

## LITTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Litton Cheney Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 24 September 2019 at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall to consider  
planning application **WD/D/19/00187** LAND EAST OF 7-8 GARDEN CLOSE – demolition of double garage  
and erection of 1 no dwelling, garage block, access, and parking

Present: Bill Orchard (Chairman); Kathryn Brooks; John Firrell; Andy King; Andrew Price; Bella Spurrier;  
Maggie Walsh (Clerk). Also in attendance were Paul Hoffman (planning agent) and 16 local residents

1. **Apologies:** none
2. **Declarations of interest:** none
3. Cllr Orchard invited Paul Hoffman, agent for the application to give an overview of the proposal. PH summarised the proposed development and said that, as a village without a development boundary, new dwellings within Litton Cheney would be contrary to Local Plan policy. However, as Dorset Council does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply, the Local Plan was superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which carried a presumption of approval unless the harm significantly outweighed the benefits. The site was within a Conservation Area (CA) and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and adjacent to a Listed Building. However, the site was enclosed by development on 3 sides and was screened by hedges. The applicant had obtained independent advice that the proposal was acceptable in heritage terms. No wildlife would be affected and nesting bird boxes would be erected. The Housing Needs Survey had identified 30 respondents would require open market housing. In his view all villages needed some level of new housing to sustain them. The application was for a 145m<sup>2</sup> 4 bed house which was appropriate for the size of the plot. The proposal would deliver 1 dwelling towards the 5 year housing land target; provide local employment during construction and the inhabitants would contribute to the village. He therefore felt the benefits outweighed the harm.
4. **Democratic time**
  - 2 local residents said they either had, or planned to object to the proposal and hoped the Parish Council would object to the application.
  - Concerns were raised about the impact on the amenities of neighbours.
  - Concern that the situation regarding the 5 year housing land supply left the village vulnerable to opportunistic applications for new dwellings
  - Query as to why the proposal was for a 4 bed house – most families could not afford a 4 bed house at open market prices and a number of 3 and 4 bed dwellings in the village were proving difficult to sell. The proposed dwelling was more likely to be purchased by a retired couple or for a holiday let.
  - Would the proposed dwelling be accessible to emergency services? The coal delivery lorry was unable to use the access road. Concern that the junction between Garden Close and Chalk Pit Lane was dangerous, PH responded that Highways and Technical Services had been consulted and raised no objection with regard to the proposed access arrangements; the nature of the junction of the junction between Garden Close and Chalk Pit Lane was not relevant to this application as both roads were already adopted.
  - The proposed house would fill in a green space and be out of keeping with the village.

#### 5. **Consideration by Parish Council**

Cllr Brooks confirmed that Dorset Council currently had 4.88 years of housing land supply and so the balance shifted from the Local Plan towards the NPPF. However, each planning application was assessed on its own merits. The balance of weight between the NPPF and the local plan, where there was a shortfall in 5 year housing land supply, would vary with the Local Planning Authority and/or Planning Inspector.

Parish Councillors were disappointed that so much planning weight should be given to the 5 year housing land availability target, when Dorset Council had exceeded the housing delivery test by 29%

over 3 years. There was already extant permission for 7 new dwellings in the village and Parish Councillors were concerned that pressure to build new houses in the village would continue whilst the 5 year housing land target was unmet, even though the local plan policy was that villages without development boundaries were unsuitable for new dwellings.

Whilst the NPPF carries a presumption in favour of *sustainable* development, the bus service extremely limited and Parish Councillors thought that the village school may be full. Villagers were reliant on cars and on street parking also caused significant problems. Litton Cheney was therefore not a sustainable location for new dwellings. One additional dwelling would not make a significant contribution to the 5 year supply.

Concern about how the proposed back land development would impact on the amenities of the occupants of Garden Close given the proposed narrow single lane access track for use by 4 properties running around existing dwellings and the proximity of the proposed dwelling to no 8 Garden Close.

Parish Councillors did not feel there was a need for additional 4 bed houses within the village and felt the agent had misinterpreted the Housing Needs Survey.

## 6. Conclusion and decision

It was proposed by Cllr Orchard, seconded by Cllr Firrell and carried unanimously that the Parish Council OBJECT to the planning application for the following reasons

- (1) The proposal is contrary to Policy SUS3 of the Local Plan as the village has no defined development boundary and proposed dwelling would not meet any identified needs within the village. The recent Housing Needs Survey did not confirm a substantial need for housing in the area other than for some respondents who supported the need for affordable housing.
- (2) Notwithstanding any reduced weight accorded to the Local Plan as a result of Dorset Council currently falling short of the 5 year housing land supply, and the NPPF presumption for *sustainable* development, the proposed application site is not in a sustainable location as the village has a limited bus service and facilities are limited to a pub, school, village hall and church. The occupants of the proposed dwelling would therefore need to rely on cars to travel in and out of the village via narrow and steep roads. There is already extant planning permission for 7 new dwellings in the village. If permitted, one additional dwelling would not make a significant contribution to the 5 year housing land supply but would have an incremental impact on the village. The adverse impacts of the proposal therefore outweigh any benefits.
- (3) Loss of amenity for the occupants of Garden Close: the proposed location is an infill site in back gardens but with the proposed building very close to the rear of other properties in Garden Close, particularly no's. 7&8 - which means this is a backland development and should be designed with full care and consideration for these properties as they are the ones most affected. The proposed dwelling is pitched about 45m from the rear of no 8 and with an access road to four garages running between the two properties. Larger vehicles are unable to use the access due to restricted turning space on the plot. The access to the site would be via a private lane off a cul-de-sac head, serving 4 properties with all their collections and deliveries, and passing within 10m of the principal (south facing) elevation of no 8 before turning at right angles and running past their rear windows as well. There are considerable adverse effects to be expected for the owners of this property in terms of privacy, outlook and quiet enjoyment, and others in the Close will be impacted to a lesser degree by this development and increased traffic movements.

The Parish Council also wishes to record its disappointment that Dorset Council's significant achievement in exceeding the housing delivery test does not appear to mitigate against its shortfall of 0.12 against the 5 year housing land supply.

## 7. Meeting closed

Maggie Walsh, Parish Clerk