Hill Close members wished still to reinforce their view and again object. The Village Council feels the road is of a minimal width to cope with the volume of additional traffic and of major concern is the access leading to and from the Bell Hill section of the Southend Road. Traffic regularly speeds along the road in a northerly direction following acceleration up the Hill and in a southerly direction after leaving the roundabout at the top of Bell Hill. Also, for vehicles leaving Bell Hill Close the sightline southwards is limited, members would like to suggest if no other vehicular access is made available that a restriction be put in place stopping vehicles from turning right when leaving Bell Hill Close to avoid potential accidents. Members believe the initial application included an additional access, from the south of the development onto Noak Hill Road. That would still be the preferred safer option, with two access points also helping to alleviate traffic congestion not only on the development but particularly on Bell Hill.

Landscaping

Overall members approved the planting scheme however it was noted a number of specific plants were not indigenous to the area and would like to raise an objection to the following:

Sorbus (Mountain Ash)
Birch
Prunus Pissardii

and suggest they be replaced with:

Field Maple
Crab Apple
Thorn
Pear

The Village Council was pleased to note the inclusion of a hedge, to separate the development from the wildlife corridor, as apparent on site plans but noted it does not appear on the planting plans. Members would like to endorse the planting of such a hedge.

Ecological area and open space

The ecological area is another area of major concern along with the existing ecology of the entire site.

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Members noted the content of the Ecology and landscape management plan, August 2008 which includes reference to the protection of the existing badger setts, with the planned containment during construction of the development, and eventual southerly route access for them from the site. The badgers are being pushed closer to the road with less space. They will wander from the site as they naturally do and may be involved in accidents which of course not only endanger themselves but the drivers and their passengers, on the neighbouring busy main roads.

The provision of new habitat for the bats currently residing in the ancient barn, which is to be demolished and the planned relocation for other wildlife was also noted and although members are concerned trust the actions which the report alludes to are carried out.

The Village Council understands the local community have already asked that the ancient barn, which was originally and should have remained listed, be given to the community and the Village Council endorses that request. Members would also like to ask, with reference to item 3 of the Ecology and landscape management plan, can part of the area, be made available for potential allotments if the need arises?

Again with regard to the planting plans members would like to suggest oak, ash or field maple be planted rather than sorbus (mountain ash).

With reference to the open space of the proposed development members noted a complete lack of any community facility and would like to ask that children's play equipment be installed as part of the scheme. No provision has been made in the proposed development for local services.

The infrastructure is already under pressure to meet the needs of existing residents. (The Village Council is urgently trying to also source a place for a community facility within the Parish that would include a meeting room and will contact the developer direct requesting their assistance.)

Ecologically, the Village Council would like the developer to issue a statement detailing the eco-credentials of the proposed development and would like to formally be notified of the developer's plans for the ongoing maintenance of the ecological area in perpetuity and how it will be monitored.

The Village Council would also like to receive a guarantee that there will be no future phases of development to the ecological area.

b. 09/01156/FULL

12 Church Street, Billericay

First floor side extension and conversion of flat roof dormers and entrance porch to pitched roof dormers

The Village Council had no objection to this development.

9/150 Coxes Farm Road

Members were updated on correspondence received from Essex CC, Highways in response to the Village Councils recent letter. It was noted a speed survey is to be undertaken and the parking problems outside of the School are to be monitored. A resident informed members a speed survey strip had been installed however it was in an area of the road, where the derestricted area meets the restricted area outside of the school, not however a stretch of road where speeding usually occurred. Members requested that the clerk contact Highways to ensure the speed survey is also undertaken on the northern section of the road.

The clerk to update members at the next meeting.

2 members of the public left the meeting.

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9/151 Noak Hill Road

The clerk advised members letters of acknowledgement had been received from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation and Essex CC, Highways.

Members to be further updated at the next meeting.

9/152 Pedestrian Crossing, Southend Road north of junction with Hickstars Lane

Members were updated on correspondence received from Essex CC, Highways in response to the Village Councils recent letter. It was noted that the street lighting provision at the site is to be reviewed and subject to findings will be upgraded. The anti-skid surface is also to be reviewed and the Village Council will be notified when further information is available. For now the school warning sign is too replaced. Members to be further updated at the next meeting.

9/153 Langham Hall and Park

Members were advised no further response had been received to the Village Councils earlier requests for inclusion in consultation on the future of the Hall and Park.

It was however noted from a recently received circulated copy of the Basildon District Council's Members bulletin that the principal of disposal of the site is to be considered on 14 January 2010 at Cabinet. The clerk updated members, on the response, since received to her further enquiries with an officer on behalf of the Manager of Basildon Renaissance Partnership and the Cabinet member concerned. The matter is now to be heard at Cabinet on 28 January 2010. Public notices are to appear, as the site comprises of public open space in the Yellow Advertiser on 8 and 15 January stating the Council's intention to dispose and seeking written representations by 22 January 2010.

Debate ensued and members requested the clerk write accordingly, in response to the public notice, again highlighting the Village Councils concern about the potential loss of the community facility.

9/154 Clerks report

Christmas illuminations - It was noted the decorations had been taken down. Some members commented that one of the column tree decorations had been alight intermittently.

The clerk would bring the matter to the attention of the installer, particularly for reference prior to the installation for Christmas 2010.

9/155 South Green - Tree maintenance and planting

Members were updated on the clerk's conversation with Garry Meadowcroft, Arboricultural Officer, Basildon District Council, who concurred that the trees planted on South Green in 2008 would benefit from an application of mulch and fertiliser with attention also to the stakes and ties. Members referred to the discussion at the December meeting, when it was proposed by Cllr. Cundy and seconded by Cllr. Marie Dear, that the quotation from P. Thomas landscapes be accepted and all members present were in agreement that the clerk now arrange for the work to be completed.

With regard to the planting of a hedge alongside the boundary fence to the first property in Grange Road, he thought it to be good suggestion as it would actually be replacing a hedge that had been previously removed and would improve the look, having hedge all along the boundary to that side of South Green. He said no further permission would be required. A budget of £60 for cultivation of the strip had been approved at the December meeting and members asked that the clerk arrange for work to be completed. Planting to take then take place in the spring. With regards to future maintenance he stated the District Council no longer took over the responsibility for maintenance of planting by local councils but he did think the cost of such future care would be minimal.

4 members of the public left the meeting.

9/156 Christmas Sing Song

Members received an update from the clerk following the 10 December event which had been a great success being well received by all who attended and generously supported by the independent South

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Cllr. Marie Dear proposed and it was seconded by Cllr. Cundy that the clerk is delegated authority to reply on behalf of the Village Council, to which all members present were in agreement. Members to contact their clerk with their comments on the matter and all members present requested that copies of the reply also go to the Forward Planning Officer at Basildon District Council and Billericay Town Council.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

DRAFT