MAIDEN NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING TO DISCUSS THE OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE LAND KNOWN AS THE QUARR OFF CATTISTOCK ROAD

HELD ON

MONDAY 22 JUNE 2015

**AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, CHILFROME LANE**

**CHAIR:** Cllr.Alan Goff(AG) **PRESENT:** Cllr. Cherri Dyke (CD)

Cllr. Sally Falkingham (SF) Cllr. Dave Marsh (DM)

Cllr. Paul Valinski (PV)

County and District

Cllr. Jill Haynes (JH)

John Ball (Clerk) (JB)

There were approximately 60 members of the public at the meeting.

AG thanked members of the public for attending and explained that, contrary to the agenda, he intended to ask JH to speak first so that she could update everyone on the latest information from both WDDC and DCC. Members of the public would then have an opportunity to contribute before the meeting proper commenced. Once the meeting had begun, members of the public would not be allowed to speak and he would ask each councillor in turn to state their views, and, if necessary, vote, so that a consolidated position could be reached. After the meeting JB would produce a draft response to WDDC which would be circulated to councillors for comment before submission. He understood that the deadline for comment to WDDC was now 8 July.

JH explained that the new WDDC 20 year Local Plan had not been approved by the inspector at the end of 2014 because he considered that it was not sufficiently ambitious and did not contain provision for enough housing. As a result it had gone out for further consultation and the timeframe of the previous plan had since expired. It was now unlikely to be approved before the end of October, leaving an interim period where development was largely only restricted by national guidelines. The nearer the Local Plan came to approval the more weight could be attached to its provisions and planning officers would be able to take into account the fact that the area in question was :-

* outside the ‘Defined Development Boundary’,
* within the ‘Maiden Newton Conservation Area’,
* in an ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’,
* on a potentially important archaeological site, and
* next to a Grade 1 listed church.

In the interim developers were submitting applications relying on there being a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’.

JH had also spoken to DCC Highways. They had studied the application and did not feel that there was anything like enough detail about the proposed junction with Cattistock Road. The ground levels would mean that a significant visibility splay would be required and they were not happy with the ‘virtual pavement’ proposal. They also needed more detail about the pedestrian access to Manor Farm Close. This was likely to mean that there would need to be quite a number of questions raised with the applicant and the application could sit on hold for some time.

In answer to a question from the floor, JH said that she very much doubted that an application of this size would be decided by officers and that it was therefore likely that it would go to the Development Control Committee. This would mean that members of the public would get an opportunity to put their case. If this happened, it would be far better to get one spokesperson to consolidate their objections rather than having a number of people saying similar things.

A number of disparate issues were mentioned from the floor, including the following:-

* It was estimated that the ground levels at the proposed entrance to the site were some 3 meters above the road, meaning that a vast amount of material would need to be moved to create the entrance.
* The narrow width of Cattistock Road at this point allied to the amount of parking required and the fact that it formed part of National Cycle Route 26. Access issues for emergency vehicles.
* Additional traffic problems at the Cattistock Road/Station Road/Norden Lane junction. JH said that Highways did not seem too concerned about this.
* The routing of footpath 29/1 (part of the Wessex Ridgeway) the walked route of which was not the same as that shown on the map. The Parish Council were already aware of this issue and had the necessary paperwork to correct the anomaly. There were potential cost implications.
* The potential loss of views of the church from The Quarr and surrounding points.
* The fact that the site was listed as of historical interest being the likely position of an early Manor House and medieval village.

At this point it was suggested from the floor that a vote should be taken to gauge the level of opposition to or support for the application. A show of hands revealed no members of the public prepared to cast their vote in favour of the development with a very large number against.

AG declared the meeting open at 7.40 p.m. **ACTION**

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| **1** | **Apologies for absence** had been received fromCllr. Anne Clements and Cllr. Diana Padfield |  |
| **2** | **Cllr. Cherri Dyke declared an interest** as her house was in Manor Farm Close next to the proposed development. |  |
| **3** | **Parish Councillors’ individual views**  AG asked each councillor present for their views.   * DM declared his opposition to the development and agreed with the points already raised. He was particularly concerned about the impact on Cattistock Road and the effects on the infrastructure of the village. He considered the virtual pavement potentially dangerous and thought that the issue of loss of views in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty outside the Defined Development Boundary was a major factor. He was in favour of any new housing being affordable for local people but not opening the market up to second home buyers. * Although CD lived in Manor Farm Close, her house did not abut the area in question. She was totally against the development and was concerned at the potential loss of part of a field which not only contained the Wessex Ridgeway footpath but afforded beautiful unrivalled views of the church. All the houses would overlook existing ones nearby as the top part of the field where building was proposed was relatively high ground. She felt that the proposed access from Cattistock Road was the most serious issue. The road was narrow with cars parked along one side and the proposed entrance to the site would be steep with limited visibility. The road was well used by pedestrians and was not, in the main, wide enough for a footpath. It was also a school and scheduled bus route. Traffic during a construction phase would make the road even more dangerous. She shared concerns about the effect that extra traffic would have on the junction with Station Road and the fact that the houses would not be affordable for local people. * SF mentioned the recent history of the site in that it was originally included in the Manor Farm Close development but was then taken out as it was outside the Defined Development Boundary. Regarding the junction of Cattistock Road with Station Road/Norden Lane, SF said that, following past accidents, she had over her time on the parish council, had three meetings with Highways to consider whether anything such as a mini roundabout could be beneficial. Her suggestion was that WDDC should be asked to defer any decision until the Neighbourhood Plan was in place as the whole village (rather than just those directly affected) would then have had the opportunity to vote on whether the land should be included for development. * PV tended to agree with SF that it would be beneficial to delay any decision until either the WDDC Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan or both was in place. He recognised, however, that WDDC were unlikely to accept this and felt that, as an elected councillor, he had an obligation to represent the views of parishoners. As such he could see that the weight of public opinion at the meeting was against the development and he would therefore vote against it. |  |
| **4** | **Consolidated view of the Parish Council**  AG summed up by saying that he agreed with all that had been said by members of the public and councillors and that he was definitely against the development. He had lived all his life in the village and his father had worked on Manor Farm. He did not want to see development of what he considered to be a very historic and attractive part of the village. JB would draft minutes of the meeting and produce a draft response to WDDC objecting to the development which would be discussed and agreed at the parish council meeting on 2 July. AG thanked everyone for attending the meeting. | JB  JB |
|  | The meeting closed at 8.56 p.m. |  |