

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

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MINUTES

Planning Committee Meeting
Tuesday 16th May 2017 at 7.30pm
in the School Room at Witnesham Baptist Church

1. Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Present: Mr Wilks, Mr Everett, Mrs Shaw, Mr Lightfoot and Mr Rush.
Apologies: Mr Hindle.
In attendance: 9 members of the public.
2. Councillors' declarations of interest. None.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 27th March 2017 were confirmed as a true record.
4. SCDC decisions received since the meeting of 27th March 2017:

Application: DC/17/0939/FUL **The Old Flax Mill Tuddenham Lane
Witnesham**

**Extension of existing rear porch to provide storage and utility area
adjacent to kitchen and rear lobby.
Was supported
SCDC permitted**

**The below application decision was noted later in the meeting, but is
minuted here for completeness:**

Application: DC/17/0569/FUL **3 Jubys Hill Upper Street Witnesham**

**Erection of two-storey rear extension and front porch
Was supported
SCDC refused**

5. Application: DC/17/1661/FUL **Land On Mow Hill South Of Springfield
Mow Hill Witnesham**

**Erection of 11no. new dwellings including 3no. new affordable
bungalows with new access from Mow Hill**

Chair explained the procedure to consider this application at the meeting, including order of invitations to speak etc.

The differences between this application, and a similar unsupported one for the site, which had been withdrawn, were highlighted by the Chair.

These included:

- A reduction in the site size
- Layout amendments
- Hard standing reduced
- Vegetation changes
- Footway to link to the Barley Mow

The meeting was reminded that the site was still not included in the new revised Local Plan, which only contains the Street Farm site, and was outside the village boundary limit.

The applicant's architect was invited to speak.

It was explained that the previous application was withdrawn so that minor issues could be addressed.

The Street Farm site's suitability was questioned in regard to access and flood zone proximity.

The Mow Hill application was stated as having a good balance between affordable and market value bungalows.

It was the applicant's view that recent appeal decisions continued to evidence a lack of a 5 year housing land supply in the District and thus the housing policies of the Local Plan were out of date.

When asked by the committee if this application were to be approved, would the site be subsequently expanded? The response was that there was no intent to further develop the site at this stage.

Five members of the public spoke in support of the application. Main points raised were; meeting the types of housing needs in the village, including the affordable housing and bringing in more people would support community facilities, particularly the pub.

Chairman discussed with the committee and asked each to comment in turn. The benefits of the application, including the revisions since the last iteration were generally appreciated. By way of background, Street Farm brownfield site was stated as likely to see a submission of a planning application for 14 to 15 dwellings soon based on local enquiries made. Another brownfield "windfall site" was expected at the Witnesham Saw Mill on Mow Hill which would likely offer around 15 dwellings.

The Chairman explained that if the Committee was minded to support the current application, given that it was outside the settlement boundary and

previous views expressed, it needed to be satisfied there were particular facts weighing in its favour.

The Chairman then summarised the views expressed against the application (as recorded online) including construction impacts, traffic and impact on views hedgerows.

It was noted that the highway authority (SCC) had not raised an objection previously, that the majority of vegetation was to be retained and that construction impacts would be of short duration and generally screened from view.

In favour of the application, it was noted that the applicant had taken on board views expressed by the Parish Council during the previous application and the development provided for a good mix of housing tenure and type.

A vote was taken and the decision was to support.

The following reasoning was given in conclusion:

"The PC recognises that the site is outside the settlement boundary and would ordinarily not support such applications.

However, the applicant has clearly responded to concerns raised by the PC following the withdrawal of the previous application, in particular to improve layout, provide a better link to adjacent development and ultimately a design that respects its surroundings.

Additionally the housing mix is welcome, affordable housing and bungalows are both in local demand and as such the development would meet an identified need.

Consequently, on balance, considering expressions of local support received by the PC and the fact that the site is well-related to the existing village envelope, the application is supported."

Application: DC/17/1754/AME **Land North Of Elm Cottage Mow Hill
Witnesham**

**Non Material Amendment of DC/15/0147/FUL - Residential
Development Of 2 pairs of semi detached dwellings and 2 double car
ports.**

Details discussed of the amendment (retrospective application) were around the position of a chimney stack and a pitched to flat roof change on plot 7.

Decision:

No objections, hence supported.

Application: DC/17/1825/FUL **3 Jubys Hill Upper Street Witnessham**

Erection of two-storey rear extension and front porch (revised design to 17/0569/FUL)

Chair outlined the differences between this application and the previously refused DC/17/0569/FUL. Plans were distributed.

Decision:

No objections, hence supported.

6. **Sawmill site - presentation from agent.**

The agent stated that it was "early days" and outlined the Saw Mill site ideas which would be for approx 15 dwellings and a policy of one in three affordable on approx. 1.6 ha of land. It is a brownfield site and may be considered a "Windfall site" as the lease expired recently on the business site which was no longer being run as such.

The agent, asked for a steer from the committee. The Chairman said the PC were receptive to ideas and recognised the site could not stay in its current state in perpetuity.

Regarding the housing mix it was important to understand the housing needs at a local, not just district level.

The scale of the development should be carefully considered given adjacent property and the topography of the site. For similar reasons, boundary treatments were important.

Density should also be considered carefully, it was generally agreed that the development north of Elm Cottage was probably too dense for the locality. Density should be considered alongside proposals for open space and how the development site, the largest in the village potentially, could make a wider contribution to the village, which being linear would benefit from additional focal points.

The Chairman suggested the site should have a clear identity and sense of place, probably relating to its history as the Sawmill site.

The adoption of roads needs to be carefully considered, lack of clarity on responsibilities often led the PC to being involved which it wanted to avoid.

A possible site visit would be welcomed.

In conclusion, the committee would welcome a proposal taking account of the above being brought forward for further consideration.

7. Received correspondence and any proposed items for next meeting:

Application: DC/17/0381/FUL **Homeland House Ashbocking Road Swilland**

Proposed change of use from storage yard to parking and maintenance of Ambulances, Coaches, plus mini buses and storage of cars.

The Parish Council had received the case officer's report on the above. It recommended permission with conditions applied.

The continuation of existing activities was unacceptable and the application should be refused.

SCDC Committee meeting was due on Thursday 18th May 2017. Parish Council would attempt to give representation, but available resources were low.

Meeting closed at 9:00 p.m.