

# **HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 29 October 2014 in the Village Hall

Present: John Anderson (Chairman), Mike Parry, Stewart Payne, Peter Spall and Philip Underwood; Jane Woolley (clerk); Cllrs. Adam Taylor-Smith and Elizabeth Cable ; PC Tracey Taylor; and, for the first item of business, approx. 40 members of the public

Apologies: Karen Jones and Paul Pattinson

### **QUESTION TIME**

#### **1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Chairman opened the meeting by announcing that it provided the first opportunity for the Parish Council to be apprised by English Rural Housing Association of its acquisition, since the date of the last meeting, of Orchard Farm. In 2011 this property had been identified as a potential site for a second affordable housing development in Hambledon, the need for which had been established by the housing needs survey carried out in 2010-11. It was agreed to bring the affordable housing item on the agenda forward so that members of the public, all of whom appeared to live adjacent to Orchard Farm, could also hear and ask questions arising from English Rural's presentation. The Chairman then invited Nick Hughes, Regional Development Manager, English Rural, to address the meeting.

Mr Hughes explained that negotiating the purchase of Orchard Farm had required English Rural to maintain a high degree of confidentiality and he noted that, in the absence of information, some local concerns had already been voiced. He outlined the role and activities of English Rural, a not-for-profit specialist provider of affordable housing in the South East, including Hambledon (Duncombs Cottages) and adjacent villages; he briefly described the 9.5 acre site and the importance of any development on it reflecting its location within the Green Belt, the Surrey Hills AONB and an Area of Great Landscape Value; and he referred to the drawings that were on display. He confirmed that English Rural owned the site and would control the project which, as presently proposed, would comprise 12 affordable dwellings, four open market dwellings (which might include two bungalows to help villagers wishing to down-size to remain in Hambledon) and the refurbishment or replacement of the existing dwelling. The scheme would be brought forward under Rural Exceptions Site policies, to ensure that the affordable units remained available in perpetuity for local people; and its implementation would be subject to the granting of planning permission. Criteria for accessing affordable housing included an appropriate level of income and strong connections with the village. In the event of there being insufficient take-up for a scheme of 12 dwellings, any surplus could be used to help meet the needs of an adjacent parish in the short term. The scheme would, however, enable additional Hambledon need to be met in the longer term.

The remainder of the site (approximately four acres) would be landscaped to provide a public open space and English Rural would be glad to gift this to the village to safeguard its ownership in perpetuity.

It was proposed that two accesses onto Wormley Lane would serve the dwellings and that Surrey Highways agreement would be sought to the use of a (presently disused) access onto the A283 for construction traffic.

**Questions from members of the public** indicated that their main concerns relevant to the proposed scheme were as follows

- properties immediately below the site already flooded as a result of run-off from it; more development would exacerbate the problem
- ownership of the site might be transferred, resulting in further development on it
- whether any additional housing was needed in Hambledon, particularly as none was proposed in the forthcoming Waverley Local Plan
- why 12 affordable houses were required when the identified need was for six; the resultant need for the scheme also to cater, in the short-term, for the housing need of other parishes; and whether an alternative site for six could be identified
- the protection afforded to the site by the Green Belt, AONB and AGL
- whether it was an appropriate site for affordable housing given the lack of adjacent amenities
- whether a primary school could be included, given the chronic shortage of places in the locality
- the total cost to English Rural of the development
- how English Rural, a not-for-profit organisation, could commit funds to a site which had no planning permission and was in the AONB without some indication that permission would be forthcoming
- the lack of prior consultation and non-receipt of the 2010 housing needs questionnaire: the Parish Council was not representing villagers' interests; it should organise a referendum; it might be necessary to take the Parish Council to judicial review

English Rural undertook to address those of the above points that fell within its remit, in consultation with Waverley, SCC and the utilities companies as appropriate, as it developed the scheme for presentation to the whole village. It was hoped to organise this before Christmas and then to proceed to a full planning application which the Parish Council and all interested individuals could support or object to. In the meantime, the Parish Council reiterated its support for a second affordable housing scheme in Hambledon, in furtherance of the undertakings given in the Parish Plan and to meet needs identified in the 2011 survey.

## FORMAL BUSINESS

### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2014 were **agreed** and signed.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

#### 4. FINANCE

##### Audit

Deferred until the next meeting.

##### Cheques

**Agreed** and signed the following

- BDO: audit fee	£156.00
- Tim Coleman: September/October maintenance, Almshouses hedges	£380.00
- Norris & Gardiner: cricket green cutting, September/October	£411.98
- Workstation: ink	£ 39.98

##### Henry Smith Charity

Noted the grant of £2,000 for 2014-5 and **agreed** to pass this on in full to the Trustees of the Hambledon Almshouses as a contribution to their appeal for the refurbishment of the second Almshouse and to write accordingly to the six villagers who had up to now been in receipt of individual grants.

#### 5. PLANNING

Deferred until the next meeting.

#### 6. VILLAGE MATTERS

##### Police

Noted the following crimes in Hambledon for the period 1 September – 29 October 2014:

- public order offence: male runner with a large stick hit and injured dog belonging to female walker on the bridleway between Maple Bungalow and Little Burgate Farm. Witness appeals put out via Surrey Police press office and posters along the route.
- shed and vehicle break-ins, overnight 16-17 September: Lane End (two incidents, including theft of two power saws from secured garage), Hambledon Park (three sheds, nothing stolen) and Wormley Lane (two incidents, including theft of electrical items from van)

Noted that Operation Candlelight, cracking down on dwelling burglary in Surrey, would run through November and that posters/flyers would be displayed at the Village Shop

##### Highways

Deferred until the next meeting.

##### Scottish and Southern Energy

Deferred until the next meeting.

##### Village pond

Deferred until the next meeting.

#### 7. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

##### Oakhurst Cottage

Noted that the National Trust's grant application to Biffa to cover the cost of essential conservation repairs had been unsuccessful; that the Trust had therefore agreed to fund the full cost of the work (estimated at £25,000); and that all less essential ancillary work would accordingly have to be put on hold. **Agreed** that it would be appropriate for the Parish Council to acknowledge the Trust's commitment to the long term future of the property by making a one-off donation of £1,000 towards the costs of interior decoration; and **confirmed** that this could be met from the 2014-5 budget.

Reports from other organisations

Deferred until the next meeting.

8. FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Deferred until the next meeting.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Deferred until the next meeting.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 22.15

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 3 December**