

Minutes of the Meeting of Beech Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Monday 12th August 2019

PRESENT:

Councillor Graham Webb (Chairman)

Councillor Daniel Gordon

Councillor Tony Ransley

Mrs Louisa Thomson – Clerk to the Council

Members of the public

19.129 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – NON AGENDA ITEMS

Members of the public raised the issue of speeding traffic along Medstead Road which they believe is sometimes 40 to 50 mph and asked if there was a possibility of having speed bumps installed as they thought this was the only way to slow down the traffic.

Chairman Graham Webb confirmed that the Parish Council had applied for S.106 monies to fund a study to be carried out by Hampshire County Council to establish what further traffic calming measures could be put in place.

19.130 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Alana Coombes and Ruth Duffin.

19.131 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 29th July 2019, copies previously circulated, **Proposed as a true record by Tony Ransley, Seconded by Graham Webb and signed by Chairman Graham Webb.**

19.132 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public addressed the meeting regarding the planning application Land North of Lower Park Farm, Abbey Road. They referred to the draft Beech Neighbourhood Plan which mentions preventing coalescence with Medstead / Wivelrod / Bentworth. The Beech Landscape Character Assessment referred to maintaining the individual identity of Beech and maintaining established green space. Not to do so would create a precedent the individual character of Beech needs to be protected.

Another member of the public spoke about the same applications referring to CP50 compliance and felt that the application fell short as there it has not proven the local authority provision has not been met. They also raised concerns regarding local schools and doctors which are already full and that Alton Abbey is a place of retreat and a heritage landscape in Beech and would as the Council to consider this when considering this application.

Another member of the public also addressed Council regarding this application stating that gypsy and travellers have special planning applications and requested the council get specialist advice as they felt it likely to be ongoing what ever the initial decision of the council. They suggested the Beech Parish Council might coordinate its response with Bentworth and Medstead Parish Councils, and that Four Marks Parish Council had recently objected to a similar application and their comments may be of interest.

A further member of the public confirmed the importance of maintaining the gap between Medstead and Beech and also raised concerns regarding the increase in traffic which would be 50/60 additional traffic movements a day as there are no local facilities such as schools and shops this may mean more journeys. The increase in traffic through Wivelrod would be significant and noticeable on Medstead Road. Visibility was not good especially in summer months with visibility sight lines to Medstead Road approximately 30-50 metres and to Wivelrod of 50-70 metres, reduced sight lines may be acceptable in traffic limited to 30mph. Wivelrod and Snode Hill are not suitable for wide traffic neither is Kings Hill. If Medstead Road is closed it would be impossible for the vehicles to be accommodated on Wivelrod Road and Snode Hill. Also walkers, cyclists and horses who regularly use Wivelrod would be compromised.

19.133 CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillor Daniel Gordon signed a copy agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct adopted in July 2018.

19.134 PLANNING

Council considered one application their comments to be forwarded to East Hampshire District Council, comments to include reference to the draft Beech Neighbourhood Plan where applicable.

58352 Land North of Lower Park Farm, Abbey Road, Medstead. **OBJECT**
Change of use of agricultural land to provide 8 pitches for gypsy families incorporating 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan and 1 utility/day room per pitch and formation of hard standing and associated car parking.

Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and Unanimously Resolved that Standing Orders were suspended and reinstated twice during councils discussion so members of the public could speak regarding this application.

Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following comments are forwarded to EHDC:

Beech Parish Council acknowledges the need for adequate provision within the district of sites for pitches for gypsies and travellers. However, the Parish Council objects to this particular planning application because the proposed development is in a completely unsuitable location.

1. *The land in question is in peaceful, elevated, open countryside, close to Alton Abbey, an active Benedictine monastery retreat. There are the possible remains of a Roman road on the other side of Abbey Road (Monument ID 57992, Hampshire Environmental Record). There is no proven need for a development of this nature to be sited in the countryside (i.e. outside any Settlement Policy Boundary) and so the application contravenes EHDC Policy CP19 'Development in the Countryside'. The development would be detrimental to the intrinsic character and beauty of this open countryside landscape, and to the setting of Alton Abbey, a heritage asset (Monument ID 68610).*
2. *The proposal would introduce development along Abbey Road in the narrow countryside gap directly between Beech and Medstead. Emerging Beech Neighbourhood Plan Policy BPC03 seeks to maintain the current gap between Beech, Medstead and Wivelrod so as to preserve the identity of each settlement. The policy derives from the independently-produced Beech Landscape Character Assessment (2018) that identifies a threat of coalescence of Beech with Medstead, and recommends that Beech should "maintain individual settlement identity and limit linear expansion and infilling between existing settlements" and "retain an undeveloped road rural corridor [in] important open gaps". Even though the land in question happens to lie in Bentworth parish (at the junction of three parish boundaries), its development would clearly go against Beech Neighbourhood Plan's policy objective to preserve this gap, which has already been supported by public consultation in Spring 2019.*
3. *With regard to EHDC Policy CP15 'Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople' we dispute the applicant's claim that the land is conveniently located for access to schools, medical services and other community facilities. The land is outside any town or village that has any of these facilities, and is in fact remote from such facilities. The application site therefore does not meet the requirements of Policy CP15.*
4. *There are no footways along the roads around this land. Nor is there any public transport of note. This means that practically every journey to and from the land must be in private vehicles. With eight pitches, this would lead to significant extra traffic on the surrounding roads, which is particularly undesirable in Beech, which has steeply-banked narrow roads with no footways that are already considered hazardous for pedestrians. Via Beech would be the direct road route from the land to the A339 and Alton, the nearest town and service centre.*
5. *The road from Alton and the A339 through Beech to this land (narrow, windy and with a steep gradient) is not suited to the towing of large residential caravans, which could be a regular occurrence, even if this were not to be designated a transit site. (We assume that the land's remoteness from A-roads means that it could never qualify to be a transit site.) The alternative road from the A339 to this land through Thedden and Wivelrod (also used as a diversion if the road through Beech village is closed) is even narrower and less suitable. Hampshire County Council has recently erected a sign at the A339 advising that these roads are 'unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles', which strongly indicates that they are also unsuitable for the towing of large residential caravans.*

6. *It seems doubtful that large towed residential caravans could actually enter and leave the land from the very narrow Wivelrod Road. No vehicle tracking information, including for movements within the site, was provided in the application. In addition, we are concerned about the adequacy of visibility splays at the proposed site entrance, including the impact of vegetation on land not owned by the applicant. We also request that Hampshire County Council be asked to review the suitability of the nearby junction between Abbey Road and Wivelrod Road (on the principal road access route to the land) for significant towed caravan traffic, as the junction is situated on a bend on Abbey Road that limits visibility when exiting Wivelrod Road.*

19.135 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to request that Ms Ann Skippers, Ann Skippers Planning, Chelmsford is appointed as examiner.

19.136 FOOTPATH ALONGSIDE MEDSTEAD ROAD AND KINGS HILL

Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and Unanimously Resolved to suspend and reinstate standing orders so member of the public and speak on this item.

a) **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Daniel Gordon and Unanimously Resolved** that Beech Parish Council have not approved the study and as Hampshire County Council to clarify the following:

- Would you be happy for Beech parish councillors to accompany you on site visits, to help with local knowledge, clarifications of needs etc. and so that we can understand any constraints at first hand?
- Please confirm that an initial part of the work will be to check the conclusions of Beech PC's preliminary study, i.e. in terms of assumptions of locations of proposed footways and location of physical traffic calming measures.
- Please confirm that speed restrictions (e.g. a potential 20mph limit) will be considered as part of the mix of options for the physical traffic calming.
- We envisage that the work will consist of two phases. At the end of Phase 1, as a milestone you will present to the parish council a brief report on:
 - The optimal locations of new footways (i.e. extent, and which side of road), with alternatives (if any) complete with pros & cons; and
 - The optimal type and locations of physical calming measures and/or speed restrictions, with alternatives (if any) complete with pros & cons.
 With Phase 2 being the more detailed work on all alternatives that are not discarded after discussion.
- Will the final deliverable drawings be similar in presentation style to those seen for Oakhanger traffic calming (attached)?
- If at any time (i) either the footway or the traffic calming part of the study is abandoned, or (ii) the optimal traffic calming study is concluded to consist of a speed limit only, we would expect the £12,650 estimated fee to be reduced as the work will be reduced.
- We note that the £12,650 fee is not a fixed fee. Do you propose to report time and cost expended, with anticipated final outturn to us, say, every two weeks?
- We note from page 4 that you will implement formal change control.

b) **Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and Unanimously Resolved** that Graham Webb continues to liaise with Hampshire County Council.

19.137 EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BRIEFING LARGE HOUSING SITES CONSULTATION

a) Report from Graham Webb

- ‘Large sites’ = more than 800 houses plus supporting infrastructure. Two large sites (Whitehill & Bordon and Northbrook Park, Bentley) were included in the draft local Plan consulted on in the Spring. There were a huge number of (presumably negative) comments on Northbrook Park but very few comments (unsurprisingly) on alternative large sites not included in the draft plan. So this additional consultation is to gather information and comments on a wider range of potential large sites.
 - The ten candidate large sites are at: Whitehill & Bordon (again); Northbrook Park (again); Liphook; Horndean; **four** sites at Four Marks/South Medstead (none close to Beech Parish); Neatham Down, Alton (on the east side of the A31 bypass); and Chawton Park Farm.
 - The Chawton Park Farm site, bordering Beech, consists principally of the LAAs considered and rejected by EHDC in 2018, and would mean more or less continuous housing to the south of Ackender and Bushy Leaze Woods, all the way from the Lord Mayor Treloar development to the boundaries of Old Park Farm (Jardinique).
 - The consultation period runs from 3 September to 15 October. Parish councillors will be invited to a drop-in session in Petersfield (with all the developers & plans) on Monday 2 September. There will be a further 6 drop-in sessions for the public (again with all the developers present), a weekday and a Saturday in each of Alton, Whitehill & Bordon, and Horndean. There was a big row about no sessions in Four Marks!
 - EHDC will publish the full list of comments received in the Spring consultation ‘soon’. But we won’t see how they have responded to the comments until the next draft of the Local Plan is published – and that won’t be until after the Large Sites Consultation has concluded, the comments analysed, and two large sites selected for the revised draft plan. A new Local Plan timeline will be published ‘soon’.
 - The next draft of the Local Plan will be for Regulation 19 consultation, i.e. any further comments we make will go to the Independent Examiner for review, not to EHDC. Effectively this means that we can’t make any further representations for EHDC’s consideration about the Local Plan content, e.g. about site SA19 – Land at Brick Kiln Lane & Basingstoke Road).
 - EHDC confirmed that, now that their current plan (Joint Core Strategy 2014) is more than 5 years old, it carries less weight when considering planning applications. So they are in a hurry to get the new plan in place.
 - EHDC now has a transport planner on their planning team. There were complaints about the difficulty of getting Hampshire Highways, Thames Water and other infrastructure providers to engage meaningfully with town and parish councils.
- b) **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Daniel Gordon and Unanimously Resolved** that Graham Webb reviews the consultation document and reports at the September meeting where the councils comments will be agreed.

19.138 LAND AT WILL HALL FARM, ALTON – BRICK KILN LANE AND BASINGSTOKE ROAD

Following a request by Hallam Land Management to meet to discuss the possible development, **Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and Unanimously Resolved** not to meet that council would prefer to engage in the process through the established channels with East Hampshire District Council.

19.139 BUSHY LEAZE WOOD FOOTPATH

Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Daniel Gordon and Unanimously Resolved to wait until formally asked to comment on the footpath application.

19.140 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS DATA SHARING CONSULTATION

Daniel Gordon abstained as has no background to this, council therefore unable to respond as not quorate.

19.141 MEDSTEAD ROAD FOOTPATH

The overgrown nettles have been cleared by concerned residents.

19.142 EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL DOG CONTROL CONSULTATION

Proposed Daniel Gordon, Seconded Tony Ransley and Unanimously Resolved to raise concern over control and disposal of bags containing dog faeces.

19.143 ACCOUNTS 2019/20

i) Summary of Receipts & Payments for 1st Quarter Ended 30th June 2019 presented to Council detailing bank reconciliation as follows:

Current Account Balance	1,376.92
Less: Cheques drawn but not debited as at 31.03.19	-220.41
Deposit Account Balance	10,361.50
High Interest Bonds Balance	<u>24,477.50</u>
	35,995.51

Reconciliation checked and agreed by Councillor Graham Webb.

ii) **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Daniel Gordon and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the following payment is approved:

a) Clerk's expenses – August	£35.55
b) Hampshire Association of Local Councils – Councillor training	£342.00
c) Beech Village Hall and Recreation Ground – additional meeting	£16.38

19.144 MEETING DATES - Confirmed the date of the next scheduled Council meeting as Monday, 23rd September 2019 at 7.30pm with public question time at 7.15pm.

CLOSURE OF MEETING - Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.20pm.

signed:

Chairman Beech Parish Council

date: 23rd September 2019