

Hatley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Hatley Parish Council held on Tuesday 27th February 2018

In attendance: Cllr M Eagle (Chair), Cllr A Pinney (Vice Chair), Cllr H Nickerson, County and District Councillor S Kindersley, Clerk to the Council K Wilde and 9 members of the public.

1. Apologies received from Cllr M Astor and Cllr N Jenkins.
2. Interests or dispensation applications: Cllr Kindersley made a declaration of interest as a Member of the District Council Planning Committee. As such he could potentially be in a decision-making position with regard to the planning application. He would therefore be happy to contribute on matters of fact rather than opinion as he would not want to prejudice his position by pre-determining any planning application. As such he would be unable to express support for or object to the planning application but would answer any questions, if he was able to, at the request of the Parish Council.
3. To open the meeting to members of the public for a maximum of ten minutes to enable them to address questions to the Parish Council.

Questions relating to items not on the agenda shall not require a response or discussion until the following meeting.

The Parish Council was thanked by a member of the public for the informative Parish Newsletter that was recently distributed. Cllr Kindersley queried the disappearance of the paving slab from in front of the post box in East Hatley. The Chair agreed to investigate and will see if it can be replaced.

4. Planning Application **S/4601/17/FL** - change of use of domestic outbuildings to two dwellings at Moat Farm, East Hatley, SG19 3HY. The Chair confirmed receipt of a Planning Statement, an amended Site Plan showing the proposed highways visibility splays, and amendments to the Elevation Plans for Units 1, 3 and 4. The Chair invited the Applicant, who was present at the meeting, to give a brief summary of the changes to the proposed elevations which were amendments to proposed plans that were considered on 30th January 2018. The Applicant did not wish to comment. The members of the public were invited by the Chair to raise any questions or comments in response to the planning consultation. The following were **responses from the members of public**:
 - If windows are placed in the end of Unit 1 it would overlook 19 Main Street's rear garden and the rear of their property which includes a conservatory. It would be very close to the boundary with no. 19 and in direct line of sight with the conservatory. The gaps in the trees would mean that when lights were on at 19 Main Street, particularly in their conservatory the issue of overlooking and privacy would be greater. Home owners of the proposed home at Unit 1 would of course experience the same problem.
 - Refusal should be recommended based on the site being outside the village framework, a view that was supported by more than one member of the public.
 - There have been significant changes to planning over the years, with more weight being given to certain areas and policies. The restrictions that have been in place concerning development outside the village framework should be upheld until the new Local Plan is implemented. The Chair confirmed that the Local Plan is expected to be in place in the summer of 2018.

- If approval were to be given to any developments outside the village framework this would have the potential to open the floodgates for other developments. Recognising that this does not have a bearing specifically on the Moat Farm application, which should be considered in isolation, the approval would undermine the hard work of South Cambridgeshire District Council to finalise a Local Plan which includes the identification of sustainable locations for development.
- The argument by Cheffins (in the Planning Statement) that the Moat Farm development would be sustainable as it is 5 kilometres from another ‘sustainable’ village is laughable.
- Whilst recognising that there have been improvements to the barns since recent work commenced and based on details shown in the plans, there are still discrepancies and the detail is confusing as a result. There are ‘grey areas’ in planning policy about improvement to barns outside the village framework. Cheffins’ positive argument for the development and questioning of the relevance of policies is to be expected as they are providing a service to the Applicant for payment. However, the lack of housing supply in recent years, due to the lack of a 5-year housing plan, is about to be rectified by the new Local Plan and as such it is felt that the policies referred to in the planning statement should all come into play. Sustainability is open to debate, but if approved this development would set a precedent and would effectively extend the village framework and open up possibilities for the same thing to occur elsewhere. The due processes should be followed and the highest level of consideration should be applied to this application.
- Cllr Kindersley confirmed that the report for the Local Plan is due in May 2018. Discussions are ongoing, but as we are now so close to the final draft and implementation it is possible to rely on much of the content in terms of what will be implemented. In the case of Hatley, no landowner placed a request for changes to the framework and as such we should be able to rely on what has been proposed as being final. However, the current position is that there is no Local Plan and SCDC will need to consider which policies to follow.
- The change of use has been based on the buildings not having changed in size but we know that this is not the case – they have been changed. Therefore, does this make the buildings now illegal? The Chair responded to this question to confirm that buildings have made taller by the applicant for structural purposes, however no evidence has been given to support this and as such the Council will ask SCDC planning to give a view on this.

The Parish Council’s response to the application and supporting documents was as follows:

- With regard to the proposed highways splays, the Parish Council and a group of residents continuously strive to keep the visibility at the junction of East Hatley to an acceptable level by routinely cutting back foliage to improve the sight line for oncoming traffic. Visibility at the proposed access would also be a significant problem and would require regular attention by the home owners and Highways. The driveway meets with an open rural road where the speed limit of 40 mph is known to be routinely broken. It is also very close to the National Speed Limit area. Speed data provided by the speed monitoring sign gives evidence that 47.96% of vehicles passing the proposed site entrance are exceeding 40 mph, with 6.19% exceeding 55 mph and some vehicles exceeding 70 mph. This is recognised as a very unsafe area in the village. The suggestion of raising of height of the East Hatley village sign would be actioned by the applicant but would require the approval of Highways. However,

increasing the height of the sign would not improve visibility for drivers of all vehicle types and therefore the issue would remain. The entrance would be close to a small cluster of other entrances including the main junction for East Hatley and it is felt that it would not be sensible or wise to add another busy entrance to the area. The site entrance would have no pedestrian access. The plans have no allocation of parking for visitors or personnel in service vehicles and therefore they cannot arrive safely on foot should they choose to park in Main Street, East Hatley.

- With regard to the village framework, Hatley Parish Council has a history of objecting to developments outside the framework with the aim of protecting the rural character of the village.
- With regard to the sustainability of the development, the Council agreed that the proposed high-end properties, offering 4 bed and 3 bed accommodation respectively, would fail to provide any economic, social or environment benefits to the local community. The proposed properties are unlikely to be affordable to young families or future generations who wish to remain living in the Parish. The development would offer no economic benefit in terms of local business or services and offers no provision for any community infrastructure. The development would not support the growth of a healthy local community and would add no value to the community as the homeowners would most likely commute to areas outside the Parish and beyond the surrounding villages for work, services and amenities. The environmental impact cannot be fully understood or commented upon in terms of carbon principles and intentions as this information has not been made available. It is expected that car journeys would be significant due to the lack of local services and work opportunities. These issues were key to the dismissal of a planning appeal in Little Gransden (APP/W0530/W/16/3155302, S/0525/16/FL) where sustainability was the main consideration for development outside the village framework.
- With regard to architectural design the Parish Council considers the development to be lacking any special circumstances that may justify building on the fringe of the countryside and outside the village framework. The buildings continue to be standard barns by design and do not attempt to set themselves into the rural setting very well. Intentions for landscaping remain unknown.
- With regard to the re-use of redundant Agricultural Barns as dwellings, all but one of these barns has a planning status of ‘light industry and storage’ and not ‘agriculture’. Permission was granted for business purposes but the business was never sited there, so they need not be ‘redundant’. Also, it is possible that had the barns been sold with the main dwelling house, which has recently been sold separately (at the time of the meeting, subject to contract) they may still have served a purpose as storage to the main dwellinghouse or for future light industry, which may have had economic benefits.
- With regard to the lack of a Local Plan, the implementation of the Local Plan is imminent, and includes a number of large sustainable developments, close to essential infrastructure, facilities and places of work. Two new houses in Hatley would not make a significant enough difference to the supply of local housing to justify building houses outside the village framework and would be unlikely to make any impact on Gamlingay village, as has been suggested by the Agent. The development would not provide affordable or sustainable housing for the local community.
- If the development should meet the approval of SCDC’s planning team the Parish Council requests that the following points to be noted as conditions for approval:

1. Confirmation that the footprint to all buildings remain unchanged to the previous structures that have been recently been replaced.
2. Confirmation that the increased height of the buildings in recent months can be justified as being a necessity for structural purposes. Could the structural integrity have been resolved without making the buildings taller, especially as this work was undertaken prior to planning approval?
3. Any recommendations in terms of local archaeology and wildlife are adhered to before any further building work takes place.
4. Concerns regarding localised flooding and drains are fully investigated and addressed.
5. Safety issues at the site entrance are fully addressed.
6. Work on the site is restricted to normal working hours so as to minimise disturbances to neighbours.
7. Other site nuisances are addressed and restricted where possible, to include noise and the lighting of fires.

The **Parish Council resolved to recommend refusal** for this planning application for the above-mentioned reasons, in addition to the concerns raised by the Parish Council and residents at the two previous meetings where this case was also considered, being the ordinary meeting held on 16th January and the extraordinary meeting held on 30th January. **The Parish Council resolved to request that this planning application is referred to SCDC's Planning Committee** should the decision of the delegated Planning Officer be contrary to the recommendation of the Parish Council. Parish Councillors would be happy to represent the objections raised by the Council and residents if this is referred to the Planning Committee.

5. To agree the time and date of the next meeting: **7.30 pm on Tuesday 20th March 2018.**
6. To note the time of meeting closure: 8.01 pm.