

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 23rd January 2019

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor

Nick Ginn Parish Councillor

Peter King Parish Councillor

James Catmur Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West and 13 members of the public

1. The meeting was opened at 7.30 pm with a silent prayer

2. Apologies. Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Michael Capps, Nigel Day and Giles Scott.

3. Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.

4. Open Forum. The meeting was closed for 20 minutes. A number of residents spoke against the outline planning application for 33 dwellings on land adjacent to 37 West Street. Points raised in support of their objections included significant harm as a result of the proposed development based on a lack of employment opportunities in the village, a lack of health care facilities, no infrastructure to support the development, impact of additional traffic, impact on the countryside and heritage of the village. Other objections raised were the detrimental impact on nature and wildlife and the conservation area with a loss of trees, impact on the archaeology of the site as well as the impact of flooding. Reference was made to ‘tilted balance’ which should not be a mechanism to allow all planning to be passed and greater weight should be given to the Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036 which is nearing adoption. Residents affected personally by the proposed development spoke about the loss of privacy. Further comments were made on the inaccuracies in the planning application, which were misleading, the lack of spaces at the local school for Key Stage 1 children and further points on the impact on plant life including the loss of a rare fern. There followed a discussion on a recent appeal against refusal of outline planning permission for up to 140 houses on an edge of settlement site in Danbury, Essex. An Inspector in Chelmsford dismissed the appeal against refusal, with the decision giving an insight into how and when ‘tilted balance’ in paragraph 14 of the NPPF might apply. District Councillor Richard West spoke about a decision in Huntingdonshire in which an Inspector allowed a development of 170 houses at Buckden, a departure from the Local Plan. The appeal was lost notwithstanding the demonstration of a 5-year housing supply and any further challenges to the decision, if lost, would have cost the District Council a lot of money. This case has had an effect on HDC’s subsequent planning decisions and the problems of fighting a legal appeal.

5. Planning. 1. 18/02720/OUT Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 33 no. dwellings with all matters reserved apart from access, Land Adjacent 37 West Street.

Councillors considered the objections that had been voiced in open forum. Andrew Pett spoke about the applicant’s Statement of Community Involvement which had not been submitted with the application and had only just become available. The report indicated that there had been mixed responses to the consultation for the proposed development, although the data showed that there was no public support for the scheme. Other comments made by councillors included traffic issues and vehicle movement including A428 traffic, sustainability and lack of public transport, the number of new homes in the village numbering 110 with 40 already approved at Sand Road, the present application and another 30+ at the Potton Timber site. References were made to it being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the issue of flooding and the ecological aspect with bats and other species. There have been previous planning applications for

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Planning – continued:

the site, which have been refused. The provision of car parking spaces is insufficient and the results of a recent Housing Needs Survey identified only 5 householders in Great Gransden in need of affordable housing. There will be 16 in Sand Road and 40% within this development. A number of trees are inaccurately shown within the boundary of the site although not part of the site. There are other inaccuracies; contraction on the drainage survey and ecology survey. The proposal is a departure from the Development Plan and Andrew Pett proposed ‘**Refusal**’ on the grounds that

- (1) the site is located mostly outside of the settlement boundary for Great Gransden which runs along the eastern boundary of the site and is contrary to Policies H23 and En17 of the Local Plan (1995);
- (2) Great Gransden is defined in the Local Plan up to 2036 as a Smaller Settlement where housing development is restricted and as the December 2018 Annual Monitoring Review demonstrates that HDC has a 5-year supply of housing land this should be given significant weight to preserve and protect the nature of this small settlement;
- (3) the development would result in detrimental effects on views and visual amenity primarily to adjacent properties on Poplar Close and West Street, the Public Right of Way and from West Street itself;
- (4) the sustainability of this development will rely upon the use of the car to access a range of wider facilities as Great Gransden is not well served by bus routes which connect it to surrounding settlements; and
- (5) the proposed development will lead to a loss of wildlife species including bats and a loss of habitat contrary to policy EN22.

Seconded by Jeff Gorton and carried unanimously.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 4th February 2019

This meeting closed at 8.25pm.