

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 May 2018 in the Parish Room, Newington Pavilion

Present: Cllr Stephen Harvey (Chairman), Cllr Richard Palmer (Vice Chair), Cllr Steve Godmon, Cllr Debbie Haigh and Cllr Mel Harris, and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were five members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr Ray Cuffley (personal); apology accepted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Harris declared a pecuniary interest in the Land adjacent to The Tracies

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The meeting was adjourned for the public time.

A resident said he is liaising with Swale Borough Council regarding his property, 43 Playstool Road, and is discussing the issues the Planning Officer has with some aspects of the proposal.

Cllr Harris left the table and sat in the public gallery in order to speak as a member of the public.

Discussion took place as to whether this was permissible under Standing Orders; the Clerk's view was that a Member is not able to speak as a resident but speaks always as a Councillor; this was challenged by Cllrs Harris, Palmer and Haigh.

Cllr Harris asked if the Council agreed that if we accept the applicants claim that the land at The Tracies is a windfall site it would potentially affect every planning application in the country.

Cllr Haigh asked Cllr Harris if he was challenging the statement in the appeal application.

Cllr Harris said his understanding of the NPPF is that a windfall site must have a building on it, it is not a green field site. He requested that the Parish Council agree that this is not a windfall site and ask that the Parish Council object to the Planning Inspector.

Cllr Haigh said the point made previously was that this was outside the built-up boundary.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the meeting had been adjourned for the Public Time.

The meeting was reconvened.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** to submit a response to the Planning Inspector that the Parish Council was surprised to see the applicant citing the land as a windfall site as this is not the Council's understanding of windfall sites under the National Planning Policy Framework. The Parish Council would wish to re-state comments submitted ten days ago and resubmit previous comments; **SECONDED** by Cllr Godmon: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Harris returned to the table.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

i. Application: 18/501887/FULL

Address: The Vallance Callaways Lane Newington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7LU

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension, alterations to existing adjoining single rear projection roof. Conversion of existing integral garage into habitable space. Internal alterations and changes to fenestration

Councillors considered the application and had no comment to make save that neighbours' comments be taken into account.

ii. Application 18/502040/FULL

Address: Orchard Cottage, Keycol Hill, Bobbing ME9 8NE

Proposal: Change of use from workshop to ancillary accommodation to main dwelling house.
Councillors considered the application and had no comment to make save that neighbours' Comments be taken into account.

iii. Application: 18/501902/FULL

Address: 43 Playstool Road Newington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7NE

Proposal: Erection of a part one storey part two storey side extension. Single storey rear extension with 5 no roof lights and a rear dormer including changes to fenestration

Councillors considered the application and had no comment to make save that neighbours' comments be taken into account.

iv. Application: 18/501468/FULL

Address: 47 London Road Newington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7NS

Proposal: Erection of a two bay oak framed garage

Councillors considered the application and had no comment to make save that neighbours' comments be taken into account.

v. Application 18/501586/REM

Address: 82 Church Lane Newington ME97JU

Proposal: Reserved matters of access and appearance pursuant to outline permission 16/505663/OUT for erection of 1 detached 2 bedroom bungalow. Matters of landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for future consideration

Councillors considered the application and had no comment to the design and requests Swale Borough Council will take notice of residents' concerns about the shared driveway and that there be covenant on the building that there is no occupation of the roof space.

vi. Application: 17/504638/FULL

Address: Bog Farm (Riverview) Wardwell Lane Lower Halstow Kent ME9 7BP

Proposal: Change of use of land to natural burial ground

Cllr Harvey reported that if Officers recommend approval of the proposal the Ward Members will call the application in to committee. If fit is shown there is no detrimental environmental impact Cllr Harvey will call in the Parish Council's objections.

5. "LOOKING AHEAD"- CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE LOCAL PLAN

Cllr Harvey told the meeting that everyone is encouraged to respond to the consultation.

Councillors considered the review of the Local Plan and agreed the following responses:

3. Are there any specific matters that you consider the next local plan should be covering or amending from the adopted version?

- Removal of the 85/15 split between Sittingbourne and Faversham
- Removal of local regional service hubs

4. Are there any specific topic areas that you think need further research?

- Air Quality on the A2 corridor
- Visibility of the priority of brown field sites, Swale needs to produce a brown field site register
- Special provision for people down-sizing due to bedroom tax
- Newington Parish Council questions the validity of research regarding transport links for settlements as highlighted by the Planning Inspector when reviewing the Local Plan.

5. We have provided just a small digest of some of the big challenges that may face us. This is your chance to tell us your own thoughts about what the future may mean for us. What do you think?

- Over optimistic view of switching to electric vehicles, there are no charging points for residents with no off-road parking.

- Longevity of current vehicles
- HGVs and diesel vehicles
- Air Quality issues will increase or at least persist
- Newington Parish Council is concerned that housing is only viable with the correct infrastructure of roads, schools, hospitals and other amenities.

6. *Do you agree with this analysis of Swale's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats? If not, what should be added or taken away?*

Yes agreed

7. *Where should we be locating the next generation of employment sites?*

- The Council is using a methodology based on landowner profits rather than community needs.
- Swale overplays people commuting to London

8. *Do you agree with our assessment of what we need to provide to ensure that the economy is sustained? How can Swale ensure that its current positive economic forecasts come to fruition and are sustained?*

Newington Parish Council agrees with the economic assessment, however free transport to Canterbury would solve it.

There should be a move to changing buildings in the High Street to flats and the High Street should be a leisure and entertainment centre.

9. *What will Swale need to do to make its most deprived communities more resilient in the face of future economic change?*

Why concentrate growth on deprived parts of Swale when growth should be across the Borough? It could be 70/30 and then 50/50.

10. *What do you think the future planning policy should be toward our town centres, in particular, how can we ensure that the areas beyond the core retail areas remain vibrant and how can we ensure the vitality and viability of our centres as a whole?*

The focus on Town Centre policy is outmoded and exasperated by high parking charges.

11. *How can the economic and other opportunities of our existing strategic employment locations be more fully realised?*

- Expand some in greater areas of affluence so there is a wider spread of employment. This could be at Faversham as the rail link at Faversham is better than the rail link at Newington.
- Swale should be looking at more strategic locations and attract white collar establishments.

12. *What would the implications be for Swale if it were to adopt either the Government's 'starting point' for housing targets or a higher level of provision*

- It is a proposed government target and Swale must not exceed government targets.
- Ongoing assessments need to take place to consider the impact of Brexit.

13. *Do you believe that Swale should consider asking its council neighbours to provide for its unmet development needs? If so, what reasons would the Council give, who would it ask and why would they be well placed to help? Likewise, if asked by a neighbouring council to consider meeting their unmet development needs, what should be our response and why?*

In general Newington Parish Council is sceptical of this especially where Swale might be used as an overspill for London. However, the Council sees an opportunity for "garden communities" and the renewal of coastal towns.

14. *What compelling circumstances could there be for the Council to take a different approach to the standardised method of arriving at overall housing numbers?*

- Impact of Brexit

- Whilst the government imposes targets with the threat of punitive measures the Council sees no reason to part from standard housing numbers.
- There needs to be sufficient research on what will happen post Brexit.

15. How can the Council speed up the delivery of new homes in Swale

- By having Council-led development, not developer-led development
- Penalties on developers who have permission and do not develop within the three-year period.
- The Council proposes that Swale should examine establishing a CIC or some kind of infrastructure committee utilising its General Power of Competence. This would have the benefit of stopping the bullying powers of developers where a five-year supply can't be demonstrated, therefore keeping development within strategic planning.
- Modular housing

16. How can the Council increase the amount of affordable housing that is currently built?

By imposing strict conditions on all developers and monitoring these.

17. What approach should we be considering to making further site provision for Gypsies and Travellers?

- Ensure existing sites are used by those with Gypsy and Traveller status
- There should be designation of sites with enforcement
- Adhere to the national definition of Gypsy and Traveller status
- No mix of traveller and settled community

18. What mix of new houses should we be trying to build in the future and how can we ensure that the housing market provides for all housing needs?

- Disabled access with no stairs-only flats
- Invest in social housing
- Provision of independent housing for elderly who do not require social housing
- Modular living suitable for young people.
- A concept of looking at faster and cheaper ways of building

19. How best should the local plan make provision that will enable people to build their own homes

- Only where land is identified in the Local Plan and not as a means of speculation in rural areas
- Specific designated land as within the Local Plan

20. What evidence is there that Swale should set additional housing technical standards in the next local plan?

- Yes with regards to increased accessibility and independent living
- Consider the most environmental standards to include solar panels on all new buildings

21. How can more effective use of brown field land be achieved?

- Swale needs to draw up a register of brown field sites in the Borough
- These brown field sites to be clear priorities in the Local Plan
- Make planning permission more difficult outside of the sites
- Majority of windfall sites should be windfall sites

22. Should the next local plan set minimum density standards? If so, what standards should we be considering

- Maintain minimum density
- Consider three storey buildings and greater use of terracing, but not a move to high-rise
- *Realistic standard for parking*

23. *What do you consider the broad social and physical infrastructure priorities should be for Swale in the coming years?*

- *Hospitals and health centres*
- *Education must be a priority*
- *Social amenities such as youth centres*
- *Play grounds*
- *Theatres*
- *Ensuring the broader needs of residents, as above, are met apart from just employment and housing.*
- *Warden controlled housing for the elderly*

24. *What more can be done by the Council to ensure that the infrastructure needs generated by new development are matched by a developer's financial contributions? Should more radical approaches toward 'land value capture' be considered?*

Newington Parish Council supports a Community Infrastructure Levy across the Borough.

25. *Should Swale introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy on the development of greenfield sites to housing across Swale?*

Yes

26. *How can planning policies positively influence climate change outcomes or mitigate their impacts*

- Carefully looking at drainage problems in new housing developments
- Carefully looking at paving gardens with impermeable surfaces
- Priority should be to promote the improvement of air quality especially in already identified Air Quality Management Areas.
- Solar panels on all new builds
- More wind farms
- Wave power
- Grey water systems

27. *What opportunities do you see in green energy for Swale and how should our planning policies seek to encourage or manage them?*

Air quality is a paramount concern for many residents in the Borough.

28. *What solutions should we be considering for improving the A2 corridor?*

- The Councils' understanding is that the A2 corridor begins at Rainham and goes to Faversham and not as stated in the document
- The Parish Council believes the health of residents should be the paramount concern and due to known issues in Air Quality Management Areas, Swale should consider introducing a charging zone and an emission zone to reduce the use of polluting HGVs
- The A2 corridor could be improved by building a by-pass.

29. *What further measures could be considered to improve accessibility to and from the eastern end of the Isle of Sheppey?*

Leave blank

30. *What are the next big sustainable transport projects that should be being considered?*

- M2 upgrade
- Better services for smaller stations on the London main line.

31. *How much should we be relying on future technological fixes to address air quality and congestion problems? What can be practically achieved by the planning system to mitigate or remove the adverse impacts upon air quality?*

- Councillors feel it would be a mistake to rely on future technology solving air quality problems which are currently affecting the health of residents, especially children today.

- Building should be stopped in AQMA and HGVs prevented from the area

32. *What steps should we be taking to ensure that all projects, as far as possible, bring with them the necessary measures to secure real enhancements for biodiversity*

- Formally adopt best practice for the design of new builds
- Do not build on green fields
- Do not build on best and most versatile agricultural land
- Do not increase the built-up area

33. *What should the approach be to the existing 'local designations' in the next local plan?*

It was agreed that Cllr Harris will write the response to this question.

34. *How can the local plan help bridge the gap between ordinary and extraordinary design?*

- The current system is developer-led and motivated by profit
- The Council likes the idea of design standards

35. *What initiatives should we be pursuing through the local plan to improve the built environment, including for historic buildings, structures and areas?*

Enforcement to ensure that owners of heritage sites keep them in prime condition.

36. *How can Swale keep the loss of agricultural land to development to a minimum, especially the highest quality land? Where high quality land is being considered for development, how can we balance the need for new development with the value and quality of agricultural land, particularly best and most versatile?*

- Priority for brown field sites
- Protect best and most versatile agricultural land
- Use low quality land first

37. *How can we better integrate green space needs so that we provide multi-functional spaces to both maximise health and well-being and biodiversity? Should we be increasing open space provision above that currently sought and should we be considering the adoption of existing best practice for providing green infrastructure, such as those offered by 'Building with Nature'?*

- Adopt best practice as described
- Ensure that over a number of dwellings green space is provide

38. *Do you agree that the challenges for Swale in Statement 2 opposite represent the big challenges for Swale? If not, what would you include or remove?*

- The Council agrees in general but feels the emphasis on traditional town centres is too great
- "Stronger links to large labour market"- the strongest link is London and that is unchanging

39. *What would be the possible consequences of continuing with the current approach to meeting development needs in the Borough as set out by the existing adopted local plan vision and settlement strategy*

The Council supports statement 3 however, Councillors believe the current Local plan gives unsustainable growth to the west of the Borough creating less attractive and less popular places to live in creating further air quality issues in AQMAs and further transport issues.

40. *If the next local plan were to require a new vision, what are your views on the approach set out in table 8.1.1 over the page?*

The vision statement as captured in 8.1.1 is good to read but open to too many interpretations, it gives no details, it does not refer to garden communities or the concept of an authority led vision of "garden community" and plays down the use of brown field sites.

41. *Parish Councils and rural communities are asked to consider whether they would be willing to consider limited releases of land in their areas to support housing needs?*

- There has been new development beyond capacity in past years
- Organic growth is the right way to increase rural housing
- The Council would not agree to limited releases of land in their areas to support housing needs
- There has been irreversible loss of best and most versatile agricultural land
- Further development in and around Newington cannot be permitted to take place

42. *What elements should be further considered for inclusion as spatial alternatives for the distribution of development in Swale?*

- The removal of the 85/15 split
- A new plan to adjust the balance remedying the effect of previous years

43. *Unless you have advised us already via one of our previous 'calls for sites', are there any locations or sites you think would be suitable for future development? If so, where, why and what for?*

Leave blank

44. *If new communities are to be taken forward, what models for their funding, delivery and stewardship should be considered?*

To be larger settlements away from established urban areas mainly through statutory development corporations but facilitating through community land trust which must be able to deliver.

4 FOR; 1 AGAINST- CARRIED

45. *Should the Council consider the opportunities offered by new settlements, in particular those which have had regard to 'garden' community principles? If no, explain why. If yes, please explain why and where they should be promoted and at what scale.*

Yes the Borough Council should actively pursue this. The Parish Council believes the ideal place is Brenley and this would enhance Faversham which has good rail links including HS1. This would fit in with similar proposals for Graveney forming hubs that would combine together to form a new community in which people would want to live.

The Parish Council is excited about the reports of the Duchy of Cornwall offer.

46. *Are there any other matters not covered by any of the other questions in this document that you would like to tell as about?*

No

6. MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

It was AGREED that Cllr Harvey would look at the Medway Plan and any impact it might have on the Parish.

7. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTER

Cllr Haigh thanked Cllr Harvey for Chairing an excellent meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chair
29 May 2018