

# **WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 10th September 2018 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

## **PRESENT**

G C M Willis, Chairman

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, B L Correll, R J Dykstra, D W England, Ms L A Gifford, S J Green, Mrs M H Harlock, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs J E Tavener, Mrs S J Wilcox, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt,

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor T V Rogers and District Councillor G J Bull.

## **39/18 MINUTES**

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Wilcox and seconded by Councillor Potts, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th August 2018 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

## **40/18 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest were received in respect of items appearing on the agenda.

## **41/18 MATTERS ARISING**

The Committee noted that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 20th August 2018.

## **42/18 DISTRICT COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Committee was informed that there were no matters appearing on the agenda for the meeting of the District Council's Development Management Committee to be held on 17th September that affected the Parish of Warboys

## **43/18 APPLICATIONS**

The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission, arising from which it was

## **RESOLVED**

that the following observations be submitted to the District Council:-

- (a) **18/01242/TREE 6 Garratt Drive – T1 Ash: Crown and uplift as branches are extending over roof of garage**

that the District Council be recommended to approve the application.

- (b) **18/01754/FUL Land north east of Airfield Industrial Estate, Church Road – Change of use of land to a mobile home park as a retirement village with a maximum of 65 park homes and associated infrastructure works.**

The Parish Council have considered the application submitted and accompanying documents. In those documents, the applicant contends that the ‘tilted balance’ argument applies and that planning permission should be granted even though the site is not allocated for housing in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 which was approved by the District Council as recently as December 2017 and is currently the subject of an Examination in Public. Using this argument, it opens the door to planning applications for development anywhere in Huntingdonshire and rides roughshod over the planning system.

This site was submitted by the applicants at almost the last stage of the Local Plan’s preparation when the District Council issued a Call for Sites in the summer of 2017. The Parish Council concurs with the reasons used by the District Council in its rejection at that time.

The Parish Council therefore recommends that the application be refused on the following grounds:-

- (a) The site is not allocated for development in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.
- (b) Warboys is designated as a Key Service Centre in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. In defining Key Service Centres, paragraph 4.97 of the Local Plan states that ‘each is considered capable of accommodating some development sustainably due to the level of services, facilities and infrastructure they contain’. The key words are ‘some’ and ‘sustainably’.

There are already allocations in the approved Local Plan for 270 dwellings in Warboys. Of those, reserved matters applications have been submitted for 154 dwellings. Approvals also have been granted by the District Council in the course of the Local Plan’s preparation for a further 157 dwellings that have either been completed or are in the course of construction. That totals 427 dwellings. The 2011 census showed the number of households in the Parish as 1,631 and the population as 3,994 people. Therefore the Local Plan provides for a 26% increase in the number of dwellings in Warboys. Using the census average household size of

2.45 people per dwelling, this will amount to an additional 1,046 people.

Any increase above that level is an inappropriate use of the term 'some development' and is certainly not sustainable.

There is a further outline application yet to be determined for 210 dwellings for a site not allocated in the Local Plan.

Development of this scale is not sustainable in a Key Service Centre of the size of Warboys.

- (c) The application proposes that the development will be a 'retirement' village 'generally' for the over 50s. With the current retirement age at 67 and likely to rise even higher in the future, many of the occupants will still be of working age. The Transport Statement is therefore flawed as it assumes that the development will 'tend to have significantly lower trip generation rates than standard dwellings';
- (d) There are insufficient employment opportunities locally to provide jobs for those occupants of the development proposed who are under retirement age. This would result in out migration in search of jobs, leading to additional traffic congestion and pollution which is not environmentally sustainable.
- (e) There is no evidence to suggest that 'professional' people will downsize to a park home when they would have sufficient capital to downsize to a smaller dwelling if they wish to do so. This is a spurious contention merely to support the proposal;
- (f) Notwithstanding the proposed addition of a shop on the site, there is no evidence that this would be viable and it certainly could not be supported by the occupants of 65 park homes. The shop does not form part of the current application and there is no certainty that such an application would be made subsequently. If an application were not to be made, additional traffic movements would be generated as park home occupants made shopping trips. Even if a shop were to be provided, it could not satisfy all of the shopping requirement of the site occupants who would still need to travel for other goods.

Conversely there is nothing in the application to suggest that custom at the proposed shop would be restricted to site occupants. If this were open to all which would in all probability be necessary if the shop were to be viable, it would generate additional traffic movements as customers accessed the site.

Again this is not reflected in the Transport Statement.

Finally there is no certainty that such an outlet could be sold or let. A shop with A1 planning permission has been vacant in a prime location in the village for over 12 months without attracting a tenant and is now the subject of an application for demolition for housing.

- (g) The application contends that the occupants of the proposed development will walk or cycle to Warboys to access local facilities. If the occupants of the development are elderly, it is unrealistic to expect that they will walk or cycle to Warboys which is 1.5 kilometres distant from the site, a 3 km. round trip. The vast majority of the journeys will be by car.
- (h) The Transport Statement quotes the site capacity as 56 homes and not 65 for which application is made. For this and the reasons above, the Transport Statement is fundamentally flawed and greatly underestimates the number of vehicle movements that will be generated by the proposal;
- (i) The Moat House surgery would be unable to accommodate the additional number of patients that would arise from the development, especially as it is proposed that the site occupants will be elderly who would be likely to have greater medical needs than younger persons. The waiting time to see a doctor of choice is already two weeks which would only be exacerbated if permission were to be granted for this application.
- (j) The site has extremely poor access to village facilities. Notwithstanding the proposed construction of a local shop, occupants of the dwellings proposed would require access to the chemists, surgery, library etc. which are located 1.5 kilometre distant from the site;
- (k) The site is in the open countryside totally separate from the village of Warboys and is fundamentally not sustainable. Moreover this would drive another wedge into the triangular piece of land bordered by the A141 and B1040 which would make further applications for development of this land more difficult to refuse;
- (l) It is proposed that the development will not be connected to mains drainage. The use of an underground treatment plant for foul drainage is an outdated method of waste water treatment.

#### **44/18 DETERMINATIONS**

The Committee noted that, since its previous meeting, the following applications had been determined by the District Council:-

**Approved**

- (a) 18/00531/REM Land south of Farriers Way and Bencroft Lane – Residential development of up to 74 dwellings including access
- (b) 18/01324/HHFUL 39 Pathfinder Way – Proposed two storey extension to residential dwelling
- (c) 18/01344/FUL Land south of 90 Fenton Road – Proposed single storey bungalow
- (d) 18/01436/HHFUL 22 Woodlands – Proposed single storey extension with internal alterations.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

**Chairman.**