

MINUTES OF CHRISTLETON PARISH COUNCIL EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING

Held on THURSDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2021 7.30 pm

Christleton Parish Hall

UNSIGNED

Present Cllr Luke Henley (Chairman) Susan Robson, John Beckitt, Elizabeth Inall, Kate Sinclair, Peter Tonge, Graham Ranger & Lauren Buckley

In Attendance: CWAC Cllr Stuart Parker, 27 members of the public & Sue Thwaite (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllrs Damian Murphy (on holiday) & Janet Brown (unwell)

Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

1. Cllrs Kate Sinclair & Susan Robson both declared a personal interest in the items on this agenda and would not comment on the specifics of the applications or have a vote on any decisions taken at the meeting regarding the planning applications.
2. Cllr Luke Henley (Chairman) welcomed everyone to the meeting explaining that the meeting was for the Parish Council to discuss the planning applications for the University of Law site and the implications for the future of the village should they be granted.

To consider Parish Council's response to submission of recent planning applications relating to University of Law

3. The Chairman went on to summarise the applications for the conversion of Christleton Hall into 18 apartments and to build 24 new 4/5-bedroom dwellings this was the primary application a second was for the creating of a temporary Haul Road for construction traffic with entrance off Little Heath Road running behind the houses to the construction site and, the third for Listed Development Consent for Christleton Hall for work to be carried out in the conversion of the building to apartments.
4. The Chairman then invited Cllr John Beckitt, who has been leading on this matter so far to speak to the meeting.
5. Cllr Beckitt started with the matter of the rear haul road explaining that CWAC Highways maintained that it is possible to allow the construction vehicles through the centre of the village with appropriate traffic restrictions. The developer's first consultation with the village revealed that this was not acceptable to the village.
6. The developer then engaged with the Council and the land owners on possible rear access to the site with two options, one via Pearl Lane and the other via Little Heath Road. The developer and landowners then chose the Little Heath Road route to the site. An agreement in principle between the developer and the landowner was reached for a short straight-line route from Little Heath Road to the construction site over the farmer's field. This was displayed to the Parish Council early in the year. The haul road has been amended for the planning application to include additional right-angle bends and a route behind and very close to the properties on Little Heath Road which is causing a great deal of concern to the residents of these houses.
7. No contractual agreement between the developer and the farmer is agreed at this stage between the developer and the farmer and in the meantime, the farmer and St James Church, have indicated that they are considering proposals to develop the land behind the Church to include a community centre, community car park, affordable/community houses and private houses which would be of financial benefit to the Church and, would like the temporary haul road (if allowed) to become a permanent road. The farmer and the church have appointed a consultant to represent their interests.

8. Any development of the land at the back of the Church would have to go through feasibility study, consultation with the village, an outline design plan, a review with the Planners to establish if the plans trigger special circumstances required to justify damage to Green Belt. Only at this stage will it be clear if the existing access is adequate and, if part of the UOL temporary rear haul road is required for temporary or permanent access to a development behind the Church.
9. Without all of the above having been carried out and no actual proposal being in place then the temporary haul road could not become permanent road.
10. It was agreed that the developer had not met the requirements of the Council, by not considering the alternative route from Pearl Lane, which would keep all the construction traffic out of the village, by changing the route of the haul road off Little Heath Road from the one originally submitted to the Parish Council without informing us, with the inevitable disruption, loss of amenity, noise, dust, disruption and inconvenience to the residents of Little Heath Road not being considered.
11. In conclusion the Council feel having set out to negotiate acceptable access to the construction site and for an amenity contribution to the village, the developer has not actually delivered on either of these matters
12. It was agreed that the Council write to the developer and the consultant (representing the church and farmer) explaining the Parish Council's position on the proposed rear haul road.
Action: Cllr Beckitt to action this item.
13. Further consideration would be discussed about consulting with the developer regarding the Haul Road submission and with CWAC Highways on this matter.
14. The meeting then went on to take a view on the overall principle of the development plans including whether the site should be used for alternative development, size, style and sustainability of the properties, whether a development of smaller properties for first time buyers and for older people looking to downsize to free up existing family residences, and any other matters that are needed to be included, whether we formally ask for the application to be called in to CWAC Planning Committee and to look at ways to have a formal consultation with the village.
15. The site is in washed-over Green Belt, this development could affect the openness of the Green Belt and CWAC are already on track in reaching their target for the number of new houses in the borough by 2030 without the need for this development and, priority should be given for further developments to be on brown field sites for the limited amount of housing still required to meet CWAC housing target for 2030.
16. The density and make up of housing was discussed, with comments on the profitability of the site for the owners. Fewer houses would require higher prices; lower prices would mean more houses having a large effect on the infrastructure of the village amenities.
17. Further discussion ensued on calling in the applications to CWAC Planning Committee with Cllr Parker stating that for him to call it in there has to be sound planning reasons and he has attended to listen to the Parish Council and resident's views
18. The Chairman then went on to ask, bearing in mind that this may be provisional subject to revision after carrying out a public consultation, are we in support of, or neutral or against in redeveloping this site for housing.
19. Before going forward to decide on which option to adopt the council should request an extension to the deadline for comments to CWAC Planning to allow time for the Parish Council to have a full consultation with the residents and to consider their comments prior to submitting any formal submission to Planning.

Approved: to formally request an extension to the deadline for comments on these application to CWAC Planning to the 5th November 2021 to allow time for a consultation with the village to be organised and for their comments to be considered prior to the Councils submission to Planning.

Action: The clerk to submit the request to Planning.

20. The method of setting up a village consultation was discussed bearing in mind that a full village meeting is not an option due to the current COVID situation. It was agreed to organise a leaflet drop in the village outlining the proposed development, informing the residents of the work done by the Council over the last two years with the developer on this proposal and asking for people to email or write in to the Parish Council expressing their views and to make their own individual representations direct to CWAC Planning.

Approved: To organise a public consultation by leaflet drop, the wording and method of delivery to be confirmed.

Action: Cllr Sinclair will draft the wording for the leaflet and circulate to all members for approval prior to printing and distribution.

21. Having listened to the comments from members of the public present and views of some of the councillors it was put to a vote on whether to formally request Cllr Parker call the application for the Haul Road and the full development applications of the University of Law site in to CWAC Planning Committee.

22. A straw poll was carried out of residents present to get their thoughts on the applications being called into the Planning Committee, which is no way binding, firstly for the Haul Road, this was unanimously agreed and for the development application a show of hands showed the majority of those present wanted this to be called in also.

Resolved: A vote to formally request that Cllr Parker call in the two applications, the Haul Road and full planning for development of the site to CWAC Planning Committee on the grounds discussed at this meeting.

There were 5 for the resolution, 1 against, Cllr Tonge requested his vote against be noted and 2 abstentions

23. The Vice-Chair of Littleton Parish council attending voiced her concerns that they had not been consulted on these applications and their submission to the developers on the issue of the Haul Road had not been acknowledged.
24. A poll of the meeting showed that the public present represented 50/50 between Christleton and Littleton both with concerns over the suggested haul road, as well as the housing development.
25. It was agreed that the both parish councils would work together to cover both villages for a consultation, the current working group will work with the developers to work through key points before it is taken to Planning Committee to allow the issues raised by residents to be addressed.

To consider the implications of such planning permissions being granted for possible future development with in the village.

26. The remaining item for the meeting to consider is the issue of the Church and the Farmer to make the haul road made permanent to allow access to land at the rear of the Church, which is partly owned by the Church and the Farmer to be developed. This development could include community housing, retirement/assisted living housing, affordable housing for rent or shared ownership, some private housing, public open space and a car park. The Church and the farmer have been liaising with the developer of the UOL.
27. It was commented that the landowners sees the proposed construction access (the haul road) to be the key to unlocking the potential for their land, and the landowner has informed

the developer that the haul road needs to be permanent, not temporary which would be removed on completion of the UOL development.

28. Following discussion on the potential proposals outlined that at this very early stage for such to develop of land behind the Church the proposed temporary haul road could not be made permanent. Before a process, which could include a Village consultation with adjacent residents, the Parish Council on the content of the proposal, produce outline drawings, arrange a pre-application with CWAC planner for the preliminary input on all planning policy issues, whether community benefits adequately compensate for 'damage to greenbelt' such that 'special circumstances' justification for development in greenbelt is likely to be triggered. Complete detailed design, planning application in which some or all of the UOL rear access construction route may not be required for any development behind the Church. This process could take several years to complete.
29. Considering the above comments, the suggestion by the Church/Farmer to make the temporary haul road permanent could not be considered until all of the process outlined have been carried out.
30. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to the consultant representing the Church and Farmer explaining the Parish Council's position in regard to its stance on trying to make the temporary haul road permanent.
Action: Cllr Beckitt to draft the letter.
31. Further discussion on the principle of more development within Christleton ensued concerning this specific proposal and general future development with varying views being expressed with the main concern that the land is within greenbelt and should not be built on and it is up to individuals to prove special circumstances for such development on greenbelt land, which they are unlikely to achieve and the Parish Council would not support such schemes unless all the necessary pre-planning proposals have been met.
32. Further concerns were voiced that once the haul road was built it could become permanent so the Parish Council would want a condition of granting the developer's application that the land should be restored after the development is complete.
33. The Chairman then asked if there were any other issues concerning this matter and Cllr Tonge highlighted that the haul road in its current location will cut across one of the few remaining footpaths, and bearing in mind that a great number of footpaths have now been fenced in, there is strong feeling to support the haul road being accessed from Pearl Lane which would not cross the existing footpath.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Date: 16th September 2021