

Swavesey Parish Council

Minutes

Parish Council Meeting, held at The Memorial Hall
Monday 7 June 2004, 7.30pm

A Presentation by South Cambs District Council and The Guinness Trust on Housing Development Proposals for land in Whitton Close, Swavesey

PRESENT

Mr M Johnston (Chairman)

Councillors : J Foster, C Houghton, P Marriott, J Shepperson, W Wright

Clerk : Mrs L Miller

Parishioners : 11

S Cambs District Council: Ms Sarah Lyons, Affordable Housing Officer

Guinness Trust: Ms Shenaz Virji, Development Manager

APOLOGIES

J Tait, A Day, J Dodson, S Rogers,

AGENDA 2

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

AGENDA 3

Presentation by SCDC & The Guinness Trust on Housing Development on land in Whitton Close

The Chairman explained to members of the public present that this would be a presentation to the Parish Council of the initial proposals for a development of low-cost housing as part of the District Council's current redevelopment plans for Airey Houses within South Cambs.

The Chairman then asked Councillors if they would agree to adjourn the meeting, at the end of the discussion, in order to allow members of the public to ask questions of the proposals. This was unanimously agreed.

Sarah Lyons, SCDC, gave a brief history of the Airey Houses and why the District Council now needed to redevelop and refurbish these houses. There are eight Airey Houses in Whitton Close, four of which it has been agreed, following consultation with the residents, to demolish. This will allow development of the site by The Guinness Trust for the proposed low-cost housing.

The landowner at the rear of the properties in Whitton Close, Mr Scambler, has also been involved in the discussions and is willing to release a section of his land adjoining the Airey Houses site, in order to allow development of a suitable low-cost housing site. As this land is outside of the village framework boundary, it can only be developed for low-cost housing and only with the approval of the Parish Council. No commercial housing developer would be permitted to develop freehold, market value housing on this site.

SCDC and The Guinness Trust are proposing to build a total of 20 low-cost homes, a mixture of bungalows, houses and flats. 12 dwellings on the site of the four demolished Airey Houses and gardens and eight dwellings on the additional land behind comprising 2-bedroom bungalows, 2 & 3 bed semi-detached houses and 2-storey flats, 4 x 1-bed flats per block. The Parish Council was assured that the proposed development would be the total complete size (ie 20 dwellings). No further land would be purchased in the future and no further dwellings would be built.

Sarah Lyons explained that low-cost housing schemes, such as the proposal put forward, are shared ownership schemes, which do not permit outright purchase. A S.106 planning agreement would be put in place to regulate how the properties are rented or share-purchased. Tenants would firstly have to have a connection with Swavesey, if there were then still properties available these would be provided on a cascade effect with the next closest villages.

The plans on display were initial site proposals. A set of draft detail plans would be provided within the next 2-3 months, for further discussion with the Parish Council. Following this The Guinness Trust would then apply for formal planning permission. The Parish Council would advertise all future meetings to discuss these plans and Sarah Lyons agreed that the District Council would formally notify residents in Whitton Close of the dates of future meetings. If approved the development would take approximately 9-12 months to complete.

Questions from the Parish Council

- (i) An arrow on the plan shows possible future roadway/access into land beyond the proposed development, does this mean that future land will be purchased?

Shenaz Virji replied that The Guinness Trust did not wish to increase the proposed site, 20 dwellings was considered to be a manageable scheme and there were no plans to purchase additional land. Sarah Lyons confirmed this statement.

- (ii) What timescale on the development is being planned?

Shenaz Virji replied that the funding available from The Guinness Trust has to be spent within the financial year, so the Trust is hoping to finalise plans and gain planning permission by the end of 2004, with development starting soon after.

The Guinness Trust will provide the Parish Council with draft plans prior to applying for planning permission, to ensure that all concerns and questions are answered before the formal planning application.

- (iii) Where do the nominations for tenants come from?

Sarah Lyons replied that the District Council's housing waiting list would be used. However the Parish Council will also be asked to advertise the fact that affordable housing is going to be built in the village and that priority will be given to those residents in housing need with a local connection.

The meeting was then opened for Questions from the Public

- (iv) Will the remaining Airey Houses be refurbished and how?

Shenaz Virji replied that other rented properties will be refurbished in consultation with the residents and the District Council. Tenants will have to move out of the properties during refurbishment. With regard to the other freehold properties, The Guinness Trust will discuss with the owners, the possibility of partnership costs to refurbish these properties.

The Chairman thanked Ms Lyons and Ms Virji for their presentation and for answering all the questions put forward. The Chairman confirmed that all future Parish Council meetings to discuss the proposed development would be advertised to all residents and open to the public to attend. The Parish Council had no objections in principle to the proposed development and would await the detailed plans.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.30pm.
Signed & dated, Chairman

Minutes approved & signed as a correct record by the Parish Council on 28 June 2004