

Ogbourne St George Parish Council

Minutes of an Additional Meeting held on 14 June 2012

Present: Keith MacDonald (Chairman), Timothy George, Richard Iliffe, Kevin Howard, Wendy Reardon Smith.

Apologies: Keith Wallace.

In the absence of the Clerk Timothy George took the record.

Three parishioners were present; also Michael Fowler, architect to the applicants under Item 2.

The meeting opened at 1935.

There were no minutes of previous meetings for consideration.

Item 1: Planning application E/2012/0613/FUL – Lower Upham Airfield

The Council noted the plethora of comments from neighbouring parishes on this Aldbourne application. After a brief discussion Councillors agreed, on the proposal of Timothy George, to comment to Wiltshire Council as follows:

E/2012/0613/FUL – Lower Upham Airfield

Ogbourne St George Parish Council raised no objection to the construction of a permanent building to replace the existing plastic covered structure provided that all existing planning conditions are strictly maintained relating to the ownership of the airfield and use of the land for flying purposes.

The Council has received several recent complaints about noisy light aircraft. It is not clear that they come from Lower Upham, but the Council intends to pursue the matter on noise abatement grounds.

Item 2: Planning Application E/2011/1708/FUL (revised) – Poole's Farmyard Development.

Councillors Howard and Iliffe left the meeting at this point, as having a prejudicial interest in the proposed development.

Mr Fowler was invited to comment on the revised application. He clarified the area now proposed for "the green" and the green field area proposed as part of the development. Relative sizes were noted. He said that the brick and sarsen wall no longer formed part of the plan, although its retention was favoured by the planning authority. In response to a query about the lack of garages for houses 7, 8, 9 and 15 he indicated that this was normal. He was uncertain whether the provision of an equipped playground was at the expense of the developers or to be paid for out of the S106 provision.

Comment was sought from parishioners. Mrs Manos said that she hoped that the wall could be retained, perhaps as the back wall of garages. She was also concerned at the loss of light to her property and hoped that the roofs of the houses facing it could be “hipped” to minimise the problem. Councillors noted that she had submitted her views to Wiltshire Council and confirmed that they were already on the website.

In the light of the changes made to the application (mainly the change to the affordable houses and the resultant squeezing of the green) Councillors then reviewed their comment (already submitted to Wiltshire Council) on the earlier application. They noted views voiced by villagers on the application, notably the resistance to the provision of any recreational space that might back on to the Marlborough Road houses.

Councillors concluded after some discussion that the main problem remained that of the excessive “take” of green field space on the South West and (even more) on the South East sides of the area proposed for development. This far exceeded the space allocated to the green. In response to views expressed they did not oppose a green as part of the development, but continued to think that the provision of genuine recreational land was more important to the village. Mr Fowler commented that the original ideas which excluded a green had in many ways been simpler. He thought that the green would be maintained by the residents under their management charge. Councillors noted that there was now an additional road access from one of the affordable houses which would exacerbate the anticipated traffic and parking problem.

While continuing to welcome development of the basic “built area” of Poole’s farmyard, Councillors continued to think that the proposals breached policy HC 24 (and HC 26 to some extent), and should be opposed. They reaffirmed their views on the garage and storage facilities. On the Chairman’s proposal it was agreed to submit a further comment (to be agreed by email) reflecting the discussion.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 2035.

After the meeting a comment to Wiltshire Council was agreed by the Councillors involved. This is attached to the minutes for information.

E/2011/1708/FUL (revised) Poole's Yard

Ogbourne St George Parish Council appreciates the applicants' efforts to improve the proposal by changes to the affordable houses following the housing needs survey, and to include a ready equipped playground in "the green". But it **continues to oppose the development** on the grounds that it breaches Policy HC 24. While the Council supports development within the existing built area, the proposals take in considerable amounts of green field land. This could only be justified if there were significantly more planning gain and community development.

Detail

There is strong local opposition to green field development, strongly affirmed in the questionnaire for the Village Plan. Policies HC 24 (and 26) generally confine development to a previously built area. The revised proposal makes no change in the considerable "take" of green field land on the South East and South West sides of the site.

The applicants' initial ideas restricted development approximately to the built area plus areas previously built on. Following suggestions that a green might be a village amenity, the applicants extended the area for development in order to include one. This would mean that on the South West side the current built area would now constitute the proposed building line, but with the residential boundary some 25 metres beyond that. On the South East side the proposed building line is far beyond the existing built area, and the residential boundary is beyond that again. No doubt there will be proposals for conservatories and garden buildings to be erected on this extra land. The extra area proposed for development far exceeds the area allocated for the green (even more so following the changes to the affordable houses).

The Parish Council now accepts the merits of a green with a ready equipped playground provided that it is clearly owned by the Parish as a village amenity and is not the perquisite of the development. While the green should be maintained at least for an initial period as part of the development, this must not undermine general village ownership and use. The exact siting of the playground equipment needs further discussion.

But, reflecting majority local opinion, the PC also continues to believe that it is to an extent still the "wrong sort of green". What the village needs is a flat area for genuine recreational use by adults and children alike. By a coincidence the green field area proposed for inclusion in the development comes to rather more than two acres, which is the land needed for a football pitch. It would be good if land could be provided elsewhere in the village for recreational use.

Houses 1 and 2 would now both have direct vehicular access to the High Street. This would exacerbate the anticipated parking problem in the High Street to which attention was drawn previously.

The lack of garages and adequate storage space in the houses 7, 8, 9 and 15 still seems very short-sighted.

The Parish Council continues to believe that an outline planning decision that resolved the Policy HC24 issue would permit the speedy resolution of outstanding issues.