

Westfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment and Development Committee Meeting held at the Oval Office, St Peters Business Park, Westfield on Monday 11th February 2013 commencing at 7pm

Present: Chair of the Committee: Cllr E Newman
Councillors: Cllrs A Butcher, G Fuller, B Wallbridge, P Wilkinson.

In Attendance: Cllrs D Cooper and S Hamilton
Mrs L J Welch (Parish Clerk)
9 members of the press and public

Comments from the public

There was a complaint about the amount of dog mess on the path from the Alcan Site to the School. This would be referred to BANES.

There was a question about whether there would be access from Old Pit Road to service the housing on the Mardon site. No information had been received in this respect.

There was a query on the Parish Council's view relating to Sainsbury's, an item which was on the agenda.

124. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr R Appleyard who had a work engagement.

125. To note the resignation of Cllr Russell from the Committee due to work commitments

The resignation from the Committee of Cllr Russell was noted.

126. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

127. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2013 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

128. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting.

Signed Dated

129. Residential Development of Land adjoining Five Arches

The Committee welcomed Richard Wallace who was representing residents on the proposed development, in particular Fosseway Gardens, Shakespeare Road and Highfields. He raised the following concerns:

1. Suitability of building on land on a 40-45 degree slope. This land was always very wet and potentially unstable for new housing and the existing houses at Highfields and Fosseway Gardens, creating a precipice from those houses dropping down to the level of the field of the proposed development.
2. Access is at a cycle path crossing, purpose built for horses, cyclists and families. There are no major bus routes therefore the access road will be in constant use.
3. The concept of building on such a slope is flawed in that people will not walk far on those gradients and so does not meet government guidelines encouraging people to walk more.
4. The smaller field is in an approved conservation area, adopted by BANES in 1999. 95 houses have been proposed for one field.
5. The fields in front of Fosseway Gardens and Shakespeare Road have active natural springs all year around.
6. The estate at Wheelers Hill has problems of wetness. Diversion of natural springs will worsen the difficulties.
7. There is bat activity in the batch, with 10 different species. Although the plans show dark corridors, the whole area is a foraging ground for bats and the development would cause a loss of feeding ground.
8. Many existing homes have beautiful views over the valley. The plans state those views will be protected, but photos were circulated to demonstrate this would not be the case.
9. Bird variety needs to be protected.
10. The greenway is used to the max, it is an amenity to the area which allows families to view nature and wildlife.
11. The context within which these plans are made should be considered. 650 new homes are coming into the area within a 3 m radius. The current plethora of applications brought about by the lack of a Core Strategy at BANES highlights the question of how this will effect the local environment.

The Chairman thanked residents for attending on this matter. A formal planning application has not been brought to this Committee yet, but if it does, the residents' views have been noted.

130. Planning Applications for Consideration

130.1 There were no objections to the following two applications:

12/05430/FUL	Erection of second floor extension and loft conversion to include 2no	1 Lincombe Rd
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	dormer windows.	
13/00166/TCA	2 leylandii and 2 fir trees to front of house – reduce by 50% then fell in first year. 4 leylandii to side and back of house fell.	4 Cypress Terrace

130.2 The Committee agreed to request information from BANES about how the new plans differ from those originally agreed and refer the following planning application to the full Council for consideration:

12/05563/VAR	Variation of condition 32 for the substitution of house types for plots 96-122 (excluding 110 and 111)	Residential development on former Alcan Factory site, Linden Homes, Nightingale Way.
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130.3 The Committee objected to the planning application on the grounds of the adverse impact on the schools and roads (particularly the A367 which is a main route into Bath). This development, combined with the proposed adjacent development would have a huge impact on Westfield. If the planning application is agreed, the impact on Westfield should be thoroughly examined and a substantial amount of s.106 funds should be allocated to improve the roads and schools in Westfield.

13/00127/OUT	Outline planning permission for up to 165 residential dwellings, a 60 bed care home, 2 points of access and public open space.	Parcel 5400, Fosseyway South.
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130.4 The Committee objected to the following planning application on the following grounds:

12/05418/FUL	Erection of foodstore and petrol station with associated development.	Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd, St Peters Factory, Wells Road.
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- (1) The store is too large, it will bring too much traffic into the area and will have a negative impact on other local retail outlets.
- (2) In particular, the proposed road layout at Charlton Road would create a rat run at Hazel Terrace and large/articulated lorries would not manage to negotiate the adjacent roundabout. Traffic would back up along the A367 and this would be exacerbated by the bus stops on both sides of the road. The congestion caused by the store would encourage the use of other side roads as rat runs (Longfellow Road, Wesley Avenue etc).

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- (3) The traffic will discourage other businesses from locating in Westfield and the existing retail outlets in Westfield, Midsomer Norton and Radstock will be damaged by this development thereby causing a net loss of employment in the area. In addition we may lose full time jobs in favour of low paid part time work provided by supermarkets.
- (4) The size of the car park would create an estimated 1,000 car movements per hour at peak time. This would put pedestrians and cyclists at risk and would deter them, particularly children and parents from walking to the four schools in the area. This would have a massive impact on the schools in the area.
- (5) The disincentive to pedestrians would result in greater car use for delivery of children to schools resulting in exacerbation of the existing problems in St Peters Road, Longfellow Road, Charlton Road and adjacent roads.
- (6) Residents in the immediate area (Tanners Close and Coopers Way) will not be able to move easily to and from their homes due to congestion at the junction of Tanners Close and the A367.
- (7) The infrastructure under the road (sewers etc) will be eroded in time by the massive increase in traffic.
- (8) The development is out of keeping with the ambience of the area, which is primarily residential and light industrial.

Picking up on the comments of local residents, the Parish Council would like to positively encourage a mixed housing and retail development at this site, encompassing small, interesting shops and entertainment such as bowling.

131. Planning Decisions

The Committee noted the recent planning decisions in the Parish.

132. Neighbourhood Planning

The Committee noted the new allocation of the Community Infrastructure Levy from Central Government and the importance of creating a neighbourhood plan in order to benefit as much as possible from the CIL.

133. Flagpole

With the permission of Curo, the new flagpole was put up, with thanks to Cllr Fuller for his work in this respect.

RESOLVED To purchase two St George Flags 5ftx3ft @ £41.70 each.

134. Area of hard standing next to the tennis court at Norton Hill Recreation Ground

The Committee received the comments/suggestions from residents of Upper Court for this piece of land. Whilst some advocated a play area for older people, others were very much against usage which might generate noise so close to the houses.

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RESOLVED that the clearing of the land should go ahead as scheduled for the end of February and the future usage should be discussed further.

135. Snow Warden Scheme

The Committee noted the recent Snow Wardens' meeting where the need for smaller gritting machines was discussed, along with salt stations to allow the Wardens to refill the machines as they went along.

The Committee discussed the means of encouraging a community group to allow elderly residents to ask for help if they are housebound due to snow.

136. Designated Public Places Order

There had been no further information from BANES on this matter, however it was noted that there might be a financial cost to the scheme and further information would be requested.

137. Litter picking

A meeting with Aled Williams of B&NES took place on 24th January and further information to allow the Council to make an informed decision on whether to take on the litter picking / road sweeping in this area was awaited.

138. Westhill and Norton Hill Play Areas

The Committee had an initial discussion on the need for a planned development of the play areas, their life expectancy and the needs for the future. It was noted that several items were no longer working, for example the springer at Norton Hill due to wear and tear and the accessible swing at Westhill, for a reason which had yet to be clarified. This would be brought back to the Committee for further consideration.

139. Items for the next agenda

There were no specific items raised.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8.05pm.

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Signed Dated