

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the twentieth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council **Planning Committee** (2003 – 2007 Session) held on Monday 4th September 2006 at 8:00 pm in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mr M Fairchild** **Chairman**
 Mr T Feather)
 Mr A Morris) **Councillors**
 Mr T Skidmore)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and **15** members of the public.

20.1 **Absent** – Cllr Mrs M Gibson, Cllr Foreman [abroad on business], and Cllr Stigwood.

20.2 **Democratic 10 minutes** The Chairman invited members of the public to comment on any matters on the agenda.

Mrs Ward asked if there had been any developments on the cottages next to May Cottage, Cradle End. She was concerned that the site, with its half demolished building and flapping tarpaulins, was a continuing eyesore. The Clerk said that he had spoken to the enforcement office at EHDC. The enforcement notice on the developers had come into force on 4th September 2006. No appeals had been received. The developers' agent had apparently been paid and was now working on new plans that might regularise the position and allow work to continue. The conservation officer hoped that enough of the original structure had been conserved in a locked container on the site to make a sensible restoration possible.

A number of comments were made concerning the plans for Church End Lane and a church car park. People were concerned that a roadway should not be constructed over the burial ground if it were to affect existing graves. Some thought that access to the Farm should be via the road from the Albury Road rather than by Church End Lane.

There was a general feeling that the details of the plans should have been made available before the meeting so that members of the public would be able to make more considered comments. Cllr Fairchild said that he would consider how the format of the meeting might be changed to make this possible.

20.3 **Declarations of interest** Cllr Skidmore express a prejudicial interest in the applications for Church End Farm as they involved St Cecilia's church and he was on the PCC. He left the room when these matters were discussed.

20.4 **Minutes** of the meeting held on Monday 3rd July 2006 were agreed and signed as a true record.

20.5 **Matters arising**

20.5.1 Cottages next to May Cottage, Cradle End. Dealt with above.

20.6 **Planning applications considered by the Council**

20.6.1 1223/06 Field House, The Ford. Side conservatory. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Morris.

Cllr Feather proposed that there be no objections. Agreed.

- 20.6.2 1266/06 Meadow Cottage, Bury Green. Conservatory. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Fairchild.
Cllr Feather proposed that there be no objections. Agreed.
- 20.6.3 1412/06 Connect Scaffolding, Hadham Park. To continue the use of land and buildings at Hadham Park as a scaffold erectors depot without compliance with condition 5 of app.3/04/1408/FP, re. The provision of a passing bay on the private drive. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Stigwood.
Cllr Feather proposed that there be no objections. Agreed.
- 20.6.4 1450/06 Hoop House, Green Street. First floor extension. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Morris.
Cllr Feather proposed that there be no objections. Agreed.
- 20.6.5 1619/06 Glentara, Albury Road. Replacement of existing double garage and extending 1.5m further forward to become single garage + store room + small office in roof space. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Fairchild.
Cllr Feather proposed that there be no objections. Agreed.
- 20.6.6 1652/06 Church End Farm, Church End. Change of use of land from agricultural to roadway and parking area.
1653/6 Church End Farm, Church End. Re-align existing access road (part adopted and part private).
Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Fairchild.
Cllr Fairchild explained that these two applications were to be taken together. People attending services and other activities at the church parked in Church End Lane. These parked cars severely reduced access by farm vehicles and the emergency services. The plans were to realign the lane slightly away from the farmhouse and to build a car park in the field on the northern side of the churchyard. A road would have to be constructed across the western side of the burial ground to allow access to the church door on the southern side of the church.
Cllr Fairchild said that the Council had commented on similar plans in November 2005. The Council had not objected but had made comments about matters that should be agreed with the church. Cllr Fairchild read a letter that he proposed should be sent to EHDC by the Council:

These plans were considered at the Little Hadham Parish Council Planning Committee meeting on Monday 4 September 2006.

With regard to assurances that we would seek, our comments are similar to those made in our letter of 8th November 2005 in response to the previous applications. This Council has no objection to the plans in principle: the realignment of the road should improve safety and convenience for road traffic and the emergency services, and the car parking spaces will add a useful amenity to the church.

However, we note that some of the issues raised in our earlier letter remain unresolved. These same issues have been referred to in correspondence between Michael Snyder, vice-chairman of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Collins family, and in conversations and correspondence between the PCC and this Council. We note that the version of the letter from Mr Snyder to Mr Robert Collins of 24 May that was submitted by the applicants along with their plans, omits all references to matters on which Mr Snyder sought specific assurances.

Our general position is that the resolution of these issues is a matter between the PCC and the applicants. However, to protect the interests of all parties concerned, including

the general public using Church End and visiting the church, and to avoid problems in the future, we would draw to the attention of EHC concerns that we feel should be resolved before any permission is granted, namely:

The footpath that runs from the road to the main door on the south side of the church is important for disabled access and for wedding cars and hearses. Planning permission should be conditional on this footpath being connected to the realigned road and right of way preserved.

We understand that the PCC has asked for an undertaking that right of access would be guaranteed from that part of Church End Lane that is private property, to the proposed new road and car park. Such access would be complicated by the use of a lockable gate, which we understand has been referred to in discussions between the PCC and the applicants.

Clarification is needed on various issues concerning provision of a new car park, including number of spaces, whether a turning bay is to be provided, who would have the right to park there, and indeed whether EHDC would allow a car park (as distinct from a road only) to be built.

We note that little direct reference has been made to the fact that the new footpath/driveway from the proposed car park to the main door to the church would be across a burial ground. Permission would need to be given by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) who, we understand, is awaiting confirmation of certain details from the applicants. The Council would like to be assured that the DAC is satisfied with the plans and that agreements are in place for the siting, construction and financing of this path before any permission is granted.

We are sympathetic to the PCC's desire to obtain a written agreement on all the outstanding issues. We would also point out that unless the change of use and road alignment are carried out to the satisfaction of all parties, the result could be a situation in which there would be no incentive for car drivers to use the new facilities. They might therefore opt to continue parking in Church End Lane, defeating the purpose of the exercise.

We would also repeat a point made in our previous letter. While recognising that it is outside the scope of these two applications, the Council would like explicit reassurance from the applicants and from East Herts Council that the improved access and increased parking space will not lead to a more extensive business estate on the site. The area is agricultural land beyond the green belt in which there is a presumption of no development. Access from Church End Lane on to the A120 is dangerous and it would be unwise to allow any increase in the number of vehicles using the lane.

Cllr Morris said that the final paragraph was unenforceable as all planning applications had to be considered separately. He proposed that it be omitted. With this amendment the proposal was agreed.

20.7 **Planning decisions received from EHDC – to note**

- 20.7.1 0970/06 Stockbriggess, Church End. Two-storey side extension. Granted.
- 20.7.2 1050/06 2 Westfield Cottages, Westland Green. Two-storey rear extension. Refused.
- 20.7.3 1223/06 Field House, Ford Hill. Side conservatory. Granted.
- 20.7.4 1266/06 Meadow Cottage, Bury Green. Conservatory. Refused.

20.8 **Decisions on appeals received from EHDC – to note**

20.8.1 2138/05 Ford Barn, The Ford. Single storey side extension to provide drive through garage. Appeal refused.

20.8.2 1294/05 The Pastures, Chapel Lane. Raise roofline and alterations to elevations to provide additional accommodation at first floor. Appeal allowed.

20.9 **Withdrawn planning application – to note**

20.9.1 0996/06 Bury Green Farm House, Bury Green. Two-storey side extension and alterations, replacement detached garage with playroom over and upgraded courtyard.

20.10 **Property advertised for sale**

20.10.1 Folly Farm, Albury Road. Considered by Cllr Feather and Cllr Fairchild.

Cllr Feather said that the farm was for sale as agricultural land on the day after the Council meeting. Only potential purchasers could attend the sale. Cllr Fairchild said that the land might become involved in any future by-pass with some or all of the land becoming “land locked”. However he had been assured by EHDC that this would not affect the status of the land – land cut off by the recent A10 by-pass had retained its status as agricultural land. The East Herts Local Plan would come into effect in 2007 though recent changes to the rules might make alterations easier.

20.11 **Any other business.** None.

20.12 **Date of next meeting – Monday 2nd October 2006.**

20.13 **Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 8:39 p.m.**