

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Friday 22nd May, 2009

<u>Present:</u>	Cllr. D. Manning	Clerk
	Cllr. P. Wilks	12 Parishioners
	Cllr. P. Fearn	
	Cllr. J. Gregory	

Election of Chairman, Welcome and Apologies

The meeting opened with the election of the Chairman for the Planning Committee. Cllr. Peter Wilks was duly elected Chairman; he was nominated by Cllr. Fearn and seconded by Cllr. Gregory.

The Chairman welcomed all present. Apologies were received from Cllr. Hurrell and Borough Cllr. Ben Stokes, who had briefly attended to give his apologies as he had a prior commitment to attend another meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Fearn declared an interest in the Hillreed development and took no further part in the discussion.

Introduction

The Chairman briefly outlined the details of the Regional Council, which is a body higher in stature than K.C.C., and introduced the draft South-East Plan, which went to the Government over a year ago and is still being considered by Committee.

He referred to Hillreed's development brief for the South-West side of the village, adjacent to Coleshall Farm, for 327 houses and Wards development brief for 90 houses on land to the East of Helen Thompson Close with access through Woodpecker Drive. The response to both briefs has to be in by the 1st June, 2009.

He briefly recalled that the development in Iwade began in 1994, with a proposed 1200 new houses; 800 have been given permission, with 27 more to come just North of the Church, which will complete the first phase. The second phase completes the houses.

Wards Development

He expressed his concern at the proposed development on the orchard to the rear of Woodpecker Drive; the Parish Council has tried to save it for its biodiversity and wildlife. It is a habitat of the highly protected Great Crested Newt and the Noble Chafer Beetle, recently discovered on this land, which is also protected and thought to be extinct in Kent.

The Chairman stated that in 2006 the Inspector examined the draft Swale Local Plan and his recommendations are what the developers are bringing forward now. The Chairman is hoping to make a case that at the time the Inspector did not know about the Noble Chafer Beetle, plus the fact that the land offered as compensation for the Great Crested Newts is now a crop and has been sprayed with insecticide, and he is hoping to make a case to save half the orchard. The Chairman has been in-touch with the people who discovered the Noble Chafer Beetle and is hoping they will help in opposing the development.

The developers held a meeting a year ago to discuss residents' concerns, one of which was a request for a temporary construction road (haul road) – the developers at that time stated that this had been examined and a temporary application had been submitted and if approved will provide access to the site. However a second document mentions the haul road and states *the use of a temporary haul road to the East of the site is an option under consideration – the operative word is 'option'*.

Hillreed's Development

The Chairman referred to the flooding in the village and commented that Shaun Fury, C.P.R.E., is assisting with this problem. It was generally felt that the proposals by the developers were not sufficient to satisfy the requirements of Policy AAP9.

The draft shows a small increase in the size of School Lane playing field – 1.3 hectares, but no land for formal sports provision as promised in the original master plan for Iwade.

General

Cllr. Gregory referred to the type of housing. The Chairman stated that there must be 30% affordable housing; there will be some three storey dwellings and there will be 40 dwellings to the hectare. Cllr. Gregory stated that throughout the developments the elderly had not been taken into account and the developers should consider bungalows. She also commented that the allotments had failed to materialise.

Parishioners' Comments

The Chairman then opened the meeting to parishioners. Most were concerned that the end of the roadway in Helen Thompson Close will be opened up to create an access route into the new development and the resulting traffic will create a hazard for their children. When the residents purchased their properties from Wards they were told by this company's staff that the Close would not be opened to traffic. All residents present were very positive on this point. It was suggested that residents check to see if they had this 'promise' in writing from Wards Homes. Residents could also seek legal advice regarding this point – perhaps on a group basis and share the costs.

Cllr. Manning suggested that those residents of Helen Thompson Close who wished to raise objections to the brief write individual letters, instead of adding names to a petition, as this will carry more weight. They might also like to attend the Planning Meeting and have a right to address the Members.

A resident brought up the fact that the developments equate to 5% more housing than the original 400 mentioned in the Kent and Medway Strategic Plan. The Chairman stated that it looks as though this

will increase because of the South East Plan. When this scheme comes into effect Swale will need to find land for further development, which could have an impact on Iwade.

Residents from Coleshall Farm raised their concern that the Hillreed development will be visible from their property, particularly the three-storey properties; the boundary will butt up to their access road.

Discussion closed and return to Planning Meeting

Response to the Development Briefs

The Chairman is hoping that we might get support from Kent Wildlife Trust and the charity involved with the Noble Chafer Beetle. We can also approach Natural England (formerly English Nature) regarding this Beetle.

Councillors were concerned that Swale Borough Council enforces the conditions of planning consent Phase I.

Points to raise in the response:

- Query why there is no land for formal sports provision.
- No allotment land.
- Bus shelter needed for School Lane.
- We need to clarify that we will get a haul road.

Agreed the Chairman to draft a response to both briefs and to try and bring in all the facts. Due to the restriction on time these drafts to be e-mailed to all members of the Committee for their comments/ agreement.

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.