

Extraordinary Meeting of Charminster Parish Council
5th January 2021
held virtually online via Zoom at 7.00pm

Draft Minutes

Present: Mark Simons (MS) (Chair), Carol Matthews (CM) (Vice-Chair), Keith Beeson (KB), Geri Brown (GB), Peter Dangerfield (PD), Richard East (RE), Alan Rolls (AR), Richard Wareham (RW), and Peter White (PW), Tim Yarker (TY)

In attendance: Sarah Davies (Clerk) and 9 members of the public

MS welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7pm and introduced himself. MS informed the meeting that Nigel Kay was in attendance representing The Pilot taking notes for the next edition of the Parish Magazine.

2021/001 **Declarations of Interest** – to record declarations of interest in any item on the agenda.
PD declared an interest as he is Chair of Wolfeton Riding House.

2021/002 **To consider grant of dispensations**
None received.

2021/003 **To receive apologies for absence**
None received

2021/004 **Public Discussion Period**

MS suspended the formal part of the meeting. He gave a background to the planning application for land south of Westleaze in Charminster. He explained the application was for up to 89 houses on one side of the Strawberry Fields (the side nearest the village centre). It is very similar to a previous application that was turned down by West Dorset District Council and then turned down at appeal afterwards. Approximately 30 years ago there was also a residential application for the whole site that was turned down.

MS explained there is a shortage of affordable housing in Dorset but Charminster Farm has provided a large amount of affordable housing some of which has been taken up by people local to the area.

MS asked if anyone present would like to speak in favour of the application. There was no response.

TY agreed that there is a housing need in Dorset but this is being addressed by the Local Plan that will soon be out for consultation. This includes a proposal for approximately 3,000 homes right up to the boundary of the Parish. TY noted the previous application was rejected at appeal just over 12 months ago and the new application does not ameliorate any of the potential harm identified by the inspector which related to the unacceptable impact on designated heritage assets particularly the Grade 1 listed Wolfeton House and the Grade 2 listed Riding House and the character and appearance of the Charminster conservation area.

There was discussion about the additional traffic the development would create. MS explained that regardless of whether Highways has objected to the proposals, it does not mean the Parish Council can't object strongly on the grounds of the impact on pedestrians and traffic safety in the village itself including the problems of access to and from the development. Several people spoke raising their concerns about these issues.

There was also discussion about the impact on the footpath across the field which is well used by many locals and the negative impact of light pollution especially on Wolfeton House. Clarification was made about the capacity at the village school to handle more children. The clerk had spoken to the Headteacher who explained they now catered for reduced numbers but there is classroom capacity in the school for more pupils.

PD spoke about the impact the development would have on the Riding House. He explained the trustees are currently making very good progress on a long term sustainable use of the Riding House which will be sensitive to the building and sensitive to the environment around it and an asset to the community but unfortunately the proposed development would ruin those plans.

MS resumed the formal part of the meeting at 7.44pm

2021/005 **WD/D/20/003004 Outline application for residential development for up to 89 dwellings (Land South of Westleaze)**

TY proposed the Parish Council strongly objects to the application on the following grounds:

- The proposals result in considerable harm to significant listed buildings, one of which is of acknowledged national importance.
- The proposals also cause harm to the character and appearance of the Charminster Conservation Area and the character of the landscape and how it is experienced. This land forms part of an important open space down to the water meadows from the village and as a 'buffer' between Charminster and Dorchester and has been designated as land of local landscape importance (LLLI) within the current Adopted Local Plan due to its' positive contribution to the character and setting of Dorchester.
- The impact of traffic within the village, on the C12 and access in and out of the site is of considerable concern, especially given the large development at Charminster Farm which has considerably increased traffic within the village. The draft local plan clearly acknowledges the problem of traffic through the narrow streets of the conservation area
- The site is not included in the draft Local Plan that is soon to be out for consultation and is outside of the current development area.

When all this is placed in the overall planning balance the adverse impacts of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the contribution the site could make to Dorset Council's 5 year land supply when assessed against the policies in the NPPF, taken as a whole, in the tilted balance.

Given the unacceptable nature of the proposed development when assessed against relevant planning policies the application should be refused planning permission.

RE seconded. 9 in favour. 1 abstention.

There being no further business MS closed the meeting at 7.52pm