

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF SPARKFORD PARISH
COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 16 APRIL 2018 AT 8.00 PM
IN SPARKFORD PARISH HALL**

Present: Mr L Piper – Chairman, Mr T Tuck, Mr R Bell, Mr S Flood
In attendance: Mrs L Davis, Cllr. M Lewis, Mr J Read – Chesters Commercial, Mr
R Tizzard, 27 members of the public

After a short opportunity for members of the public to address the Council, the Chairman opened the meeting at 8.02 pm.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr D Northcott and Mr A Roylance

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) **18/00810/OUT** Residential development for up to 50 dwellings and associated works. Land at Cherry Pie Lane, Sparkford

Detailed discussion took place during which various points were raised.

Is there a need for more housing with other applications that have already been approved? There is a shortfall of housing across the district but the Planning department are responsible for deciding if this is a suitable location for housing,

How is housing need identified? A statistical analysis of what is needed across South Somerset has been undertaken. The number of houses needed could be built anywhere in South Somerset. 5,208 properties have been approved but not yet built.

Sparkford is a rural settlement and not a rural centre. Sparkford already has a significant number of planning applications approved so is almost at rural centre status.

Where will the access be to enter and exit the site? The access will be through Bennetts Close.

There is no dispute that there is a shortfall in housing locally but it was felt by some that this site is not suitable.

Concerns were raised about the increased volume of traffic. The access will not cope and there will be safety concerns with the close proximity to the main road.

It was noted that the comments from the SSDC Landscape Architect suggest that the density for the site should be 20 dwellings.

Bennetts Close was an exception site for affordable housing, the site was never envisaged to be a major development.

The sewer system is not capable of taking additional capacity.

Parish Councillors queried if the road width is wide enough and concerns were raised that there would be no clear visibility when exiting the site due to the existing issue of cars parking on the roadside.

Parish Councillors suggested that there is a need for more bungalows in the village to achieve a mixed community but raised concerns that this proposal does not meet SS2 Policy.

There are 50 properties included in this application but will the proposed improvements to the sewers accommodate more than 50 properties?

A member of the public commented that the sewer is unable to take the surface water now and asked will the proposed scheme take all the water?

Although a survey has been undertaken by a consultant, Parish Councillors do not feel that the proposed system is suitable and that it will have an adverse effect to Queen Camel and West Camel. One resident suggested that the current problems that are encountered during periods of heavy rain will be magnified.

Concerns were made about the overlooking of properties in Church Road.

One resident felt that no further development should take place until the Village Plan was in place. The Chairman advised that unfortunately this would not be possible.

Concerns were raised about the capacity of the schools and doctors surgery with all this development locally.

In 2016, David Norris, formally of SSDC Planning department gave assurances that no further development would be approved in Sparkford until Wessex Water had resolved the drainage issues. SSDC Area East Committee instructed Planning to work with the Parish Council to resolve the drainage issues. Remedial works have been completed since then but further developments have been approved.

A member of the public asked if planning would consider other planning applications that have been approved but not yet built when assessing this application. The Chairman advised that each application is assessed on its own merit.

Concerns were raised about the water supply with additional properties being added to it. There are already problems with water flow in Church Road at peak times.

It was noted that the river floods a lot more since the construction of the A303.

John Read who is the agent for the planning application summarised that there is a housing shortfall across the district, meaning that people cannot get on the property ladder. All political parties are keen for new housing. If the agent/applicant can assist in

delivering more bungalows they would look into this in the Reserved Matters application if Outline permission is granted.

A Highway consultant (AWP) has looked at the existing access road and has advised that it has the ability to serve the proposed development. The applicant is keen to work with the Parish Council and Highways to resolve any safety concerns/issues.

The main issue with the drainage is where the water goes and how quickly it gets there. The field does not currently drain. Consultants have been engaged to advise on the best possible solution to alleviate problems and improve the situation for the village. If the field remains as it is now, the drainage will not improve. The consultants have advised that the proposals will improve the current situation. The water will be held on site in cellular storage and discharged at a suitable rate. The tanks would have to be constructed to a specified standard for Wessex Water to adopt and maintain.

The water from Bennetts Close is discharged into the foul sewer at 1 litre per second which is exasperating the problems. It is hoped that the proposals for Cherry Pie Lane will enable the water from Bennetts Close to be diverted into the new system to remove water from the foul sewer.

Heavy rainfall creates issues with foul water. The findings have proven that the whole system cannot cope but it is hoped that this proposal will provide an improvement.

The betterments proposed by Wessex Water will take a long period of time to complete, this solution could improve the current situation in the meantime. It was agreed that joined up thinking between the various departments at Wessex Water is needed.

The provision of vehicular access to the playing field and parking will provide lasting benefits to users.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 14 May 2018, Sparkford Parish Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.28pm