

Swilland and Witnesham Grouped Parish Council

Clerk to the Parish Council: Steve Barron

Telephone: 07719 176917

Email: swill-witpc@outlook.com

MINUTES

Planning Committee Meeting

Thursday 23rd September 2021 at 7.30pm

The Chapel, Witnesham Baptist Church

1. **Present:** Mr Hindle (Chair), Mrs Shaw, Mr Henley, Dr Nicol, Mr Barlow, Mr Collings and Mr Henley
In attendance: 12 members of the public
Apologies for absence: None
Chair welcomed all to the meeting and explained the protocol for public participation to all present.
2. **Councillors' declarations of interest:** The site in item 5, is visible from Mr Hindle's property.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 6th September 2021 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair. Chair added that the draft response to ESC under minutes item 7 was pending circulation to the Committee.
4. **ESC decisions received since the meeting of 6th September 2021:**
None, but notification of a Planning Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate for DC/21/0781/OUT, Kersey Croft Kennels Strugglers Lane Witnesham, had been received from ESC.

5. Planning Applications for Consideration

- a) Application: DC/21/4111/FUL **Street Farm The Street Witnesham**
Residential Development for 20 no. Dwellings.
Chair gave an overview of the application of 14 bungalows and 6 houses over the 1.2H partly brownfield site. There had been a previous application in 2018 on the site which had been withdrawn. It was noted that there was no affordable housing in the current application. The site forms part of the ESC Local Plan allocation under SCLP12.71 and the appropriate planning policies for Witnesham, which is classified as a "small village" in the Local Plan apply. Matters to consider included flood risk, highway access and the visual impact on the elevated part of the site. Chair informed the meeting that just under 0.7H of the site was allocated but the remaining half of the site was outside the village Settlement Boundary, and should be considered "countryside" where policies against development prevail.
Chair opened up the opportunity for the public to address the meeting through the chair. Concerns raised included flood risk on the site due to the River Fynn and surface run off, increased flood risk to the adjacent dwellings in Giles Way, hazards relating to vehicular access to the site on the bend of the B1077,



pedestrian access enhancement needs, impact on the Fynn Valley and privacy impacts on residents.

The Committee was then asked to comment prior to making a decision. Concerns were raised over breaches of SCLP Policies 9.5, 3.5, 5.2, 5.3 and Policy SCLP 10.4 concerning the impact on the Fynn Valley landscape Character. The consensus was that support was not possible. It was proposed that the decision should be "no objection" but there was no seconder. It was proposed and seconded that the PC object to the application as it does not meet the criteria for SCLP12.71 for the allocated land and as the other half of the site lies outside the Settlement Boundary where there is a general policy presumption against development. **It was so resolved.**

Decision: The Parish Council objects to the application for the following reasons;

1) It does not meet the policy criteria given in SCLP 12.71: Land at Street Farm, Witnesham, which covers approximately half of the application site. In particular with reference to;

a) The Flood Risk Assessment; In line with SCLP 9.5 it needs to fully demonstrate that there is no increased risk of flooding to properties outside of the site, particularly those in Giles Way, Witnesham.

d) There is no provision of affordable housing which is unacceptable to the Parish Council

e) Real concern that the proposal does not provide for safe vehicular access to the site from the south off the B1077 when turning into the site on a dangerous corner which has a history of accidents and that there is inadequate and safe provision for pedestrian access from the pavement across the B1077 to the site on this dangerous corner.

The Parish Council wishes to add that it continues to support, in principle, the residential development of the brown field site allocated under SCLP 12.71, but does repeat it's view that providing "approximately 20 dwellings" within the area is not achievable given that part of the site includes the curtilage of Street Farm -a Listed Building and further land is taken within Flood Zone 3.It asks that these criteria be reviewed.

2) Half of the application site lies outside the defined Witnesham (Bridge) Settlement Boundary. This is an open, grassed, steeply sloping valley side to the River Fynn. Development of thirteen dwellings in this area, outside the Settlement Boundary is contrary to;

a) Policy SCLP 3.2: Settlement Hierarchy: Where development requirements for Major Centres, Market Towns, Large Villages and Small Villages will be delivered through allocations in the Local Plan. This area is not allocated in the current Local Plan and no application was made for consideration during the recent current Local Plan process

b) Policy SCLP 5.2; Housing Development in Small Villages: Where residential development will be directed to within defined Settlement Boundaries

c) Policy SCLP 5.3: Housing Development in the Countryside; The application does not meet any of the criteria for development outside the defined Settlement Boundaries.



This area is within what was formally defined as the Fynn Valley Special Landscape Area now covered as the Fynn Valley Character Area in the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment 2018. Both these highlight the importance and special qualities of the River Fynn valley sides, the grassed fields, field boundary patterns and village boundaries, and the need to protect these characteristics. The Parish Council considers development of this steep valley side would spoil the character of the area and be intrusive on the edge of the village. Development on this steep valley side would be contrary to;

d) Policy SCLP 10.4 : Landscape Character: Where it states that "Development will not be permitted where it will have a significant adverse impact on rural river valleys, historic parks ...etc.

3) If the District Council is minded to approve the application, the Parish Council asks that it ensures there is;

- a) no additional flood risk to off site properties, including Giles Way.
- b) provision is made for Affordable Housing.
- c) provision for safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site.
- d) improved provision of internal landscaping.
- e) providing a more substantial south east boundary landscaping belt and provision of off site planting to lessen the visual impact of the development to the valley side and views across to Tuddenham Lane and FP 29
- f) re-siting of dwellings 15 and 16 to be further away from the boundary of Firleigh on Strugglers Lane.
- g) no provision of street lighting.

6. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Planning Committee.
None

Meeting closed at 8:45 p.m.