

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Notice is hereby given that the **virtual** meeting of the Much Hadham Parish Council **Planning Committee** will be held on **Tuesday, 27th April 2021**, 7:30pm, for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below, and you are hereby summoned to attend. For access to this virtual meeting, please request details using email address above or visit the Parish Council website.

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Clerk of the Council

22nd April 2021

A G E N D A

- 21/35. Apologies for absence
- 21/36. Declarations of Interest
- 21/37. Chair's announcements
- 21/38. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 April 2021
- 21/39. Reports on outstanding matters
- 21/40. Decisions issued by East Herts Council
- (i) Permissions granted:
- None
- (ii) Permissions refused:
- 3/21/0322/HH - Construction of residential annex at Old Park Farm Perry Green Much Hadham
- (iii) Applications withdrawn:
- None
- 21/41. Planning enforcement
- 21/42. Residents' comments on current planning applications and appeals
- 21/43. Planning appeals
- No planning appeals to consider nor any planning appeal decisions to note.
- 21/44. Current Planning Application for Committee to consider:
- 3/21/0733/FUL - Demolition of all buildings; erection of seven dwellings (one 4 bedroom detached house; two 3 bedroom detached houses, two 3 bedroom bungalows, two 3 bedroom semi-detached houses); cart lodges and parking spaces and creation of new vehicular access way at Land At South End Perry Green Much Hadham
- 3/21/0848/FUL - Erection of 3 detached dwellings with associated access, detached car ports and parking at Land South of Culver Lodge Widford Road Much Hadham
- 3/21/0899/HH - Single storey timber porch at Vineyard Manor High Street Much Hadham
- 21/45. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 1st June 2021 – arrangements to be confirmed

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council Planning Committee virtual meeting held on Tuesday, 27th April 2021, at 7:30 pm.

Members: *Cllr I Hunt (Committee Chair) *Cllr D McDonald
 *Cllr B O'Neill *Cllr S Smith
 *Cllr K Twort

*Denotes present.

In attendance: F Forth, Clerk and no members of the public.

21/35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

21/36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21/37. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

- tonight's meeting is a week earlier for administrative reasons relating to the Annual Parish Council meeting next week;
- the Annual Parish/Village meeting precedes next week's Annual Parish Council meeting and the Chair will be presenting a brief overview of development activity to it; and
- a notification of a further consultation for Harlow North (as it used to be known) had been received after this meeting had been arranged relating to updated environmental submissions. The Chair will circulate more details shortly but there is no impact on land in the parish so a response is not necessary.

21/38. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 6th April 2021 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

21/39. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS

The report on outstanding matters was circulated with the agenda. Cllr D McDonald highlighted that no response had been received from East Herts Council on the issues raised for a significant period of time. It was agreed that these issues would be raised again and Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) would be approached to support the Parish Council in progressing these matters.

21/40. DECISIONS ISSUED BY EAST HERTS COUNCIL

(i) Permissions granted:

None.

(ii) Permissions refused:

3/21/0322/HH - Construction of residential annex at Old Park Farm Perry Green
Much Hadham

(iii) Applications withdrawn:

None.

21/41. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

Covered as part of outstanding matters (Minute ref: 21/39).

21/42. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS

None.

21/43. PLANNING APPEALS

There were no new planning appeals to consider nor any planning appeal decision to note. It was highlighted that there are no outstanding planning appeals at this time.

21/44. CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

(i) Support given to the following application:

3/21/0733/FUL - Demolition of all buildings; erection of seven dwellings (one 4 bedroom detached house; two 3 bedroom detached houses, two 3 bedroom bungalows, two 3 bedroom semi-detached houses); cart lodges and parking spaces and creation of new vehicular access way at Land At South End Perry Green Much Hadham

Support given but with recommendations for the inclusion of the following:

- to support district policy DES3 Landscaping, detail is provided of the management programme for the planting schemes, and planning approval includes an enforceable condition that the developer is responsible for ensuring the monitoring and replacement of plants for the first 5 years after the sale of the final unit; and
- development incorporates solar tiles and a communal ground source heat pump as further energy conservation measures.

Vote: all Cllrs present voted to support this application.

3/21/0899/HH - Single storey timber porch at Vineyard Manor High Street Much Hadham

Vote: all Cllrs present voted to support this application.

(ii) Objections raised on the following application:

3/21/0848/FUL - Erection of 3 detached dwellings with associated access, detached car ports and parking at Land South of Culver Lodge Widford Road Much Hadham

The basis of the objection is detailed in Appendix A.

Vote: all Cllrs present voted to object to this application.

21/45. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 1st June 2021 following the close of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting. Arrangements to be confirmed as it may be a physical meeting rather than a Zoom meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:00 pm

3/21/0848/FUL - Erection of 3 detached dwellings with associated accesses, detached car ports and parking at Land South Of Culver Lodge Widford Road Much Hadham

Much Hadham Parish Council object to this application.



Visual looking at front of Plot 1 and side elevation of Plot 2

There are already approved plans for 2 detached houses on this site (granted at a time when there wasn't a 5-year housing supply), which is also allocated under the neighbourhood plan for development. The principle of residential development is therefore already established. The issue is whether the details of these proposals are acceptable.

Design:

District Policy DES4 requires a high standard of design and layout "to reflect and promote local distinctiveness" and

"Make the best possible use of the available land by respecting or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area, in terms oflandscaping, environmental assets, and design features."

However, there is almost no recognition of the historic location of this site in this village in the design of the properties. Indeed, a cookie cutter approach of 3 almost identical suburban designs has been adopted. This housing is more akin to that in Pye Gardens in Bishop's Stortford, as seen below, than anything in Much Hadham village.



The previously sanctioned applications for this site were each for a contemporary, distinctive style. When compared to recent developments of larger houses at Moor Place Park or Walnut Close, both in the Conservation

Area, it is noticeable how some effort was made to create individual designs to make each house appear distinctive from its neighbour.

The flat-roofed car port for Plot 3 has no design merit whatsoever - no wonder it is not included in any illustration.

District Policy CC2 Climate Change Mitigation encourages all levels of the energy hierarchy to be met. In the absence of technical obstacles, any planning consent for this site should require installation of solar tiles and ground source heat pumps.

Housing Density: District Policy HOU2 Housing Density requires housing development to make efficient use of land but accepts that "In villages and for some other locations lower net densities may be more appropriate to respond to local character and context". The NP does not yet carry significant weight in the planning decision but it should be an influence on our considerations. Policy MH H7 includes "If the existing permission is not implemented, an alternative proposal for 4 homes

or a terrace of up to 8 cottages would be appropriate". This proposal is for a more modest increase, to 3 units with no attempt to provide a mix of housing size.

Given the very large rear gardens, it is questionable whether the proposed land use is efficient. Opposite the site is a terrace of Victorian dwellings, which provides an alternative local context for a more efficient site plan.

The gross internal floor space is not given but appears to be very close to 1000sqm to avoid the provision of affordable housing so this needs to be carefully checked.

Rural Views: The NP policy MH H7 goes on to require "The Conservation Area is preserved or enhanced and offers an improved rural view eastward from Widford Road." There appears to be no glimpse of the rural view under these plans. For example, the new agricultural field access that was a condition of approval under 3/17/1440 is to become a gated access to Plot 3. The uniform wall frontage at a height of 1.8m is sufficient to close off any sense of the rural nature of what lies beyond.

The NP policy MH D4 Domestic Gates seeks to reduce the detrimental visual impact of solid gates: "Where new or replacement access gates to a home are proposed as part of a development, consideration should be given to using materials that enhance visual permeability." Poorly chosen gates can create an appearance of unfriendly separation from the community and block rural views, as here. It's poor design, offering nothing to the community. Para 5.15 claims that it is a common feature within the locality of the application site to have gated entrances. In fact, there are no such sites anywhere south of Hadham Cross, where open vehicular entrances are the norm. Many detached houses have an "in and out" arrangement, including the newly built Magna House opposite Station Road.

The Planning Assessment para 5.8 refers to "ensuring an appropriate transition from the built form of the village to the open countryside beyond." Cutting off all street level views of the countryside, as is the plan here, does not ensure this in any way whatsoever.

Biodiversity: District policy NE3 Species and Habitats is mirrored in a requirement of the NP for this site is that "Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures will be required to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity". The application pays lip service to this, seeking to claim an overall net gain for biodiversity through the provision of new planting along the frontage (but nowhere else it seems), glossing over the loss of all the established trees on the highway boundary and the loss of agricultural land. No thought is given to limiting night-time lighting.

The comments of the NE Herts Swift Group in requiring swift/bat boxes are supported, to meet the requirements of District Policy NES 3 Species and Habitats, paragraph VIII.

Landscaping:

District policy DES1 includes "Development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve, enhance or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the district's landscape."

DES2 includes "I. Development proposals must demonstrate how they will retain, protect and enhance existing landscape features which are of amenity and/or biodiversity value, in order to ensure that there is no net loss of such features.

II. Where losses are unavoidable and justified by other material considerations, compensatory planting or habitat creation will be sought either within or outside the development site. Replacement planting schemes should comprise mature, native species appropriate to the local conditions and landscape character, supported by a monitoring and replacement programme."

In this application, no thought appears to have been given to the view of this estate from Sidehill Wood, across the flood plain. The NP recognises how precious this view is, designating as a Priority View V11: Sidehill Wood bridleway towards Culver. Specifically with this site in mind, “Any development on the village development boundary on the horizon should blend with that of the background treeline”. Sadly, many of those trees, which were located on the Widford Road boundary, have already been axed. The statement in the Planning Assessment para 5.47 that the dwellings will sit comfortably from public vantage points has not been made with the view from the Sidehill Wood bridleway (FP28) in mind.

The plans make no proposals for the landscaping of the rear gardens, which would be open to the installation of all the normal paraphernalia of a suburban garden (sheds, playground equipment etc) and quick fix boundary treatments such as leylandii and laurel, to the detriment of the pastoral landscape. No mitigation measures are proposed for the substantial loss of trees on the highway boundary that has already taken place nor for the impairment of views both eastwards from the highway and westwards from Sidehill Wood.

Overall, this is not housing that enhances the Conservation Area: it does not add to local distinctiveness, it is suburban in nature and it presents a barricaded frontage to the street view to the detriment of the community. From the public vantage points in Sidehill Wood, the glass-dominated rear elevations of the 3 properties collectively will dominate the more restrained classical proportions of Culver Lodge, making it subordinate to them. The proposals in relation to biodiversity are perfunctory and the rear gardens, with no landscaping proposals, are going to become an unwelcome incursion into the pastoral scene.

The neighbourhood plan demands a higher standard of design, more efficient use of the land and greater investment in harmonising with the rural landscape.

Decision to approve this submission made at the Much Hadham Parish Council Planning Committee meeting 27th April 2021.