

WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held at the Community Centre
at 7.30pm on Thursday 30th January 2014**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Action</u>
	<p>Present Parish Cllrs: Mrs J Gowan (Chair); Mr S Crane, Mrs L Langford; Mrs J Shoesmith, Mr D Wood</p> <p>Also in attendance: Ward Cllr Adrian Blackshaw, Mrs C Bucknell (Parish Clerk) and 55 members of the public.</p>	
1.0	<p>To Accept Apologies for Absence Cllr J Morrison</p>	
2.0	<p>To Receive Declarations of Interest Cllr Shoesmith declared a personal (non-pecuniary) interest in item 3 as she lived in the Marsh. The Chair exercised her discretion (Standing Orders 7f) and allowed Cllr Shoesmith to remain in the room during the discussions.</p> <p>2.1 To consider requests for dispensations There were no requests for dispensations</p> <p>The Chair introduced Mr & Mrs Craig Thompson, residents of King Cup Cottage (the Applicants) and Stuart Taylor of Les Stephan Planning Ltd (the Agent).</p>	
3.0	<p>To Consider Planning Matters P133537/O Kingcup Cottage, Wellington, Hereford Site for proposed residential development and alteration to existing vehicular access</p> <p>The Chair explained that this extraordinary meeting was specifically to discuss the planning application, to listen to representations from the public and the applicants agent and to consider every aspect of the application, how it impacts upon the parish of Wellington as a whole, how it interfaces with the housing needs of the parish and how it will impact on the hamlet of wellington Marsh.</p> <p>The plans for the new development were projected onto a screen and were also available around the hall. The Chair outlined the housing type and size, which were different from the key shown on the drawings.</p> <p>The Chair drew the meeting's attention to some anomalies in both the Design and Access Statement and in the Transport Statement submitted with the application.</p> <p>3.1 To Receive Details of the Planning Application The Agent for the development, Stuart Taylor, gave a presentation on the proposed size, location and format of the development, explaining where some of the statements and information in the Design and Access Statement had come from. He stressed that</p>	

this was only an outline application and the layout and position of the houses may change and evolve as more consultation takes place.

Mr Taylor stated that the application has been developed following advice and information from the Housing Enabling Officer and using pre-planning advice from Herefordshire Council. The original scheme had included a play area but the Recreation Team at Herefordshire Council has asked for this to be removed, preferring the Section 106 monies to be spent on activities across the parish, as opposed to within the specific development

He stated that the current position was that Ed Thomas (Planning Officer) was waiting for a response from the Highways Agency and a response was also awaited from the Lugg Drainage Board on some of the technical information that has been submitted.

3.2 To Report on Site Visit

Cllrs Gowan, Crane, Langford, Shoesmith and Wood had gone on a site visit on 21st January to familiarize themselves with the land, its access onto the A49, the watercourse along the southern boundary and its location in relation to Marsh Lane itself. The Chair stated that Mr & Mrs Thompson had been most accommodating and had satisfactorily answered most questions raised.

3.3 Open Time

Those living in the Parish of Wellington were invited to put forward their views, The Chair having explained that they should limit their comments to material considerations.

The key points are outlined below:

A resident outlined concerns about flooding with reference to Planning Policy Statement 25.

A resident voiced concerns about flooding

A resident speaking on behalf of her parents resident at the Marsh read a letter detailing the history of the site, outlining a number of concerns related to traffic, safety on the highways, discrepancies within the Design, Access and Planning Statement submitted by the applicant, the lack of consultation that has taken place (Policy Statement 66 National Planning and Policy Framework), drainage and flood risk issues.

A resident speaking on behalf of a another resident detailed the disregard for the agricultural condition that is on the land, flooding concerns, sewage pollution, safety concerns on A49.

A resident outlined flooding concerns and sewage issues. Difficulties with insurance cover. The resident stated that contrary to the details in Item 8.2 of the Design and Access Statement, Mr Makin had indicated that he is totally opposed to the development. The resident said the potential one way link system (Item 1.6 – 1.9) will affect everyone, particularly the elderly, causing an increase in accidents on the A49. She also had concerns for the historic trees on the land which will be felled if the link road becomes a reality.

<p>A resident voiced concerns about flooding together with road safety issues at the entrance to Marsh Lane.</p> <p>Another resident was concerned about the effect on community life within the Marsh. Also having concerns about flooding both within the Marsh and on the A49, causing danger to the wider population. There not being enough stopping distance for heavy vehicles coming around the corner, causing danger to children and adults walking or cycling on the A49</p> <p>A resident of was concerned about road safety Issues</p> <p>A resident in Wellington village felt this development was not commensurate with rural life and felt that recreational facilities were necessary. He cited concerns about safety on the A49 and access issues.</p> <p>Other discussions included the Agricultural Occupancy Conditions (also referred to as an agricultural tie, ag tag or aoc); whether the current occupants of Kingcup Cottage are not and have not been involved in agriculture, therefore breaking the agricultural occupancy conditions. The Agent responded that the Agricultural Tie was not relevant to the application and on that basis he declined to comment.</p> <p>Resolved: Cllr Blackshaw to make enquiries and report back to the Parish Council.</p> <p>3.4 To Agree the Parish Council response to the Kingcup Cottage Application</p> <p>Parish Councillors felt there had quite clearly been a great deal of thought given to the development. The mix of property and in particular social and affordable housing is needed in the village and this development could be beneficial to the area.</p> <p>Herefordshire Core Strategy (March 2013) states that Hereford Rural HMA, of which Wellington is a part, has a target of 18% proportional growth. With approximately 261 dwellings in Wellington this would equate to 47 new houses. It was noted that this development, with a proposed 26 new homes, would go over half way to meeting this target.</p> <p>Overall Parish Councillors felt that there was a lot to commend the application, recognising that it provided the opportunity to meet some of Wellington's obligations to build more houses, especially affordable ones.</p> <p>However, it was strongly felt that the location for the site was wrong and brought with it a number of serious issues, many of which had been outlined by the community during the meeting. It was also noted that this is an outline application and could change significantly over time.</p> <p>Comments from the Parish Councillors have been consolidated and noted below.</p> <p>LOCATION</p> <p>It is an accepted fact that the current hamlet of Wellington Marsh exists as a separate and harmonious community. The Kingcup Cottage development, if permitted, would virtually double the size of Wellington Marsh but be separate from it, effectively creating a satellite community remote from facilities and with no children's play facilities as it is understood from the applicant that the provision for this was removed</p>	<p>AB</p>
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at the request of Herefordshire Council in order to increase density of houses.

It should be noted that in a letter dated 3rd July 2008 to the Parish Council, Mr K Bishop, Principal Planning Officer, stated that three locations within the village itself: Watermill, Mill Way and land at the entrance to the village adjacent to the A49, would not be suitable for consideration as affordable housing developments in Wellington as “..it is considered it would be difficult to successfully integrate into the setting of the village”. This application is some one mile distant - whether all affordable or a mix is irrelevant – the statement remains appropriate.

ACCESS

There is a long history of failed applications on this site dating back to the 80’s and through the 90’s which almost without exception were refused, citing access onto the A49 trunk road as one of the reasons. Permission for the current dwelling, in 1996, (after many refusals) was for a permanent dwelling with an agricultural tie which clearly indicates that the land was considered inappropriate for general development. Access onto and off the A49 was always an issue in previous applications (for just one dwelling) and is clearly a significant concern for this development.

Traffic has not decreased since the 1980s and 1990s, in fact with the quarry operations and Moreton Business Park both expanding, there is ever-increasing heavy traffic which is very evident. There has been much discussion around speed and volume of traffic on the A49. Due to the positioning of the entrance to the proposed site visibility is poor, add to this speeding traffic, reduced visibility on the occasions of heavy rain, mist and fog and vehicles often travelling with no lights and this is likely to greatly increase the risk of accidents. There is particular concern about traffic travelling south and turning right into the proposed development.

The applicant’s Transport Report claims that the proposal is likely to develop far fewer than 30 movements in any peak hour. With 27 houses, many of which are likely to be 2 car, it is felt peak hour traffic would be well in excess of 30. In addition with pedestrian access being poor vehicle movements to and from the site are likely to be higher and therefore only compounds the issues.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND SAFETY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THE LESS ABLE

Those who cannot drive would have to walk to Wellington should they wish to use the facilities – there is no continuous pavement along the A49 to the village – as a result it would be necessary to cross the A49 either at the access to the proposed development or at the Marsh Lane junction and then cross again in the 70mph zone at the Wellington village turn.

It is stated that this development has been designed to attract young families. If it is to be accepted that children will use Wellington School then this will either increase vehicle or pedestrian activity. Although the outline plans include upgrading some of the pavements this will not reduce the requirement to cross the A49. To access the village people would need to cross two lanes of traffic travelling at speed with poor visibility, often with no lights. Attempting this with a young child and maybe a push chair would be extremely dangerous.

Having completed this first crossing of the A49 after a short walk people would need to

	<p>cross the dual carriageway. At this point traffic coming from Leominster often has not realised the road has reduced to one lane. Then negotiate a crossing of the second lane where cars are accelerating as they enter the dual carriageway.</p> <p>Field footpaths do join Wellington Marsh to locations within the village (remote from the school) but are impassable for much of the year due to mud and tall crops.</p> <p>Pedestrian links to the school - the footpath link to north from south west corner of plot would cross a ploughed field, which is impractical.</p> <p>Much is made about a footpath extension/link being created across the fields but to date there has been nothing in writing from the landowner to support this. Re-routing a footpath is a lengthy and expensive process and would not result in children arriving close to the school.</p> <p>Using the A49 is dangerous on foot because the footpath is not continuous and equally dangerous on a bicycle due to the speed and volume of traffic. In order to get to school by bus, children would have to catch it just before 8 am. This will probably result in the use of cars to take children to school which would increase traffic even more or may deter families from using Wellington School when other schools may be more attractive due to location or access.</p> <p>SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>The application has been planned around detached homes together with a good proportion of homes for social rent, shared ownership and low market cost. This will undoubtedly attract families.</p> <p>Wellington Parish Council has to consider the sustainability of its village facilities, in particular its shop and Post Office and village school. The remoteness of this site from the main village centre casts doubt on whether residents of new homes in this location would use the village facilities especially as they can only be reached safely by car.</p> <p>Due to the position of the site, access to the village is difficult on foot and once in a car residents can travel anywhere. As the development is likely to attract young families there will be a need to access schools and shops. There appears to be no evidence, other than guess work, as to whom and how often residents will use facilities in Wellington Village. With no recreational facilities and a need to visit Wellington by car it is suspected that residents are likely to use facilities at or en-route to their destination rather than those in Wellington itself which will not add to the sustainability of the local infrastructure.</p> <p>SEWAGE/SURFACE WATER</p> <p>The area is called "The Marsh" for good reason, as it often floods and is cited as a high risk area on the Environment Agency's flood map. The field in question is part of a flood plain and there would need to be considerable work done on flood risk assessment and flood prevention measures to ensure that the site is safe and impact adversely on other residents living in The Marsh.</p> <p>The issues of sewage and surface water are well documented at Wellington Marsh and the residents in regular contact with Welsh Water regarding the inadequacies of the</p>	
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	<p>pumping station/drainage network.</p> <p>An additional 26 properties could only have a detrimental effect on both sewage and surface water and it is noted that the applicants intended to discharge into the mains sewage system. The letter from Mr Bishop referred to above also stated “..Welsh Water has objected to further development in Wellington due to the capacity of the local sewerage system...”</p> <p>THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p> <p>This plan still provides the statutory guidelines for Herefordshire. It has not yet been superseded by the LDF: Councillors at Wellington have repeatedly been assured that the UDP remains in force until the Core Strategy had been agreed – this development is totally contrary to that strategy, given its remote location. Wellington is currently undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Parish Council would like this to progress, with the community being given a say in how and where their village grows, before another major development is approved.</p> <p>Resolved: To incorporate these comments into a draft response to the planning application that can be agreed at the next Parish Council meeting. This will be sent together with a précis of the anomalies in the design and access and transport statements referred to earlier in these minutes.</p> <p>To Note the Date and Time of the next regular Parish Council Meeting</p> <p>Resolved: The next regular Parish Council Meeting will take place on Thursday 6th January</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.35 pm</p> <p>Signed Date 6th January 2014 Chairman of Wellington Parish Council</p>	Clerk
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