

CHILDSWICKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of Childswickham Parish Council Meeting held at The Memorial Hall, Childswickham on Thursday 27th November 2014.

Present Cllr's Miss K Badham, Mrs M Watts, Mr N Green, Mr A Halling (Chairman), Mr A Parker, Mr C Pape, and Mr M Patrick.

In Attendance Mrs Shields (Clerk), Mrs J Scattergood, Mr and Mrs Childs, Mr Swingler, Mr R Cook, Mrs and Mrs Cole and six parishioners.

Mrs Scattergood asked several questions regarding the planning process and action to be taking in light of the application: W/14/02502/PN - Land at, Broadway Road, Childswickham.

Councillors explained that the parish council was only a consultee as were parishioners and advised the best way for parishioners to proceed.

Mr Cook asked if the council had a 'planning criteria' or process.

Councillors stated that Wychavon were the planning authority and that councillors used their local knowledge to give an opinion to Wychavon.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr B Parmenter (District).

2. Declaration of Interests.

Councillors were reminded to update their registers of interest and to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) and their nature.

Cllr Parker disclosed a DPI in item 7a (ii) as owner of the property and took no part in the discussion. This item was considered outside the meeting, as the details were not available to the meeting. .

3. Minutes Of Childswickham Parish Council Meeting Held On the 30th October 2014.

The minutes of the meeting, having been previously circulated, were agreed, as a true record and signed.

4. Finance.

a) To Consider Invoices for Payment.

The Council agreed the following items for payment: S Gwilliam £132.00 and M Parkinson £90.00.

b) Financial Report.

The financial report was presented to the council.

5. Correspondence.

The council has received a progress report form Mr A Bielby.

Work progresses to plan on the bridge - currently concentrating on steelwork replacement. A number of subcontractors are working on the bridge as materials arrive and weather permits. The deteriorating weather will have an adverse effect on painting, so as much interim painting as can be achieved as work progresses is a priority. The original road closure timing with a completion by November 26th is still the target. Further detail of the work in hand can be found on the Bridges blog accessed from our website.

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The council was very concerned that the bridge could have been opened one week prior to the opening. As a result of the bridge closure there had been at least five known accidents in the eight weeks of the road closure, on a stretch of road that has not seen an accident for years!

The council was also concerned as to the number of road diversion in the local vicinity, all at the same time.

The council will support the 'Letter to Minister Brandon Lewis - The Emerging SWDP' from Wychavon by writing to the Minister expressing the councils support.

The council agreed to pursue the 'Volunteer Speed Watch Programme', clerk to inform West Mercia Police.

6. To Consider the Precept for 2014/2015.

The Council agreed to keep the precept at the current rate.

7. Planning.

a. For Consideration.

i. W/14/02502/PN - Land at, Broadway Road, Childswickham.

Childswickham Parish Council discussed this application at its meeting on the 27th November which was also attended by many villagers wanting to express their concerns about the application. After a short debate Councillors unanimously agreed to object for the following reasons:

1. It clearly contravenes the District Councils policies as set out in the Local Plan, which are crystallised in the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan [SWDP]; The site is outside the village envelope as designated by the planning authority. The application is attempting to exploit a loop hole created when the National Planning Policy Framework was introduced by central government, when referring to recent refused applications which were overturned at appeal by the Inspector; the appeal at Murcot Road appears to have been allowed only because it was perceived by the Inspector as in-fill, this is clearly not the case with this application; the successful appeal at Drakes Broughton is not relevant as that village is in a higher sustainable category. We have been led to believe that Wychavon's position (and its adjoining local authorities) with the SWDP is that it meets the housing allocation for the District and can readily demonstrate a 5 year housing supply, all of which makes no provision for residential development in or around Childswickham. In this regard we have recently lent our support to an effort to bring forward the emerging SWDP in a shorter time scale to prevent this under hand method being used by developers to circumnavigate the planning system. The applicants Planning Statement appears short of the mark regards the current status of the SWDP and section 6 of their Statement seems to be fishing for reasons to try and justify the application but doesn't make any connection between demand or need and thus the proposed scheme is simply speculative in nature.
2. The supporting text to LP Policy GD1 says that its aim is to further sustainability objectives, including the need to reduce travel, make best use of existing infrastructure and to safeguard the countryside. The development boundary for towns and villages identifies where development is acceptable in principle but only where those settlements have a limited range of services suitable for limited in-fill only. Childswickham is status as a category 4a village

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Unsustainable, recognises its lack of local services without which the development must be considered unsustainable and thereby unacceptable.

3. The Parish Council has issues with comments made in both the Planning Statement and the Transport Assessment about local transport and the local services which suggest a lack of local research. The wording in both documents suggesting the local bus services is regular and available, are disingenuous to those of us that campaigned for the bus service to survive the cut backs. We have managed to keep a very limited service during the day, for the short term, which is useful only to shoppers wanting local services in Broadway. Anyone commuting to Evesham has a ½ mile uphill walk to the stop at the top of Pennylands Bank along an un-lit lane without a pavement. Walking into Broadway 1½ miles to the south-west (let alone Evesham which is 8 kms north-west) is simply not a practical option for the elderly, infirm or those with young families. There are no shops, a doctors surgery, or any other retail provision in the village, indeed even the church has a vicar who is shared with other parishes. Any form of development would be almost entirely reliant on the motor car for access to real local services. The TA considers the impact of the housing on traffic only in the immediate neighbourhood; it pays no regard to junctions within ¼ - ½ mile where we have recently experienced a number of traffic incidents as a result of imposed road closures.
4. Any development in the wider open countryside would harm the rural character and amenity that this land has provided to the village and its surroundings. The field is part of open countryside that runs from Pennylands Bank north towards Murcot and up to the A44 ridge, the majority of which is productively farmed, whilst other parts have been subdivided for equine use by local people living in the village. The land in question forms a clear edge to the village settlement, and over which the residences on Broadway Rd enjoy a significant amenity; this will be destroyed by the application. In fact this is not simply open countryside but high value agricultural land that was, until recently tended and cropped by a villager as a smallholding, with the produce being sold locally in vegetable boxes. The loss of this, both to the tenant and the provision to local people is seen as a significant change to the character of Childswickham, which is one of many villages in the Vale serving a local horticultural need, both in terms of employment, and retail/production.
5. The overwhelming use of adjacent fields remains agricultural and equine, and this application cannot be considered to be any form of in-fill; it therefore is in conflict with LP Policy GD2 which seeks amongst other things to ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on the rural environment.
6. Concern has been expressed that the land on which the proposal has been made is only part of a larger field. There is a clear and obvious risk in the way this application has been made that it carries the threat of future development should this application be successful. Moreover the application has been couched in such a way as to avoid any affordable housing or s.106 contributions and in this regard alone offers no benefit or contribution to the village now or in the future.

Finally, we would reiterate the concern of villagers expressed at the meeting that the proposed houses in no way compliment the locality, are unsustainable with the existing local services, brings no benefits to the village but will instead destroy an amenity enjoyed by the village of the open aspect of the Broadway Road onto countryside that marks the edge of the village.

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- ii. W/14/02367/PP - Wyck Cottage, Atkinson Street, Childswickham. After subsequent consideration no Objections were raised
- b. Decided by Wychavon.
Approved.
W/14/01970/CU - Rickyard Barn, Murcot Farm, Murcot Lane.

8. Reports.

- a) Clerk.
Report had been previously circulated.
- b) County Councillor.
No report.
- c) District Councillor.
No report.
- d) Police Report.
No report.
- e) New Homes Bonus.
Application has been sent to Wychavon.
- f) Bus Shelter In New Street.
On going.

9. Councillors Reports and Items For Future Agenda.

To consider a 'Planning Application Criteria'.

To consider a Parish Council Website. Cllr Parker to investigate.

Fly Tipping – should be reported to the Worcestershire Hub.

Parking on the footway – should be reported to the police.

Dog noise – should be reported to Rooftop housing.

10. Date of Next Meeting.

29th January 2015.