

**Notes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council's Planning Working Group held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020.**

**Present:** Cllrs W Haggata (Chairman), L Ashley, I Benney, J Carney, I Gowler and J Smith. Cllr Benney declared an interest and took no part in the discussions on applications or the decision making process

**P13 20/21 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr F Newell.

**P14 20/21 Appeals, Decisions and Withdrawn Plans**

Appeal: Notification had been received that an appeal by Mr & Mrs Thistlebank, against FDC's decision to refuse planning permission for a 3-bed dwelling at the rear of 38 Burnfield Estate, had been dismissed. The planning inspector decided the house would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the restricted access to the site and limited visibility for vehicles leaving the site would result in unacceptable harm to highway safety.

Decisions: The Clerk updated members on the latest planning decisions from FDC. The following plans had been granted planning permission: works to Copper Beech trees at 12 and 14 Station Road; temporary siting of a residential caravan at Templedruid Farm, Stocking Drove; erection of 9 x 2-storey dwellings, demolition of a wall and rebuilding of wall at land east of 133 High Street; works to a Cherry and a Maple tree at The Vicarage, Church Lane; works to a Yew tree at 11 East Park Street; and erection of a timber gate at 23 Station Street. Planning permission was refused for an extension to 17 Willey Terrace and the erection of a dwelling at land south west of 92 High Street and prior approval was refused for the change of use of an agricultural building to a 3-bed dwelling at barn east of Markwells Farm House, Block Fen Drove.

**P15 20/21 Applications and Revised Applications**

- a) F/YR20/0700/F - Erect 2 x 2-storey, 3-bed dwellings including 1.2m and 1.8m (approx.) high fencing at Plot 2 land south east of 1 Curf Terrace – **Support** (Cllr Gowler declared an interest)
- b) F/YR20/0702/F - Erect part 2-storey/first floor/single storey side extension to existing dwelling at 23 Harold Heading Close - **Support**
- c) F/YR20/0721/F - Erection of 7 x dwellings (2-storey, 2-bed) at land west of 98-102 High Street – **Recommend Refusal more information is required regarding the access to plots 1 – 4. Access point between 100 and 102 High Street is inadequate.**

- d) F/YR20/0722/F - Erect workshop/office (Phase 2) and warehouse/office (Phase 3) involving demolition of existing buildings at Former Produce World, Fenton Way - **Support**
- e) F/YR20/0729/LB - Internal and external works to a Listed Building to form 4-bed dwelling including erection of a single storey rear extension involving demolition of single-storey to rear and stabilising of rear boundary walls at 12 East Park Street - **Support**
- f) F/YR20/0748/CERTLU - Certificate of Lawful Use (existing): Occupation of dwelling without compliance with condition 1 of planning permission TP1965 relating to agricultural occupancy at Highfield Lodge, Doddington Road – **Councillors have no objections to the application but have no local knowledge of the site and are prepared to accept the information put forward by the applicants.**
- g) F/YR20/0764/TRCA - Works to 1 Purple Beech tree within a Conservation Area at 31A London Road - **Support**

**P15 20/21 Changes to Current Planning System & FDC Changes to Planning Scheme of Delegation**

Cllr Benney explained that under the new Planning Scheme of Delegation at FDC the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Cllr David Connor, would be consulted on any planning applications officers were looking to refuse and if he felt it merited discussion the plan would then be brought before the planning committee. For example plans which did not meet the planning criteria under the current Local Plan but might still be suitable for approval.

Cllr Benney also spoke about the Government’s white paper ‘Planning for the future’ and how it was likely to affect the District. He said at present FDC was expected to deliver 11,000 homes over the next 20 years, equating to 550 houses a year, but last year they only delivered 450. If the new planning laws were approved FDC would have to deliver a minimum of 17,000 homes over 20 years, equating to 850 homes a year. Although most of the growth would be in the four towns, villages would also have to grow to make them more sustainable. It might also mean the creation of another town in Fenland. Cllr Benney reminded members that all political parties were stressing the need to build more homes.

Cllr Benney admitted 850 homes a year would be a struggle and if FDC failed to deliver they risked losing their right to determine planning applications and could be put in special measures. He said at present there was planning permission for 2,900 homes in the district which were not going forward. On this basis FDC would have to grant permission for more than 850 homes a year as some would never be built.

Cllr Haggata asked if this meant any plans approved by the Town Council would go through. Cllr Benney said at present no as current plans were determined using existing planning laws and the old Local Plan.

Cllr Benney confirmed the new planning laws would impact on the new Local Plan being drawn up by FDC hence the call for more sites which might be suitable for development. To date 400 possible sites had been put forward. National planning policy would take precedent over the Local Plan which would take precedent over community or neighbourhood plans.

Cllr Benney informed members that the planning white paper also looked at viability reports and he hoped it would result in developers being able to determine what their contributions should be. At present they were arguing against onerous Section 106 agreements as this put the price of the land down and landowners were then reluctant to sell as larger sums had been talked about.

The Hallam land south of Tithe was an example where Section 106 contributions were still being discussed. Cllr Benney admitted he would like to see the Combined Authority pay in advance for the roadway through the land and then claim back the money through the sale of the houses as this would kick start development on the site.

#### **P16 20/21 Any Other Business**

Furrowfields Road: Cllr Smith said she had been approached about speeding cars along Furrowfields Road which were making it difficult for pedestrians, particularly elderly people, to cross the road to access the library and the town. Anti-social driving had resulted in two cars smashing into a wall. Speeding vehicles also made it difficult for cars exiting the car park on the left hand side of the road.

Cllr Gowler asked if a flashing sign would help as he and Cllr Benney had recently put up the MVAS sign and brackets in Curf Terrace and Huntingdon Road. They had more brackets which could go up on lampposts and he agreed to look for a suitable lamppost in Furrowfields Road.

The Clerk said information retrieved from the MVAS sign (which recorded the volume and speed of vehicles) could be used as evidence of speeding and the police could then be asked to take action or it could be used as evidence to press for a crossing on the road. Cllr Benney said he was working on how to retrieve the information from the MVAS.

Parking Enforcement: Cllr Benney spoke briefly about a matter which would be discussed at the Town Council meeting the following Tuesday – funding of a parking enforcement project.

Apologies: Cllr Carney gave his apologies for the Town Council meeting.