

PUBLIC MEETING - ARRANGED BY POTTON TOWN COUNCIL

Monday 12th September 2016 at the Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton which started at 7 pm

To discuss Housing Developments in Potton

Present: Potton Town Chairman Cllr Mr A. Macdonald, and Cllr's Mr R. Harris, Mr L. Ivall, Mr J. Lewis, Mr R Whitfield and Mr A. Zerny who is also a ward Cllr. Sixty eight members of the public completed the attendance list and approximately a further fifteen members of the public were in attendance.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mr D. Ellison, Mr J. Hobbs, Mr P. Langridge, Mr J. Lean and Mr A. Leggatt.

2 Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone.

Cllr Macdonald introduced himself, Cllr Mr A. Zerny who is town and ward Cllr and the Town Clerk.

3 To receive a report from Cllr Mr A. Macdonald, Chairman of the Town Council

The Chairman outlined about Central Bedfordshire Council's call for sites exercise.

The Chairman advised that on Wednesday 14th September 2016, Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Management will be discussing the planning application for the land to the South of Sandy Road, Potton for up to 90 dwellings and the planning department has recommended the development for approval. The Chairman advised that the town council on the 19th July 2016 resolved to object to the application on the basis that the current infrastructure (doctors, dentist, town centre parking etc) cannot support the rapid rate of housing in Potton at this time. The impact on the town's infrastructure from the two housing developments on Biggleswade Road is not yet known.

The Chairman also advised about potential developments in Sutton Mill Road, Biggleswade Road, North of Sandy Road and Jays Farm, Myers Road. The Chairman added that currently only Jays Farm, Myers Road had been discussed by the town council and this was discussed at a meeting on the 2nd August and the council resolved to object to the application for the following reasons: Unsustainable, the site is outside the development window for Potton, access to the site and overbearing because of the raised site.

4 To receive a report from Mr A. Zerny, Ward Councillor and Potton Town Councillor

The Chairman asked Cllr Zerny to give a report.

Cllr Zerny asked the public if they had seen the information sheet Housing Developments in Potton. The majority of the people indicated they had seen the Housing Developments in Potton.

Cllr Zerny advised about the Development Management meetings, at which developments such as the planning application for the land to the South of Sandy Road, Potton are discussed.

Cllr Zerny advised that the Jays Farm, Myers Road development is likely to be turned down by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) though the applicant is likely to appeal the decision.

Cllr Zerny advised that an application had recently been submitted for 85 dwellings on Biggleswade Road, Potton and if the application is likely to be approved, I will call in the application to Development Management.

Cllr Zerny advised about what is likely to happen at the Development Management meeting (on Wednesday 14th September) at which the planning application for the development on the land to the South of Sandy Road, Potton will be discussed. Cllr Zerny then advised that he will argue about the impact on the Doctor's surgery in Potton, the Doctor's surgery in Potton has advised that they are at capacity and the NHS has advised they would require Section 106 monies for the Doctor's surgery. Doctor's surgery in Potton has advised that they don't want Section 106 monies, as this won't help in recruiting more Doctors.

Cllr Zerny advised if the application is successful option 1 is to call the application in to the planning inspectorate and option 2 is to have a Judicial Review and for this to take place fundraising of £10,000 would be needed and if the application goes to court fundraising of £30,000 would be needed.

Cllr Zerny then mentioned if the Sandy Road application is approved a resident action group could be set up and raise money for a Judicial Review. A resident action group could put in an objection about the application if approved.

5 To receive a report from Mrs D. Gurney, Ward Councillor

No report.

6 To take questions from the public

The Chairman asked for any questions from the public.

Key: **Q** = Question, **A** = Answer, **S** = Statement, (AZ) = Cllr Adam Zerny, (C) = Chairman

Q1 Has legal advice been considered, especially free legal advice?

A (AZ) Don't know if any free legal advice is available.

Q2 Does a Judicial Review have to be for one particular case?

A (AZ) For a Judicial Review to be successful, it needs to demonstrate that they didn't follow the planning process correctly, Legal Development Framework (LDF) North should be still valid.

Q3 Is a Judicial Review for one development or can it used for all developments in Potton?

A (AZ) A Judicial Review is for one development, rather than all developments.

Q4 If a Neighbourhood Plan isn't feeding into a Local Plan, the planning process is broken?

A (AZ) Ideally it would be good to do them all at once (Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan) and stop any planning applications until they are completed, though can't stop developers putting in applications.

Q5 Should all proposals for development be in the Local Plan?

A (AZ) Can only add to the Local Plan once people want to sell land for housing.

Q6 Should a Moratorium be put in place until the Local Plan is finished?

A (AZ) Only Central Bedfordshire Council can put in a Moratorium.

Q7 Should a Judicial Review be carried out?

A (AZ) A Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in place to increase the amount of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) for Pottton. The Local Plan isn't in place so CIL doesn't need to be paid. The Town Plan which was adopted in 2009 had no teeth, a Neighbourhood Plan when approved has to be considered by CBC planning. CIL without a Neighbourhood Plan will give 10% to Pottton, CIL with a Neighbourhood Plan will give 25% to Pottton and possibly as much as 35%.

Q8 Is there a precedent for a Judicial Review?

A (AZ) Watching what is happening with the Judicial Review in Dunton. Every Judicial Review case is different. Leigh Parker had success with regard to ecology for a development in Bicester for 500 dwellings.

Q9 What happened with the Wrestlingworth appeal?

A (AZ) Gladman appealed with regard to the development outside the settlement envelope. Planning Inspectorate has commented that CBC don't have 5 years of housing and for this reason CBC can't now disapprove of developments outside the settlement envelope. When CBC has 5 years of housing, CBC can then disapprove of developments outside the settlement envelope.

Q10 What about Highways with regard to lack of parking, speed through the town, looked in the plans for the Sandy Road development and nothing mentioned with regard to Deepdale?

A (AZ) Highways have reduced the speed out of Pottton to Deepdale.

A (C) If this development is approved and with the Biggleswade development which has already been approved, will result in 280 extra homes and no additional town centre parking.

Q11 What is the social housing percentage for the Sandy Road development?

A (AZ) The social housing percentage for the Sandy Road development is 35% and people living in the locality will be high on the list, though people in desperate need will be housed as a priority.

Q12 A development for Myers Road will have a speeding problem?

A (AZ) Officers of CBC look for all the answers.

Q13 350 houses in the system for Pottton can we say enough is enough?

A (AZ) Unfortunately can't look at all the developments in Pottton altogether and say to many. Section 106 will give money to the schools

and Doctors, due to space constraints at Potton Doctor's surgery money will go Gamlingay Doctor's surgery.

Q14 Gamlingay Doctor's surgery is also unable to cope with the amount of patients?

A (AZ) Tried to persuade Greensands and local NHS to comment about Sandy Road planning application. Greensands have commented to local NHS about the planning application. Greensands commented to the local NHS that Section 106 won't help recruit new Doctor's, the local NHS has given a response to CBC different from the Greensands response.

Q15 What is the school capacity and Doctor's surgery capacity?

A (AZ) The middle school is running currently at 75% capacity, the lower school hasn't much capacity and section 106 can be used to build extra classrooms, if no spaces available in the schools. A new Doctor's surgery for Potton would be too expensive to build.

A (C) The middle school has spaces available, because some children leave at the end of year 6 to go to the two tier system in Cambridgeshire.

Q16 What is the school capacity for Upper Schools?

A (AZ) Stratton Upper School is under capacity. Central Bedfordshire Council don't object to planning applications for no school places, they request Section 106 monies.

Q17 What does Section 106 for schools provide?

A (AZ) Section 106 monies can be used for construction of classrooms, it can't be used for running costs or teachers.

A (C) Funding for running costs and teachers is delayed by a year and the school has to use its reserves if pupil numbers rise.

S In the report it mentions 638 houses could be built in Potton, need to prevent impact on services. What would be the future requirements for schools and doctors.

Q18 What is the capacity of the local sewerage works?

A (AZ) Capacity isn't an issue, sewerage company advised a few years ago plenty of capacity.

Q19 Is a policy in place to stop the rapid increase in the number of houses?

A (AZ) No. Other places have grown much quicker. CBC encourage builders to sign up to build the development in a quick timescale.

Q20 Recent news about a development off Mill Lane?

A (AZ) Traffic surveys have been carried out near garage blocks.

Q21 Drainage in Sutton Mill Road results in localised flooding. Where will the access be for the development off Sutton Mill Road as the road turns into a Bridleway?

A (AZ) Access to the development off Sutton Mill Road will be via Sandy Road.

Q22 Are Newtown and Spencer Close garage blocks are going to be developed?

A (AZ) Aragon Housing are looking to turn garage block areas into housing areas.

Q23 Can Potton become a harder target for developers?

A (AZ) A Judicial Review may put off developers.

Q24 A Moratorium request from the Planning Inspectorate (PI) seems to be the way to go.

A (AZ) Have asked the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for a Moratorium and they advised that only CBC could request a Moratorium.

Q25 Adam have you got any documentation that CBC or the PI have said no to a Moratorium.

A (C and AZ) No documentation.

Q26 Would a petition carry any weight with CBC or PI?

A (AZ) A petition would probably carry no weight with CBC or PI.

Q27 Adam have you contacted the local MP (Member of Parliament)?

A (AZ) Yes I have contacted the local MP, Alistair Burt though currently no response.

S A Judicial Review is to check that due process with the application has been followed.

Q28 Would a petition to Government stop the developments?

A (AZ) Would need to consider what the petition is specifically for.

Q29 If the developments take place it will result in a loss of amenity. The town council has very little say on where the developments take place.

A (AZ) Agree, developments should be part of the Local Plan.

Q30 The amount of development should be proportional.

A (C) Developments in the future could result in towns being merged, with developments in Biggleswade coming as far as Sutton.

Q31 In the developments what is the provision for elderly?

A (AZ) Don't know how much of developments social housing is for the elderly. Originally bungalows were planned for the Biggleswade Road site, though these are now going to be maisonette's.

Q32 With regard to the CBC 2011 Site Allocations Development Plan, how do CBC know when they have met the number of houses that need to be built?

A (AZ) The Government tells CBC how much housing is needed and this is 30,000 by 2030.

Q33 Adam have you contacted the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)?

A (AZ) Yes have contacted CPRE and they have been very helpful.

Q34 What does the CBC 2011 Site Allocations Development Plan say about Potton?

A (AZ) The 2011 Site Allocations Development Plan dictates what is allowed to be built outside the settlement envelope and mitigating factors for the environment.

Q35 The developer has to comply with a number of ecological factors on the Biggleswade Road development, does CBC go back to check?

A (AZ) CBC do go back and check the major items.

Q36 Central Government say we need to have a rapid rise in housing, a review of National housing strategy is needed?

A (AZ) No evidence that people will want to live here.

S May need to lay down in front of the bulldozers.

S Rise in the demand for housing, because of more single occupancy.

Q37 A member of the public asked the C what the Town Council will do about housing developments.

A (C) Look into a Moratorium, Cllr Hobbs will speak against the Sandy Road application at the CBC Development Management meeting on Wednesday 14th Sept, investigate about a Judicial Review, write to the local MP, will take suggestions from the public and will continue to work on the Neighbourhood Plan. The whole Town Council will need to decide on how to proceed.

AZ asked for a show of hands from the people present, if they would fund a Judicial Review. The majority of the people present raised a hand. One member of the public commented only if we get a reduction on the town council bill to the same amount.

AZ asked for a show of hands from the people present, if they would be interested in setting up a Residents Action Group. The majority of the people present raised a hand.

AZ advised that if the application is successful on Wednesday, a Judicial Review would need to be submitted within six weeks to oppose the approval.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.