

# *Swavesey Parish Council*

## *Planning Meeting*

7.30pm

**Minutes**

Swavesey Parish Council Planning Meeting, held at The Memorial Hall, High Street  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**PRESENT**

Mr M Johnston (Chairman)

Councillors : Miss L Boyes, Mr J Dodson, Miss H Parish, Mr C Parsons, Mr K Wilderspin, Mr W Wright

Clerk : Mrs L Miller

In attendance: Cllr Mrs L Harford (CCC), Cllr Mrs S Ellington (SCDC)

Parishioners : 1 (late arrival)

**Item****Power Action**

- 2016/05P-1 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
Mr S Faben (prior commitment), Mr D Hunt (holiday), Mr J Pook (holiday),  
Ms S Smith (another engagement)  
County Cllr Ms M Smith
- 2016/05P-2 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS**
- 2.1 Declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda** None
- 2.2 Requests to Speak** No requests received to speak on any items as declared above.
- 2.3 To receive requests for dispensations** No requests received.
- 2.4 To grant requests received** The granting of dispensations to be made by Full Council.

- 2016/05P-3 Meeting suspended to allow 10 minutes for the public participation forum and for persons declaring prejudicial interest relating to the business to be transacted, to address the meeting.**

At the time of the agenda item, no members of the public were present.

**Public forum closed in order for the Parish Council meeting to commence.**

**2016/05P-4 PLANNING****4.1 To consider planning applications received**

- (i) Ref: S/1027/16/OL –
- Bloor Homes (Eastern) and Mr A Johnson**

Outline planning permission for 99 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure and open space. All matters to be reserved with the exception of access.

Detailed discussion took place covering all of the areas of objection and comment.

Particular discussion took place with County Cllr Mrs Harford with regard to lack of education provision for expansion of the village, impact on traffic and transport infrastructure and surface water provision. Appendix 1 attached is the detailed response to the Planning Consultation for the application and includes all items discussed.

(ii) Ref: S/1155/16/FL – **48 Middlewatch, Mr & Mrs J Garner**. New 4 bedroom detached house with integrated garage.

Council commented the village has numerous planning applications and permissions currently in place for additional development, all putting additional pressure on village infrastructure which is already under pressure from development over the amount anticipated within the Local Plan for the village. Council therefore raised objections to this application as follows:

- Education provision – Primary school is full in many classes, Village College is also full. Pressure also on pre-school places. 20 new homes have just been completed, other individual family homes are under construction in infill sites and 30 new dwellings have just been granted permission, with an application currently in for a further 99 new homes. There is enormous pressure on lack of school places for families moving into the village.
- Traffic – parking and traffic volume through the village is a major issue. An additional 4 bed dwelling (plus the proposal for a further 4 bed dwelling on this site) on top of the above mentioned new dwellings, add further vehicles into the village.
- Doctors Surgery – a small surgery with one doctor, health provision in the village may soon be unable to cope with additional development.
- Surface water – This is a major issue within the village and local surface water drains are working at close to capacity and having to take all of the additional development already permitted. Council also raises a concern over the proximity to the culverted main surface water drain which runs underneath the site – although not directly close to this application, the second proposed dwelling will be almost on top of the drain, which is very old and fragile and takes a huge capacity of water from the southern end of the village.
- In the emerging Local Plan, Swavesey is to become a Minor Rural Centre with up to 30 dwellings permitted inside the development boundary. More than that are currently close to completion, under construction or with permission granted, the village infrastructure is unable to cope with this continuous development.
- Proximity of proposed new dwelling to the boundary of 12 Gibraltar Lane – The Parish Council supports the letter of objection from 12 Gibraltar Lane, with regard to overlooking bedroom window and distance of the new dwelling, only 6m, from the boundary of 12 Gibraltar Lane. This appears to contradict the planning regulations guidance given to the building of 12 Gibraltar Lane.
- Proximity of proposed new dwelling to the boundary of 24 Carters Way. The Parish Council also objects with regard to the proximity of the new dwelling to the boundary of No.24 Carters Way, which we believe the owner of is writing to you separately. Again the new dwelling will be within the 15m guidance stipulated to 12 Gibraltar Lane. The property being that close to 24 Carters Way, will also potentially block out sunlight from the south to the garden of 24 Carters Way.

For the above reasons the Parish Council requests that this application go to Planning Committee for further discussion and to ensure the impact on the village is fully recognised and addressed if permission should be granted.

#### **4.2, 4.3, 4.4 Permissions, Refusals, Appeals, Enforcement**

None

#### **2016/05P-5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

None

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 9.07pm

Signed & dated

Chairman

Parish Council raises numerous objections and comments with regard to the outline application for 99 homes on land off Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey by Bloor Homes, S.1027/16/OL as follows:

### **1. Surface Water (SW) Management**

Water run-off from this site flows towards the north corner of the field and out along open ditches along the east side of Fen Drayton Rd into the surface water pipes along School Lane. Water also flows across Fen Drayton Rd and into fields on the north side of the road, some of which have now been built on (SCDC Social Housing).

Surface water is a huge concern here as gardens and Fen Drayton Road frequently flood in winter and following heavy downpours.

The FRA document with the application, p8, item 2.4.2 states that “It is understood the ditch drains along Fen Drayton Rd and School Lane and outfalls to a pond at the end of School Lane, before draining into the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board network.” **This statement is incorrect.** The SW system takes water under School Lane but into the SCDC Award Drain which crosses School Lane and then takes the water behind High St and into the Turnbridge Drain, which then crosses High St and becomes Main River responsibility of the Environment Agency, taking the water around the village and across the main road again and out to the river.

Item 2.4.3 confirms that due to blockages in the pipes, the survey carried out could not find the outfall of the SW system, so it appears an assumption was made that it outflows into the pond – which is incorrect.

On four occasions the survey was abandoned as the camera was unable to pass blockages in the pipe. On another encrustation stopped the camera from passing through. There are also a number of comments noted in red, which refer to Defect Grade Description 5 – Collapsed or collapse imminent – in the pipework.

**The Parish Council raises objections to any permission being given to increase the SW into the School Lane system due to the poor maintenance of the system, condition of the pipes and lack of capacity of the system to cope with additional water, which would lead to increased potential of flooding of gardens and Fen Drayton Road.**

The Parish Council also believes most of the surface water run-off from the west side of the Village College site, including all of the sports buildings and outside courts and pitches, runs into the ditches along the south and east of the site field and then through into the ditches along Fen Drayton Road, which has put increased pressure onto the surface water system over recent years, following continued expansion at the College. Adding to this will have enormous effect on potential flooding of Gibraltar Lane gardens and Fen Drayton Road.

**Balancing** – The Parish Council does not believe that the balancing proposed for the site will work effectively. The balancing will have to be dug extremely deep to enable water storage and due to the underlying soil and water table, the Council believes that the ponds will therefore never run dry and therefore capacity will be reduced.

The Council questions the correct size for the balancing pond, as it appears to be different on different drawings. Fig 8 Illustrative plan it seems to cover the width of just one back garden in Gibraltar Lane, but on the Illustrative Framework Plan it appears to be across two back garden widths.

Currently excess surface water from the site, in times of heavy rainfall, floods across Fen Drayton Road and into the fields to the west of Moat Way. The water floods this agricultural land and the landowner pumps the flood water south-west directly into Covell’s Drain which flows out to the river. Therefore none of the excess water ever goes into the Village system or through the village.

The scheme proposed for the development would take all of this water into the village system, through the centre of the village, increasing the pressure on the existing drains.

**The Parish Council raises strong concerns over the capacity of the system to take all of this increased amount of water. The Council therefore objects strongly to the proposed surface water management system.**

#### **Para 6 of the FRA**

Item 6.1.2 states that Anglian Water “..confirmed that the development would only be permitted a discharge rate of 5l/s.” Appendix F then states that “..a connection point may be made to manhole 9451 in Moat Way at NGR TL359668495 at a maximum rate of 5l/s.”

#### **The Parish Council raises objections to this proposal on the following grounds:**

Anglian Water has already permitted surface water outflow from the SCDC 20 homes development the other side of Fen Drayton Rd into manhole 9451 in Moat Way. Permitted by letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012 stating: “would accept a heavily restricted discharge rate of 3 litres per second into manhole 9451 in Moat Way”. This appeared to then be increased to 5l/s on an Adoptable Drainage Arrangement Plan for VE Parrott, drawing no. 45474/C/08. The Parish Council has already questioned this as it did not agree to this increase. Refer email from the Parish Council to [APAS.Planning@scamb.gov.uk](mailto:APAS.Planning@scamb.gov.uk) dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

To now allow a further 5l/s outflow from the proposed new development of 99 homes, the Parish Council considers would greatly impact on the capacity of the Moat Way surface water system and strongly questions whether the system was ever built to take this additional capacity. If both the SCDC existing development and the Bloor Homes proposed development were to be putting water into the same manhole and system at a combined rate of 10l/s this is grossly over Anglian Water’s original statement of accepting “... a heavily restricted discharge rate of 3l/s into manhole 9451..”

The Council also questions whether the gradient for water from the proposed development site is sufficient to allow it to flow at a suitable rate into manhole 9451 in Moat Way, if it was found to be suitable to outflow to the system under Moat Way. It is quite a distance from the proposed balancing pond and not in a straight line, to manhole 9451. We would request that the depth of the connection into manhole 9451 and the gradient from the balancing pond be checked and confirmed.

### **2. Foul Water Management**

The Parish Council understand that the foul water will flow through the existing system to Over STW. Council believed Over STW is at capacity and would require expansion. Council requests that this be a condition of any permission granted that expansion of the Over STW must be completed prior to any properties being moved into.

### **3. Highways - Traffic and Transport**

Fen Drayton Road is in a very poor state of repair and is a narrow country road. This road would not be able to take the additional numbers of traffic generated by a housing development of 99 homes. There is no footpath along the road, no cycleway provision. Road edges are crumbling. The road is not gritted in winter. It is the school bus route and if vehicles meet the school buses, both have to slow right down and encroach on the verge to pass each other.

**The Parish Council raises objections to the proposed development as Fen Drayton Road, the most direct route out of the village from this development would not be able to cope safely with the increase traffic flow.**

The impact this development would have on School Lane, Gibraltar Lane, Middlewatch and High St Swavesey would be enormous. Currently School Lane is often blocked or restricted with parked cars,

particularly during school times. The mini-roundabout at the School Lane/High St/Middlewatch junction struggles to cope with the existing amount of traffic flow. All traffic through this junction going out of the village also has to pass by the front of the Primary School, where the village has numerous issues with parked cars, dangerous crossing points in the road, volume of traffic and people, etc.

Gibraltar Lane is very narrow and cannot cope with existing traffic flow, in fact the Parish Council arranged for a sign to be put up in Middlewatch to try to stop large vehicles using Gibraltar Lane for safety and access. Gibraltar Lane is also the entrance to the Village College and part of its Safer Route to School. It only has a footpath along one side.

The pressure this proposed development would put on the wider transport network must also be taken into consideration. Traffic through Swavesey is increasing, without this development. Development in neighbouring villages puts increased pressure on Swavesey roads, as vehicles travel through to the A14. The forthcoming works to the A14 and construction of Northstowe will bring increased traffic through Swavesey. The Village struggles to cope with this along its narrow main road (High St-Station Road). Development at Northstowe Phase 2 has already been postponed until after the A14 improvements have been completed, due to the impact the additional traffic would have on the local roads. By building additional developments such as this in the neighbouring villages before the A14 improvements have been completed is putting that same pressure on local roads, which has been prevented by delaying Northstowe Phase 2!

#### **4. Highways – Footpath provision**

The Transport Assessment talks of linking the development to the existing pedestrian network to the east of the site, p8 para 2.6.1 and figure 4. The Parish Council raises concerns over the proposal as every pedestrian leaving the site will have to cross Fen Drayton Rd before continuing into the village. Students wishing to go to the Village College in Gibraltar Lane would have to cross Fen Drayton Road, and then re-cross it to get back to Gibraltar Lane, similarly parents and children walking to the Primary School.

The open ditch at the proposed area of new footpath, shown in figure 4, frequently floods and overflows onto Fen Drayton Road, piping the ditch will reduce capacity and cause further potential flooding.

#### **5. Education**

**The Parish Council objects most strongly to this proposed development on the grounds that the village schools cannot cope with the additional pupil numbers it will generate.**

The Council has read the documents predicting the increased pupil numbers and that the County Council will request S106 contributions towards local education facilities at all levels. However the primary school site is at capacity, there is no realistic space left to increase the size of the school. An expansion project has just been completed to cope with existing numbers. If pupil numbers increase with new development, there will not be places for all of them. This will impact on family life. Increased pupil numbers does not just mean increasing class sizes and space but Hall space will need to be increased to cope with assemblies, lunches, etc. Play space has been lost due to the recent expansion; additional pupils will only make this worse.

There is no room on the primary school site to take portacabins to cope with increased numbers, due to the recent building project.

The Principle at the Village College has already written in response to this application to state that the College is full and would not be able to accommodate additional students from this proposed development.

The Parish Council strongly questions the calculation model used by the County Council to predict increased pupil numbers and whether the schools could cope. A practical look at the schools on site will show that capacity is not there to increase, particularly at the primary school.

The recently permitted development for 30 new homes at Boxworth End, on top of the newly built 20 new homes in Fen Drayton Road, is already adding to the pressure on the schools.

**The Parish Council is at a loss to understand to how the County Education Dept can raise no objections to this proposal.**

## **6. Health Provision**

Swavesey has only one small doctor's surgery. Other neighbouring surgeries are also heavily used. Local dentists are full. Other development in neighbouring villages impacts on all of this. Additional development in Swavesey will only increase this pressure and facilities may need to be expanded in order to cope.

## **7. Housing Mix**

If any new housing in Swavesey is required it is for low-cost starter homes for young people with family and work related links to the village. Bungalows for older people wishing to down-size. Not more 3 and 4 bed homes. Bungalows in Swavesey are being lost at an increasing rate, recently a number of planning applications have been granted to build into the roof space or increase the height to turn bungalows into houses.

Swavesey remains a very rural village, with low level buildings. Swavesey is a low-lying village and the **Parish Council objects to proposals for buildings up to two-and-a-half storeys in height, particularly in a development on the edge of the village.** Ref Planning Statement p17, para 4.3.

## **8. Emerging Local Plan**

In the emerging SCDC Local Plan Swavesey is to be moved up from the Group Village to a Minor Rural Centre, however the existing development on infill sites and the 30 new homes already granted permission, takes development in the village well over what would be allowed for a Minor Rural Centre. A further development of 99 homes is unsustainable in Swavesey.

The proposed development would be on what is currently cultivated agricultural land and which would intrude into the countryside on the edge of the village.

**The Parish Council strongly objects to this proposal on the grounds that it does not comply with the emerging Local Plan.**

## **9. Open Space Provision**

It is not clear to us within the documentation as to who will have management and maintenance responsibility for the proposed open space and play facilities provision.

No mention in made in the Draft Heads of Term with regard to indoor community facilities provision.

## **Comments on inaccuracies in the documentation**

### **Transport Assessment document:**

P7 Para 2.5.1 – "The nearest bus stops are location on Fen Drayton Road approx. 500m east from the proposed site access..." The Parish Council questions this; there is no bus service along Fen Drayton Road other than the Village College student services.

The Citi 5 hourly service referred to is a circular service linking villages to the guided busway and although runs hourly, it runs in alternate directions, therefore not providing a very good link, as you may have to wait up to 2 hours for a return journey from a busway stop.

**Framework Travel Plan:**

Some paras refer to a site in Over village, not Swavesey Village.

**It is clear that some parts of the documentation have been cut and pasted from other Bloor application sites, namely the current one in Over village, as road names and bus stops relate to Over. The Council questions how much research has then been given to the Swavesey site and what other aspects of the proposal may be flawed due to lack of serious research and correct knowledge of the site and surrounding area.**

**MINUTES APPROVED AT THE MEETING HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE AND SIGNED BY THE CHAIRMAN**