



WILLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, LIGHTING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 10th MARCH 2011 FOLLOWING THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING AT WILLAND VILLAGE HALL

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Ursell, Cllr Phare, Cllr Mander, Cllr Crick, Cllr Crawford, Cllr Bartlett, Cllr Baker, Cllr Wright, District Cllr Chesterton, District Cllr Brandon, District Cllr Hull, 2 members of the public, Tracy Leaman (Parish Clerk)

1. Apologies: None

2. Willand Housing Needs Survey – John Scott, Rural Housing Officer, Community Council of Devon attended the meeting and explained how the survey would be conducted. The Parish Cllrs will send any suggestions they have for the survey to Cllr Crick who will then liaise with John Scott. An announcement will be included in the next edition of the Village Magazine urging parishioners to respond to the survey. The survey will then be distributed with the July edition. Responses will be considered during August and the completed survey will be available to the Parish Council in September.

3. Applications

a. 11/01620/FULL

Proposal: Conversion of carport and part of garage to form additional living accommodation
Location: 2 Rectory Close Willand

The Planning Committee had no objections with this application.

b. 11/00250/FULL

Proposal: Conversion of outbuilding to ancillary accommodation, installation of 4 dormer windows, external alterations and erection of garage
Location: Manor House Old Village Road Willand

The Planning Committee was concerned that the proposed access is on a very narrow section of Old Jaycroft. It was felt that the proposed new access was unnecessary as there was already sufficient access to the property. The committee was also concerned that there was also no mention of the new access in the

proposal details. It was also felt that this property would not be an appropriate site for any further development.

The committee had no objections to the installation of dormer windows or conversion of the outbuilding to ancillary accommodation but objected to the new entrance.

On these grounds the committee unanimously voted to object to the application.

c. 11/00275/CAT

Proposal: Notification of intention to reduce crown of beech tree in conservation area

Location: Carr Cottage Willand Old Village Willand

The Planning Committee is in support of this application as long as the MDDC Arboriculturalist is in agreement with Mr. Richard Edward of R & R Services (Devon) Ltd. The Planning Committee was concerned that the supporting documentation could not be viewed on the Planning Portal before the meeting.

4. Decisions None

5. Bus shelters

The shelter has been ordered and will be erected by Mid April

6. Mid Devon District Council planning issues: Cllr Ursell reported that he has spoken with District Cllr Chesterton regarding a number of concerns the Parish Council has.

1. Portway planning

When Cllr Ursell attended the Mid Devon District Council planning meeting to comment on this planning application he found that those partaking had to wait for hours and were then allowed only 3 minutes to speak. As the affected Parish Council it is to say the least that this is insulting as well as being non democratic. On the second occasion, Cllr Ursell had to leave the last meeting after three hours waiting and was therefore unable to speak. The Parish Council therefore believes that this process needs an urgent review and Cllr Ursell is prepared to be a part of the review process. District Cllr Chesterton stated that he had made complaints about this particular meeting and that this situation will be reviewed by the new Mid Devon District Council Planning Committee. He also said the 3 minutes speaking rule also needs to be reviewed.

Recommendation

Willand Parish Council recommend that Mid Devon District Council review the process and find mechanisms to allow more time for a Local Authority to present it's views and reduce the waiting time.

2. Discussions with Mid Devon Business Park

We have found out that discussions are being held between MDDC and the Mid Devon Business Park about a new method of decision making about planning applications which will simplify the process. Given the history of Muxbeare Lane raw sewage and flooding as a result of wells being blocked and insufficient drainage on the MDBP site, the Parish Council would have thought it necessary that it be involved in the discussions. There is still a need a hydrological survey to understand the flooding issues fully and the plan was to have this as a condition of the next planning submission. Mid Devon District Council have been heavily involved with this situation so why were the Parish Council not informed of these discussions? Also, why did Cllr Ursell have to find out in a regeneration meeting which he happened to attend? District Cllr Chesterton confirmed that full planning is not going to be required on these sites as an aid to allow businesses to develop. He will be having a meeting with Jonathan Guscott to confirm the process. A member of the public stated that all meetings between Planning Officers and businesses should be documented and the information shared with the Parish Council.

Recommendations

Willand Parish Council recommends that

- a) all planned discussions with developers be notified to the ward member and involved Local Authority.
- b) all meetings with developers be documented and the documents be added to the planning portal.

3. Park Street S106 agreement

District Cllr Chester was at the meeting where the Parish Council expressed its concerns and opinions and was told that any application to change the terms of this agreement for the number of affordable houses to be released would go to the planning process with full prior consultation. The Parish Council now understand that an agreement has been made hurriedly, without consultation and that it was not allowed to go to the planning meeting. Why has the plan changed and why were the Parish Council not informed and involved? The Parish Council had considerable doubts regarding the value of an affordable housing needs survey when the opportunity to deliver affordable homes can be reduced like this with little or no consultation. Such applications must go through the agreed process.

Recommendations

Willand Parish Council recommends that

- a) all planned discussions with developers be notified to the ward member and involved Local Authority.
- b) all meetings with developers be documented and the documents be added to the planning portal.
- c) all planning applications including changes to agreements must go through the standard planning process which includes the option for the application to be called into the planning committee.

In addition we will ask, via our ward member, MDDC Planning to provide a detailed report of this incident covering the agreement changes, the value of

public money lost as a result of this decision and the reasons why the decision did not follow the agreed open and democratic process. Failing an acceptable explanation, the Parish Council reserves the right to escalate this to the appropriate Ombudsman for investigation.

4. Bamber Trailer land opposite TDG

The Parish Council had a presentation from the owner who showed the Planning Committee detailed plans that he was discussing with Mid Devon District Council. The plans were the third pass and were very detailed. The owner made it clear that Mid Devon District Council had rejected earlier versions, which now makes Mid Devon District Council the design authority. This is well beyond pre application advice and the Parish Council Planning Committee should have been involved. One condition of the application was to provide funds to build a footbridge on South View Road at the roundabout entrance to MDBP. The Parish Council have had the money for this for five years and are working with DCC to supply the bridge. If this application comes to the Planning Committee as a done deal, our input will be valueless. Again an example of the local parish and local needs being ignored.

Recommendations

Willand Parish Council recommends that

- a) all planned discussions with developers be notified to the ward member and involved Local Authority.
- b) all meetings with developers be documented and the documents be added to the planning portal.

5. The paperless planning system

It is obvious to the Planning Committee that most towns and parishes are not able to use the portal on-line in their meetings. Cllr Ursell has to download and rename every individual document so that the Planning Committee can project at the meeting as there is no broadband in the village hall. This is time consuming and the quality of the documents varies from excellent to unreadable. The Planning Committee feel that going out for consultation with an unworkable plan is an exercise in futility.

The Planning Committee understand that quite a number of parishes including Willand have expressed concerns and the Planning Committee are sure that all these will be pushed to one side as Mid Devon District Council seeks to save money. The Planning Committee has requested copies of the feedback from other Local Authorities to MDDC on this issue and received 11 responses, 100% of which have been extremely negative.

District Cllr Chesterton confirmed that from April the Government will be looking for the planning services to break even financially. Presently the service is subsidised by people not using the service. Therefore greater charges will have to be made to those seeking planning permission, this could include fees for the distribution of paper plans to Parish Councils.

Recommendations

Willand Parish Council recommends that

A workable process is designed by MDDC in conjunction with Local Authorities of different sizes before future consultation takes place.

The Planning Committee unanimously agreed that the planning issues described above are serious and lead to non-democratic decisions being made. It was agreed that the recommendations should be adopted and forwarded to our ward member.

7. Park Street S106 agreement –see above.

8. HGV weight limit: Cllrs Crick and Ursell drove around the effected area and found the signage to be inconsistent. District Cllr Chesterton suggested the Planning Committee work with Uffculme Parish Council. Cllr Ursell and Wright offered to work together on this project. **Action Cllr Ursell, Wright**

Meeting closed: 21:47

Cllr Ray Ursell

Chair Willand Parish