

Westfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment and Development Committee Meeting held at the Oval Office, St Peters Business Park, Westfield on Monday 9th December 2013 commencing at 7pm

Present: Cllrs A Butcher (Chair), A Clarke, D Cooper, G Fuller and B Wallbridge (Vice Chair)

Attending: 1 member of the public
Mrs L Welch (Parish Clerk)

Comments from the Public

Mike Woodhouse raised the following items

- (1) At Silver Street a zebra crossing would be preferable to the proposed toucan crossing to stop cyclists free wheeling down the steep incline of the cycle path and straight across the road.
- (2) Whilst acknowledging that it was unlikely to happen, a 20mph limit was needed on a section of the A367.
- (3) Lights were needed on the footpath between Nightingale Way and Chaucer Close.
- (4) In the Placemaking Plan priority should be given to reserve land for employment and all greenfield sites should be kept for agriculture. High priority should be given to Pensioners houses, with a bedroom tax on all dwellings including private houses.
The Chairman thanked him for his input, particularly in relation to the Placemaking Plan.

105. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Phil Wilkinson who was unwell and Cllr Rob Appleyard who had another meeting.

106. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

Cllr Fuller declared an interest in item 5 Planning Decisions 13/03590/FUL 3 bedroom dwelling at 40 Bryant Avenue, since the applicant was an acquaintance.

107. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2013 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

108. Planning Applications for Consideration

108.1 There were no objections to the two planning applications below.

Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting.

Signed **Dated**

Westfield Parish Council

13/04826/FUL	Single storey side extension.	21 West Hill Rd
13/04617/FUL	Erection of conservatory.	41 Beech Terrace

108.2 13/03395/OUT Erection of up to 73 dwellings with associated parking, provision of associated public open space, pedestrian routes, engineering works and landscaping on land adjoining Five Arches Greenway and alterations to existing vehicular access on to Radstock Road (A362) Revised Submission: The Committee objected on the grounds of

- (1) The ecological impact – it is an educational place where nature can be observed. One example is the bat activity in this entire area, with 10 different species. Although the plans show dark corridors, the whole area is a foraging ground for bats and the development would cause a loss of feeding ground. Bird variety also needs to be protected.
- (2) Loss of amenity for local people – The green space is hugely used and has been described as the local equivalent of Victoria Park. On Easter Day this year there were some 200 people enjoying the area. If there were housing estates both sides of the greenway (51 houses at Wheelers Drive and 92 on the Westfield side) then this amenity would be completely lost along with the unique character of this area.
- (3) Stability of the land – Houses built at Wheelers hill still suffer due to the instability of the land on which they were built. The gradient of the land does not appear to have been truly represented on the plan and we strongly recommend that BANES commissions an independent test on the stability of the ground.
- (4) Flooding – The fields in front of Fosseyway Gardens and Shakespeare Road have active natural springs all year around and there are at least three natural springs on the site. Diverting the water course will cause other areas to flood, potentially the Wheelers estate.
- (5) Impact on neighbouring houses – It would create a precipice for the existing houses at Highfields and Fosseyway Gardens, dropping down to the level of the field of the proposed development. Given the instability of the ground throughout this area, it created an unacceptable level of risk to these properties.
- (6) Breach of the conservation area - The smaller field is in an approved conservation area, adopted by BANES in 1999.
- (7) Change of use from agricultural land.
- (8) Access – there would be a great traffic impact on the Radstock Road, and given that there are no major bus routes, this access would be in constant use.
- (9) Historical/ archaeological interest – this was once a Roman Road and artefacts have been found.
- (10) The context within which these plans are made should be considered. 650 new homes are coming into the area within a 3 m radius. There is a real need to protect the character of this area and retain this piece of green space and flourishing wildlife as a local amenity.

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108.3 The following two applications at the Former GWR Railway Line, Frome Road Radstock were considered together.

13/02436/EOUT Demolition and redevelopment of former railway lands to provide mixed use development including up to 210 residential units of varying sizes, up to 695 sq m of retail business floor space (use classes A1-A5 and B1); up to 325 sq m of use B1 floor space or for community uses (use of D1) conversion of the Brunel rail shed for use class B1 or D1 car parking and new bus stops; works to various existing roads within the town and establishment of new roads to service the development including new bridge structures; new public realm works, upgrading of below ground utilities; new children’s play areas; establishment of new Sustrans route and diversion of existing public right of way.

13/03786/EFUL Demolition of existing structures and redevelopment of former railway land to provide mixed use development including 70 residential units, up to 282 sq m of retail floor space (use classes A1-A5) up to 84 sq m of community uses (use class D1), public car park, associated highways works, ground remediation, alterations to ground levels, works to trees and existing habitat areas; upgrading below ground utilities

The Committee only considered the above two planning applications in the light of the impact they will have in Westfield. The Committee strongly objected to the applications on the following grounds

- (1) at the proposed roundabout at the bottom of Wells Hill there will be constant traffic from the right, creating long tail backs regularly up Wells Hill;
- (2) new housing developments in Westfield mean that traffic from Westfield down Wells Hill is increasing and will continue to do so over the next years. This should be considered fully when determining the road layout now; (
- (3) experience has shown that if a fully loaded HGV tries to turn right at the bottom of Wells Hill then due to the camber and space restrictions of the road it will either get stuck or be in serious danger of falling.

109. Planning Decisions

The Committee received the list of planning decisions and a Delegated Report from BANES in relation with their decision on application 13/03590/FUL erection of 3 bedroom dwelling at 40 Bryant Avenue.

110. Placemaking Plan

The Committee discussed the progress of the Placemaking Plan in depth.

RESOLVED that the Chairman finalises the Placemaking Plan and circulates it to all Committee members for final comments before the 20th December deadline.

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Signed **Dated**

111. Snow Wardens' Meeting

The Committee noted that the meeting of the Snow Wardens had been productive, with a new volunteer for the Cherry Tree Close area of Waterford Park. Cllr Fuller was to deliver some bags of salt to her house and the possibility of a lightweight gritter was to be investigated. In the meantime she would scatter the grit by hand as far as the Doctors' surgery. The Committee hoped that this would generate more interest in that area in the scheme.

112. Westfield Hub

The Committee noted that the meeting scheduled for 2nd December 2013 had not taken place and that the group had reached an impasse as far as finding a suitable location for an office hub.

RESOLVED that a recommendation be made to the Parish Council that the Parish Council no longer pursues an office hub in Westfield and that BANES Councillors for Westfield be asked if they might meet with Norton Radstock College to explore the possibility of the s.106 funds being used by them to promote employment. This was agreed 4 for and 1 against.

113. Westfield Fun Day

The Committee discussed the Westfield Fun Day Meeting held on 4th December at Westhill Sports and Social Club which had been attended by three Councillors, Kerry Coe of Luckington Carnival Club and some local residents. The next planning meeting was in late January.

114. Westfield Flag

The Committee discussed the need to renew the Westfield flag because the predominance of white makes it get dirty very quickly.

RESOLVED that the proposed design be amended slightly to show a white silhouette of a tree on a dark green background.

115. Feedback on the Christmas Lights Switch On 28th November 2013

The Committee discussed the recent Lights Switch on event. The numbers attending were higher than last year and feedback had been very good. Next time the actual switch on would take place between the carols. There was a query about the PA system which had been borrowed from Churches Together, was it strong enough? If any other options for a PA cropped up during the year they should be investigated.

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116. Land at the back of Larch Court

The Committee discussed a request from BANES Parks Department that the Council considers adopting the land at the back of Larch Court directly from the developers, Taylor Wimpey. The Committee noted the suggestion from Cllr Appleyard that it be adopted by WAGS for allotments. It was felt that the Parish Council itself was not looking to adopt, simply to ensure that the land was maintained as the residents wanted. This raised the query about exactly what the residents would like.

RESOLVED to ask the residents of Larch Court and adjacent roads how they would like to use this area of green space.

117. Public Path Creation Order

The Committee received the Public Path Creation Order for public footpath CL24/7, Westfield.

RESOLVED that, whilst there were no objections, the Clerk be asked to query why it has been re-routed in section D-E and request confirmation that there are no plans to turn this into a roadway.

118. Norton Hill Recreation Ground

The Committee noted that the most popular play area was the one presented by Sutcliffe Play. Final confirmation of funding was awaited from Awards for All. When this arrives the works would be arranged in the amount of £20,000 as agreed previously.

The Committee received advice from the contractors Greensward for the removal of moss at the tennis court to prevent it from getting slippery in the amount of £375.

RESOLVED that the Chairman checks the tennis court and, with his agreement, authority to arrange the works be delegated to the Clerk.

119. Items for the next agenda

Community Centre at Westhill Trust land to include changing rooms.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

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Signed **Dated**