

STOGURSEY PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PLANNING MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 JULY 2019
IN THE YOUTH CLUB, STOGURSEY
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

PRESENT:

Cllr Chris Morgan (Chair), Cllr Sue Goss (Vice Chair), Cllr Judy Bastick, Cllr Susan Jones, Cllr Chris Ford, Cllr Jenny Ody, Cllr Eileen Chave, Cllr Helga Staddon, Gillian Orchard (Clerk), and 20 members of the public

1. Apologies For Absence - Cllr Rebecca Calvert
2. Declarations of interest.
 - a. The chair declared that he will be on the planning committee that will decide the planning application on the agenda. He agreed to continue to chair the meeting, but if there were any objections, he declared that he would not take part in any discussion except to refer to points of order,
 - b. Cllr Ford declared an interest as a resident of the High Street
 - c. Cllr Bastick declared an interest as a resident of the High Street.
3. Public Forum. Members of the public were permitted to speak once for not more than three minutes on the planning application listed on the agenda. 10 residents had previously requested to speak and express their views. Others had written to the parish council and asked that their views are considered. The chair permitted an additional 6 residents to voice their views. If any resident had an opinion which replicated another, they were requested to state their agreement and not repeat each other. Views from residents included:
 - a. There is no infrastructure to support this size of development. There are other developments in the area which are incomplete and houses not sold.
 - b. The application glosses over the fact that Stogursey is a conservation area.
 - c. The information in the documents inferred that there is not an impact on the village. The wall that borders the High Street is described as overgrown when in fact it is a hedgerow full of biodiversity and part of the environment.
 - d. It is a speculative application with the only aim of making money.
 - e. The area floods quickly and extensively every winter – the flood water issue is an important issue.
 - f. There is a serious concern over the issue of access, and concern that the plans may change once approved. The traffic on the High Street is already a hazardous and a problem, including visibility, and there are concerns whether there will be a safe place generated for residents to cross.
 - g. Many residents chose village life, and moved to Stogursey for what it offers at the moment. It appears that Stogursey does not matter to outsiders and may lose its identity. A parish of less than 1500 residents has enough to deal with, with the building of HPC, and the life and character is being changed. Disagree with the plans to build over 100 new homes in the village.
 - h. In the District Council Local Plan to 2032, Stogursey is defined as a primary village, it states that local development schemes are limited to maximum of 10 units, and over 5 years, maximum of 12 units and over the period of the plan 39 units. Why are the numbers in the development not being considered when it is at conflict with the plan?
 - i. There are lots of untruths and misinterpretations, in the planning application and documents. The Local Plan identified as limited development, and any development should form an integral and harmonious addition to the parish. Ancient and agricultural land cannot be compared to modern housing developments. There are criteria that should be followed, economic social and environmental criteria is downplayed – impact is not negligible. Social, emotional health and well-being is not being considered. Already had major development and further development has to stop to preserve the character of the village.
 - j. Housing needs survey identified lack of housing, therefore developers will include affordable housing, but at what price.
 - k. Policy TR1 – use of sustainable transport. Somerset has higher than average CO2 emissions...
 - l. The school has a lovely outlook which will be denied. Children need a good environment. The Quantock hills is an AONB, however a development will impact.
 - m. The increase in traffic is not trivial – it is already dangerous. The proposed entry is a misrepresentation of the access. ...
 - n. Existing infrastructure, when developing Greenfield sites, it will not go back and any development will spoil natural habitat. Any sprawl will spoil the integrity of the village.
 - o. The application sounds as if the conservation plan is being partially ignored.

p. Has the evacuation in the event of an incident at HPC been considered? An increase in population and traffic may prove problematic, is there any reassurance.

q. A resident asked if a petition of 261 names could be passed to the parish council. The chair informed the resident that a petition only counts as one objection. The resident stated that it is intended to be forwarded to the diocese.

Cllr Goss explained the planning process. The planning application has been submitted. Other organisations will be consulted e.g., SCC Highways (access), Environment agency, Wessex water, English Nature, Office Nuclear Regulator (licences nuclear power station), and asked to comment, and everything is considered before a decision is made. Once all information received from stakeholders and consultees, it is scrutinised. If the parish council's recommendation is in opposition to the planning officer's recommendation, it will go to planning committee. If it goes to planning committee, residents will have an opportunity to speak. It is important if as many residents as possible register to speak at the meeting and make their comments to the planning department - comments will bear more weight if residents contact the district council planning department directly. There is no requirement for the parish council to provide a burial ground, so will not affect any decision in any way. There are usually 21 days from validation to submit a response – the deadline is 29.7.19.

4. To discuss the following Planning Application

3/32/19/023 - Outline application with some matters reserved except for access for the erection of up to 40 No. dwellings, Land south of High Street, Stogursey (The Glebe Land).

a. Parish councillors discussed the application in view of the comments by residents in order to formulate their response. The chair clarified that residents are able to voice their opinions online, as each objection is an individual objection. All comments submitted to the parish council will be part of the one submission. It will be determined by delegated powers or planning committee if there is sufficient objection or concern. It is not known at what stage it may go to committee, this cannot be determined at this stage.

b. Cllr Ford proposed that the parish council object to the planning application. To reiterate parishioner comments, there are a number of inaccuracies, the planning design and access statement, the drainage report, landscape statement and access statement is incorrect. There will be a major change to the conservation area and there will be an impact to the panoramic views. The number of houses proposed exceed the local plan numbers (only a certain number per year), the proposed 137 parking spaces is unlikely to contribute to low carbon economy, and there is insufficient public transport. The environmental statement is also incorrect, the development will be beyond walking and cycling distance. The development will not enhance the natural environment, nor is it sustainable, it is dependent on private transport.

c. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Bastick. She added that there does not appear to be a report by the Conservation Officer (Cllr Goss stated that there is a Conservation Officer who will be consulted and a report submitted).

d. Cllr Staddon commented on the drawing which hints at a pavement although there isn't one. She is also concerned that the plan shows that surface water will disappear, however water will go into the stream (which houses water voles). The visual impact is of concern - visitors looking down on Stogursey will only see a car park.

e. Cllr Ody commented on the difficulty on the road in and out of the parish with few passing spaces, there is potential for a lot more cars with more potential for accidents. The chair reported that this is an issue for highways department who will be consulted and asked to comment.

f. Cllr Goss summarised / considered that there are four main issues

- i. the impact on the conservation area (the number of heritage assets);
- ii. the issue regarding the views both out of the conservation area towards the Quantocks and into the conservation area from the agricultural land to the south (plus the Quantocks) which will be affected;
- iii. the access to the site;
- iv. the sustainability – the lack of transport, heavy reliance on cars, the lack of local employment in the parish, the increase in traffic.

g. Cllr Jones reiterated that flooding is a major issue in the parish. A lot of money has been spent on the Castle Street flood scheme and is concerned that a big development project may aggravate the problem. If so it will be a waste of monies spent. Transport is a major problem, can get several cars per property and agree this will cause a major problem.

h. Cllr Chave asked whether HPC is considered within the statement of low employment. Although HPC will have employment, an area may need a range of employment. She also commented that she was impressed by the reports of the members of the public.

i. Following all the comments made, the chair asked for a show of hands to support the proposal by Cllr Ford, which was seconded by Cllr Bastick. It was a unanimous decision to write to object to the planning application.

Action: Clerk

Although there are other planning applications in the pipeline, for our response to this application, this is all the parish council can comment on.

5. Other Planning Applications

Parish councillors agreed to discuss the following applications

3/32/19/024 | Variation of Condition No. 3 (occupancy restrictions) of application 3/32/16/016 to allow overnight workers to stay at the site | Burton Springs Fishery and Campsite, Lawson Farm, Shurton Road, Stogursey,
3/32/19/025 | Variation of Condition No. 2 (occupancy restrictions) of application 3/32/18/037 to allow overnight workers to stay at the site | Burton Springs Fishery and Campsite, Lawson Farm, Shurton Road, Stogursey

- a. The current applications above are for a change in conditions – they had previously been granted permissions for stays up to 3 nights for Tourism and not semi-permanent residential HPC workers.
- b. Cllr Jones reported that at the beginning of the HPC build, EDF reassured the parish council that there would not be caravans in the parish providing accommodation for HPC workers but this has happened illegally (at Stolford and Burton Springs). Unfortunately the planning department does not have the staff to enforce this.
- c. The owners at Burton Springs are now applying for a change of conditions – they have already breached their planning conditions of tourism only, by allowing HPC workers to live there, even though the 500 bed campus is believed to have only 15% occupancy.
- d. The parish has already exceeded its optimum number of 45 non home based workers, and EDF are already paying £5k per person over the optimum level (although they only have to pay once). Cllr Bastick expressed dissatisfaction that this is allowed to happen. Cllr Goss explained that this is a legal agreement between EDF and the District Council so it is unlikely to be able to be changed.
- e. Cllr Ford asked for clarification on how many hooks up Burton Springs has permission for.
- f. If the application is approved and long term workers are permitted, then
 - i. There would be an impact on tourism – once it is known as a long term workers site, the tourism industry will collapse, as already proved to be the case at nearby camp site which is now struggling to attract tourists after previously being permitted to accommodate HPC workers, on what was formerly a very popular tourist site.
 - ii. There will be more traffic.
 - iii. The level of non-home based workers will escalate as each caravan can house more than one worker.
- g. Sedgemoor DC have in the past permitted HPC workers to use a small percentage of their tourist caravan sites for a limited period of two years only – solely until the completion of the Sedgemoor HPC campus.
- h. HPC/EDF have authorised an HPC workers bus stop immediately outside Burton Springs, even though they had been informed that the site had been granted planning permission solely for Tourism use and NOT non-home based workers – thus sanctioning and encouraging this unlawful use by their employees.
- i. Cllr Ford proposed, seconded by Cllr Chave that the Parish Council object to the two Burton Springs applications. All agreed. **Action: Clerk**
- j. Cllr Morgan proposed, seconded by Cllr Jones, that the parish council write to the CEO of EDF (Simone Rossi) and copy to Secretary of State, Stuart Crooks (Head of New build), Nigel Cann and David Eccles to express parish council dissatisfaction with the increased number of HMOs / non home based workers in the parish. All agreed. **Action: Clerk**

6. The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: