

Tuesday 08th July 2014 – Approximately 30 residents attended the Open Public Forum.

The Chair welcomed the residents to the Meeting and explained that they had 30 minutes to bring their concerns/queries to the Parish Council, following which they could leave or remain at the Meeting, however they would be unable to enter into any discussions which may take place.

All concerns/queries raised by the residents were relating to planning application 01171 (Land rear of Roman Meadow)/development within the village. The following points were raised:

- The development proposed is too overcrowded and does not include enough affordable housing (1 currently proposed);
- The quality of the proposal is sub-standard, the overall appearance does not fit with a rural setting;
- It was felt that the consultation which was undertaken by CALA Homes was not carried out in a satisfactory manner and that many of the comments which were received have not been taken into consideration in the plans submitted;
- Eckington has had its fair share of development, is there a limit to the amount of housing which can be added to the village and why this particular site? – The Chair explained that this particular site has been ear-marked for proposal by SWDP for a few years and due to the fact that the Government is currently pressing for a large number of new housing to be built, some sort of development on the site has been expected;
- A request was made for the PC to confirm that they will make the relevant objections to this proposal – The Chair explained that they had not yet considered the plan as a Parish Council, and only once this had been undertaken (later in the Meeting), would they be able to collate their response;
- It was suggested that a new Village Plan should be created. Could this be done with the PC and some residents? – It was explained that the Village Plan has now been replaced by a Neighbourhood Plan and the PC have in fact investigated the possibility of producing one, however due to the following reasons has so far decided not to pursue this:
 - (i) very few PC's in Worcestershire have actually produced a Neighbourhood Plan and thus the effectiveness of possessing one has not yet been proven;
 - (ii) before embarking the creation of a Plan, the PC would want to be certain that the benefits of having one warrant the cost, time and commitment involved.

A discussion took place regarding the Parish Council's influence on decisions made on planning matters.

The Chair stressed that it is imperative that sound reasons are given when objecting to any proposal which the Parish Council must consider and assured the residents that the PC always endeavours to ensure that all aspects of the application are considered before a collective decision is made.

It was generally agreed that the village is not adverse to development within the community, but that it is imperative that this is done in a controlled manner, with due regard being given to local plans, ensuring that the very best is obtained from each new development. Assistance was requested from the PC to advise local residents how they can be most effective in ensuring their views are considered in regard to this planning application and indeed others which may arise.

The Chair informed the residents that during the PC meeting the Councillors would be considering whether a planning consultant should be appointed by the PC, who would assist in this matter.

The Chair thanked all those who had attended the Meeting and agreed to keep in contact with Mr Redfern (who is currently coordinating the interest within the village) on this matter.

Minutes of the Meeting of Eckington Parish Council held on Tuesday 08th June 2014

106/14 Present – Cllrs. Williamson, Smith, Glaze, Forrest, Wood, Bainbridge, Ransted and Wilkes.

107/14 Apologies – Apologies were received from Cllr Cameron. The Meeting unanimously accepted the apologies.

108/14 Declarations of Interest – The Meeting considered the dispensation request received from Cllr Williamson, relating to a potential planning application at New Road/Eckington Bank. The Meeting agreed that due to the fact that there would be no financial gain for Cllr Williamson (should a planning application be lodged/accepted), the dispensation request should be accepted. All were unanimous in their agreement.

109/14 Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 10th June 2014 – The Meeting agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th June were a true and accurate record and a proposal was made by Cllr Williamson, this was seconded by Cllr Bainbridge. All present were unanimous in their agreement, and the Minutes were duly signed.

110/14 District & County Councillor Reports – Cllr Davis reported the following:

- SWDP – call for extra housing sites – this will be going out for consultation mid-August, following which a further consultation with the PC will take place;
- Negotiations are currently on-going with Malvern Hills for a new Chief Executive;
- Cllr Davis informed the Meeting that he would be attending the Eckington Music Festival. This will be an opportunity for residents to meet the District Councillor, to discuss/raise any local issues.

The Chair invited Rueben Bellamy (RB) and Adam Coulter (AC) of CALA Homes to address the Meeting.

RB laid out paper copies of the planning application and explained that due to the decrease in housing numbers, a bungalow has now been added to the plans.

The Chair raised the following queries:

- Why do the plans not take into consideration comments raised by the public and the Parish Council, namely:
 - (i) Necessity of visitor parking – RB confirmed that parking is within the Council's parking standards, however there are no plans to include the provision of visitor parking;
 - (ii) The design of the site should be diverse and rural in appearance, to fit in with the nature of the village – the current plans show bland, urban housing designs. The PC stressed the importance of an attractive mixture of designs in order to fit in with the feel of the village.
 - (iii) Designs should be eco-friendly – RB confirmed that in relation to this matter, the housing will meet regulations imposed by the government;

- (iv) Affordable housing – why has this now been reduced to one dwelling? RB confirmed that when preparing the application, the housing in Roman Meadow had been included in the overall site and as a result, it would only be necessary to provide one additional affordable home.

RB informed the Meeting that CALA Homes had recently met with WDC in order to discuss the planning application and any possible changes which would need to be made. RB confirmed that the PC would have an opportunity to comment on any changes (made to the planning application as a result of this meeting).

- The PC queried the ‘suds pond’ – RB explained that this is becoming commonly used and is designed with a shallow gradient, which collects rainfall and is then gradually released into the sewage system;
- Public consultation – The PC informed the CALA representatives that residents had felt that the consultation had not been undertaken in a satisfactory manner, and some households had not received any notification of the event. The PC therefore requested that another consultation take place, in order that residents can make comments on any changes. RB noted this request.
- Section 106 funding was discussed. The PC queried whether this could be used to create open space within the development, thus reducing the amount of housing proposed. RB noted this request.

The Chair thanked RB and AC for attending the Meeting and asked to be kept informed in relation to any changes to the proposed application.

RB and AC left the Meeting at 9.00pm.

The Chair asked Cllr Davis to keep the PC informed in relation to this application. It was also requested that the PC have sight of the Minutes of the Meeting which took place between CALA Homes and WDC.

111/14 Progress Reports – Due to time constraints, the Chair requested that only significant matters be reported to the Meeting:

Clerk: Drakesbridge Road/Boon Street – It was reported that the Police had informed the Clerk that this matter had been raised as a safety concern (due to overgrowth of hedges at the junction). It was agreed that the Clerk should make a request to the homeowner to cut back overgrowth.

PTMP: Cllr Ransted confirmed that this initiative will now cease.

112/14 – Planning - The following planning matters have been brought before the Clerk and/or Wychavon District Council since the last Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 10th June 2014:

W/14/01233/OU Clennage, Nafford Road – Outline planning application for a single detached dwelling with associated access and garden - Objection

Applications to be Discussed:

W/14/01171/PN Land rear of Roman Meadow – New residential development of 25 dwellings including 1 affordable dwelling with associated infrastructure – Objection (see Agenda Item 114/14 below).

W/14/01215/PP Harvest House, Upper End – Raise the roofline of existing garage and construct front extension to provide kitchens & bedroom – Site meeting to be arranged by the Clerk.

W/14/01202/RM The Old Pike House, Pershore Road – Erection of 3 bedroom detached dwelling & garage. Reserved matters following outline planning permission W/13/01504/OU – No objection.

Approvals:

W/14/00855/PP The Chapel, Jarvis Street – Single storey rear extension.

113/14 – Public Consultation Meeting & Current/Proposed Housing Applications – Cllr Glaze informed the Meeting that Mr Bolsover had confirmed he would be holding his own public consultation event, with a follow up meeting in September. This will be undertaken before any decisions regarding the land at New Road is made.

Cllr Glaze informed the Meeting of the discussions which had taken place between a prospective planning consultant and members of the Parish Council. The Meeting was also informed that a further meeting had been set up with the planning consultant (Foxley Tagg), in order to discuss instructing them for their services. The planning consultant has been asked to give advice relating to the Cala Homes proposal and any proposal which may be submitted in relation to New Road. Therefore a proposal was made by Cllr Forrest and seconded by Cllr Williamson that the services of Foxley Tagg should be instructed. The Meeting was unanimous in its agreement.

114/14 – New Homes Bonus Meeting – The following was reported:

- 25 residents have requested training relating to use of the defibrillators;
- NHB funding will be audited by WDC (use of funding within the community);
- The PC anticipate shortly being in a position to make an application for £30,000 towards the Village Hall renovations. Posters will be distributed within the community to advertise this proposed application for funding.

115/14 – Cemetery & Churchyard – The Meeting discussed the quote received relating to updating the Cemetery plan/layout. It was explained that all plots will be numbered and marked with pegs (if necessary). A proposal was made by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Bainbridge to accept the proposal for works.

The Meeting considered the 3 quotes received relating to necessary tree maintenance works at the Churchyard and Cemetery. A proposal was made by Cllr Smith to accept the quote provided by Stuart Blunsom Tree Services, this was seconded by Cllr Williamson. It was also agreed that a request should be made for the work to be carried out one month from the receipt of the TPO order.

116/14 – Standing Orders – Following the relevant additions, the Meeting agreed to adopt the updated Standing Orders.

117/14 – Telephone Box – The Meeting was informed that confirmation had now been received for the PC to adopt the telephone box in the village. Once the contract has been signed, repainting will be undertaken by a local resident. The PC will then need to decide upon a use for the telephone box.

118/14 – Clerk's Appraisal – The Meeting accepted the Appraisal carried out by the Chair and agreed the proposal to increase the Clerk's salary by one scale.

It was also agreed that the 2015 Appraisal should be carried out before the end of May (due to Parish Council elections).

119/14 – Finance – Cllr Williamson proposed and was seconded by Cllr Forrest that the following payments should be approved:

Clerk's salary	£376.81
Admin expenses & mileage	£44.17
Lengthsman salary	£157.29
Village hall hire	£12.00
Greenfields Garden Services Ltd	£63,315.25
Wychavon District Council (planning fee)	£192.50
Simply Stone	£144.00
New Farm Grounds Maintenance	£441.36
New Farm Grounds Maintenance (Rec cut)	£190.80
PAYE	£71.40
CALC (training)	£10.00

It was suggested that the Clerk investigate on-line banking, to ensure financial transactions are up to date for each meeting.

120/14 – Correspondence for Information – Noted.

121/14 – Councillors Reports and Items for future Agenda –

- Next Agenda
 - (i) To discuss grass cutting within the village;
 - (ii) To discuss making use of WCC website to post Agendas, Minutes and other PC news;

The Meeting discussed and agreed the need for an additional PC meeting to be held in August (for the purposes of discussing planning issues).

Therefore the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 12th August 2014, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting was closed at 10.30pm.