

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN EXTRA ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 7.30 PM

Present

Cllr M Bamford - Chairman Mrs J Scott – Clerk Cllr B Feltwell Cllr K Spicer
Cllr P Cross Cllr N Moxey Cllr A Graffham Cllr J Wheals

Also in attendance - 87 members of the public

Cllr Bamford welcomed everyone to the meeting, pointed out the fire exits, asked for telephones to be put on silent and asked if anyone was recording the meeting. The Clerk received no notification of anyone planning to film or record this meeting. He affirmed that this meeting is being held to consider the outline application for properties in Church Road – details of design etc are Reserved Matters and not strictly the business of this application. He asked residents who wished to speak to put their hands up and limit their comments to 2-3 minutes.

1. To record apologies for absence – Cllr K Hutchings
2. To receive Declaration of Interest relating to Agenda items: None received

Public Session

Tree Warden: Read out a list of his qualifications and listed his objections – loss of productive agricultural land – developers say it is very poor agricultural land – it does however grow good crops. This is a major development with far too many houses – infrastructure will not cope. The removal of three Standard Oaks along Church Road for the exit and entrances – which will cause destruction of Stag Beetle habitat. He was also concerned about the many protected species. He ended with a minor point regarding the proposed cycle way – there is no cycling allowed on the Playing Fields.

Resident: Asked about the wording on the notice in Church Road regarding this development – she was told that Councillors must deal with it as they see it. This application is for 45 houses but the planning document refers to 111 houses in that area. To add another 45 houses would mean we would grow as a village by 25% which would be unsustainable with the current infrastructure. Medical services are already overstretched - with 1000 homes planned in Capel, East Bergholt, Copdock and Washbrook all of whom use Constable Country Medical Practice. There will be no more funding to improve medical services in Capel and it would strongly disadvantage residents of medical care. Finally, protecting our countryside - Bentley is unique in its rural character is a special landscape area - the ancient woodlands within it are to be designated as an area of AONB - this development is within 700 metres of Holly Wood which is included in that area. Church Road is a single carriageway through open countryside which is used extensively by walkers, dog walkers cyclists and horse riders as it connects with local footpath and bridleways – she believed that the views will be damaged by unsightly drainage lagoons as well as a sewage pumping station and strongly objected to this application.

Resident: Was concerned about the roads themselves at it affects the village – firstly the 166 page transport document submitted is inadequate – it doesn't take into consideration the railway crossing – there are often diversions put in place which takes traffic through Church Road. Church Road meets the full requirements of a quiet road status. He was also concerned about the pathway for children to walk to the Playing Field – this will be unlit and would threaten the security of premises adjacent to it, the buses (no one can get a bus into work), the school car park – the chapel car park is available for parents – the school is over subscribed. The Neighbourhood Plan has been drawn up and is very good and worthwhile with suitable housing for the young and the old, these needs are not met by this development in any way. The resident was reminded that Church Road was a C road. School children go to both churches regularly when there is something in the church calendar – children walk to the Parish Church,

supervised of course, and Baptist Church assemblies on a Wednesday morning. Is the carpark at the Baptist Church used by parents? No.

Resident: Had been to talk to the surveyor as the footpath on the plan appeared to cut through his garden he saw lots of red lines on the plan showing three developments with an initial 115 houses – he was told that we have to consider this one on its merits - any additional proposals are not part of this application.

Resident: Drainage doesn't appear to be a consideration - Church Road is subject to flooding and cars have difficulty negotiating the incline in freezing weather as it is rarely gritted. There is talk of "lagoons" how are they going to be secured for safety?

Resident: Agreed with everything that has been said so far -she felt the village was being penalised for the pub and shop being so successful and are in danger of becoming another Capel. She felt this had been deliberately timed before the Joint Local Plan is published and is disrespectful of the community who have put a lot of hard work into the village. Analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed but not yet published but 87% of residents only want small development 5-30 houses.

Resident: This application is prima facie against the 214 Core Strategy which is the Statutory Document that is in force. It is pretty clear that the Council know this application is outside the village envelope, within a special landscape and the Parish and District Council Development Plan is still the statutory development plan until circumstances change. Access is very poor so is public transport – Planners work to the current local plan - the Neighbourhood Plan cannot yet be taken into account – it is outside the village envelope and Special Development Plan & Special Landscape Area has to be adhered to.

3. **Planning Applications. To give comments on application DC/19/00291** Land West of Church Road - Outline Planning Application. Erection of up to 45 dwellings, pupil drop off & pick up for Primary School & shared foot/cycle path & access.

Councillors then discussed the application in detail - if the school is full – does the proposed carpark provide enough of a benefit to the school – is that a positive? 53% of the children are not Bentley residents. Does the school support the application.? The second entrance to Church Road and the three Oaks for the easement might have an impact on the dormice. Tree Warden thought it was difficult to say. Archaeology report – only a further 3% of drainage will be required. Highway safety - don't have any direct input to Highways. Following these discussions and after hearing detailed objections from several residents, Bentley Councillors **RECOMMENDED REFUSAL** on the following points

On the grounds of **Core Strategy CS11** – as the proposed development is outside the village envelope.

- i) Lack of proven justifiable need for additional housing of this scale in a village of 340 houses.
- ii) Disproportionate size in respect of the village – this development would represent a further 13% increase on top of the 10% increase due to currently approved applications up to a total in an immediate time frame of 23% whereas the Core Strategy would suggest 5-10% increase for a hinterland village in a time frame to 2031.
- iii) Cumulative housing numbers in the local Core and Hinterland Villages – 197 houses currently approved growth in the core village of Capel St Mary.

On grounds of **CS2** – impact on social and physical infrastructure – already problematic health services, school and transport infrastructure and water and sewerage services.

On grounds of **CS15** concern at the impact on the Special Landscape Area, impact on projected increased Coast and Heaths AONB. Biodiversity and Highway Safety in access from single track C class lane, which is the principal access to the village school and church.

Proposed: Cllr M Bamford Seconded Cllr P Cross All in favour CU

Cllr Bamford told the meeting this was Bentley Parish Council's response to Babergh and the Parish Council will make a presentation to the Planning Committee and obviously a representative of the community will have the opportunity to make a three minute presentation. We as a Parish Council might discuss how we are going to take this further as and when the Planning Committee arises.

Cllr Wheals – Community benefits outlined in the application should be at the start of the development rather than when it is underway. Sometimes developers renege on their promises.

4. To confirm date of next scheduled meeting– Thursday 7 March 2019 – 7.30 pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE:

DRAFT