

Guilden Sutton Parish Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 11 February 2014 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Chairman: Cllr W Moulton.

Present: Cllrs I Brown, A Davis, D M Fisher, D Hughes, W Moulton, P M Paterson,, M S J Roberts.

In attendance: Cllr M Parker, Cllr S Parker and 35 members of the public.

1 Procedural matters.

(i) Declarations of interest. Members were reminded that they should declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or any Other Disclosable Interest which they may have in any matter or item to be considered at the meeting. Any declaration must be made before the matter, or item, was considered or as soon as the Member became aware a declaration was required. Declarations were a personal matter for each Member to decide with the decision to declare, or not, being the responsibility of the Member based on the particular circumstances.

(ii) Apologies. An apology from Cllr Ringstead was received and accepted.

(iii) Dates of future ordinary meetings: Mondays 3 March, (7 April) preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm), 12 May, 2 June, 21 July, 1 September, 6 October, 3 November, 1 December 2014.

(iv) Late information report. There was no late information report for the current meeting.

2 Community engagement: (i) Public speaking time. There was no public speaking. (ii) Visiting Members/Officers. Cllr S Parker informed he had called the application referred to beneath before the Planning Committee due to the overwhelming public opposition to development on the proposed site.

3 Planning.

Residential development of 18 dwellings including 14 affordable units and associated vehicular access to School Lane.

Land Adjacent To Treetops School Lane Guilden Sutton Chester Cheshire

Ref. No: 13/05410/FUL | Validated: Fri 20 Dec 2013 | Status: Pending consideration.

MCI Developments and the Plus Dane Group.

Cllrs Moulton, Hughes.

This application had been subject to extensive consultation including public meetings organised by the developer and by the Parish Council, a drop in organised by the Parish Council and a meeting on the general principles of development attended by Stephen Mosley MP. In addition there had been public speaking at meetings of the Council in addition to direct consultation with adjacent and nearby residents. A survey of housing need in the parish had been carried out by Cheshire Community Action for the applicant.

The developer believed the 14 affordable homes, supported by four market dwellings, would provide prioritised affordable housing for local need and would secure the on-going vitality of the village by helping to provide housing for those who could not afford to rent or buy in their own village. It was argued there was an overwhelming case for planning permission to support Guilden Sutton as a vibrant and sustainable community and to meet an identified affordable housing need.

Members were aware that Cheshire West and Chester Council had identified a need for 85 affordable homes in Chester Villages ward over a five year period. There was a significant shortfall. The borough council's housing waiting list contained 12 applicants from within the parish and 20 with rural connections. The independent survey had suggested a need for 12 family homes, six adult couple homes, five single adult homes and five older couple homes. It was noted housing need was disputed by objectors.

The Vice Chairman believed the Council should draw attention to inaccurate or incomplete information within the application which may cause concern as to other content. This included references to access to Hoole Lane and to Chester, the number of churches within walking distance and the frequency of bus services.

The Chairman referred to the approach by central government and Cheshire West and Chester Council which supported sustainable growth and which would support local services. He felt there did not appear to be many people in Guilden Sutton who required affordable housing and felt there was the possibility this was not justified. The loss of prime Green Belt agricultural land should be considered. There were questions as to whether infrastructure such as the school and the village hall would be sufficient for the increased number of residents. The strong feelings throughout had been the village was against any development. Cllr Paterson recognised the need for affordable homes but did not believe the development was modest. She believed the real need was for market bungalows and felt it would be unfair to Guilden Sutton to have such a preponderance of affordable homes when the ward as whole was intended to have 17 in any one year. Cllr Parker confirmed the borough council was well down on the figures required for provision in Chester Villages. It was noted there would be fundamental change to the character of that part of the village taken with the proposed development at Wood Farm which included three affordable homes. Cllr Hughes concurred with Cllr Paterson as to the allocation of 14 affordable homes in addition to the three to be built at Wood Farm. Cllr Fisher believed the true needs of Guilden Sutton were not being taken into account in order to satisfy the requirements of the larger area.

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Roberts and agreed on a 6-1 vote with one abstention that the Council should object to the application in line with its longstanding policy to protect the Green Belt against inappropriate development. The LPA would be informed those responding to the consultation overwhelmingly opposed development on the Green Belt site and questioned whether need had been established. These views mirrored exactly those of residents who had attended the consultation events organised by the Council. In addition, a majority of those responding to the independent housing need survey had opposed development. At the time of the decision, no support had been indicated to the Council. On that basis Members believed they must follow their long established policy, reflected in the adopted Guilden Sutton Parish Plan and in the comments of the Spatial Planning Team, of opposing what was clearly seen to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The LPA would be further advised of the concern as to traffic issues. That part of School Lane was close to the primary school which had a higher than average proportion of out of zone pupils. Conditions at peak hours were difficult and the Council believed that if approved, the development should be set back to better reflect the traditional building line in the village and to allow vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear thus avoiding reversing manoeuvres onto School Lane. The cumulative effect on School Lane/Guilden Sutton Lane and the junction of Guilden Sutton Lane and the A41, including the net increase of eight dwellings on the nearby Wood Farm site, should also be taken into account.

It was also believed protected species of Great Crested Newts and bats may be present on the application site which should be assessed.

The Council wished to draw attention to the inaccurate or incomplete information within the application which may cause concern as to other content. This included references to access to Hoole lane and Chester, the number of churches within walking distance and the frequency of bus services.

Should the LPA be minded to approve the application, the Council would request the following conditions:

(i) Affordable housing. Social rented and part ownership affordable housing within the development should remain social rented and part ownership in perpetuity.

Prior to the commencement of development an affordable housing scheme should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The scheme should include details of:

The numbers, type, tenure and location on the site of the affordable housing provision to be made.

The management of the affordable housing.

The occupancy criteria to determine the identity of prospective and successive occupiers including the identification of means to ensure such occupancy conditions are enforced.

The timing of the construction of the affordable housing and of any phasing in relation to the occupancy of the market housing. All affordable dwellings should be constructed prior to or at the same time as the market dwellings.

Arrangements to ensure that such provision was affordable for both the first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing.

Priority in allocating tenures should be given to those from within Guilden Sutton parish or with demonstrable close ties to it.

Further 'construction' conditions would be added similar to those requested at Wood Farm modified to take account of the location.

The meeting concluded at 2005.