



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Extraordinary Haslemere Town Council Meeting held at 6pm on
Monday 8 November 2021 - Council Chamber, Town Hall, High Street, Haslemere

Mayor	*Cllr S Dear
Deputy Mayor	*Cllr J Keen
Councillors	*Arrick, *Barton, *Cole, *Davidson, *Dullaway, *Ellis, *Hewett, Isherwood, *Lloyd, *Matthes, *Nicholson *Odell, *Robini, *Round, *Weldon, *Whitby

* present

The meeting was clerked by the Deputy Town Clerk, Pippa Auger and also attended by the Town Clerk, Lisa O'Sullivan.

15 members of the public were present. A reporter from the Haslemere Herald was also in attendance.

80/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: Apology is accepted from Cllr Isherwood (illness).

81/21 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

The following members declared a non-pecuniary interest as members of the Haslemere Society: Robini, Odell, Keen, Dullaway (treasurer), Round and Barton.

Cllr Robini also stated that he may change his view if this brings up any issues at future WBC Planning meetings.

82/21 RESPONSE TO LOCAL PLAN PART 2 CONSULTATION

Cllr Dear confirmed a working party had convened to go through the amendments in the LPP2 pre-submission plan addendum particularly in relation to Haslemere site allocations. The working party were able to agree on the response to most sites, but not all. He went on to state that the removal of the Red Court site from the LPP2 allocations had been discussed by the working party and that it was noted a planning appeal had been lodged against refusal. In the circumstances, no further comment on that site was made.

Cllr Dear proposed that the agreed amendments were voted on first so the discussion could concentrate on the sites new DS06 (The Royal Junior School, Hindhead) and DS08 (The Old Grove, High Pitfold, Hindhead) where no agreement was reached. Cllr Keen seconded the proposal.

Cllr Dear asked for a recorded vote which was as follows:

For: Dear, Keen, Robini, Dullaway, Weldon, Cole, Hewett, Davidson, Barton, Ellis, Round, Odell, Matthes, Lloyd, Whitby and Nicholson
Abstained: Arrick

RESOLVED: the amendments agreed by the Working Party are submitted to WBC.

Cllr Odell addressed the meeting as Chairman of the working party stating there are two options to consider: Council either agrees to the inclusion of the sites or disagrees on the grounds that inclusion contravenes our Neighbourhood Plan in that the sites are in the AONB and outside the settlement area, and do not have good sustainability contrary to the Council's climate change resolution.

DS06 was discussed first:

Cllr Dullaway thanked everyone on the working party on behalf of Council. The Neighbourhood Plan should be used as the tool to make assessments. DS06 fails on AONB and biodiversity but it does state we should support building on brownfield sites. The site appears to be a mix of brownfield and greenfield, with the majority greenfield so the plan would not support it. He would support a smaller development on the built site only.

Cllr Robini has spoken to the developers. They plan to build on the school site, car park and other made areas only. There is no intention of any buildings going on any part of that site which is greenfield. The number of dwellings is a planning consideration outside the scope of this discussion. Surrey Hill AONB has no objection to building on the built site.

Cllr Dear requested clarification from Cllr Robini as the January 2021 version of the LPP2 shows a scheme of up to 120 units on the Royal School site, not just confined to the built area. A copy of the plan is circulated to members. Cllr Robini confirmed that he had spoken to Emma Hawkes of the developer DHA Planning and she confirmed 80-90 dwellings on the built site only.

Cllr Barton - the plan circulated is historic. She too has spoken to the developer who has had a series of meetings with Natural England, Surrey Hills, Surrey County Council & Waverley Borough Council. AONB protection is downgraded if there is brownfield development of the site and the designation is historic, the site sits alongside 4 lanes of major highway close to roundabouts. WBC have looked at ways to align the LPP2 with the Haslemere & Milford & Witley Neighbourhood Plan, and this is it. The key consultation feedback was that the green ring around Haslemere had to be preserved and protected. WBC made an exceptional call for sites only looking for brownfield sites. There is an allocation of houses which Haslemere has to take.

6.20 Cllr Davidson left the meeting to attend a WBC Audit meeting of which he is Vice Chairman.

Cllr Whitby - sites will be imposed on us if we don't find the 130 odd dwellings that these sites offer. He acknowledges there are issues with infrastructure and strain on the local GPs surgeries. Natural England and Surrey Hill are quite happy with the sites inclusion. Could the number be reduced from 90 to 50?

Cllr Lloyd - the Council's is an advisory response which is not binding. Housing targets are driving the allocation of a beautiful site but with the background noise of the A3. In an ideal world this would not be put up for development.

Cllr Dullaway - is there a compromise of a smaller development only on the clearly developed area and reject development on the wider green space?

Cllr Odell – Hindhead’s allocation has increased to 112, in addition to the Andrews and Barons sites, and Haslemere a decrease of 98 as a result of the addendum. WBC must consider policy ICS1 of LPP1 which relates to infrastructure and educational land and the lack or removal of facilities. The owners of the Royal School should be offering the land to similar establishments before selling up. It is not on the brownfield register and for it to be included WBC must advertise for a period of 21 days and have regard to anything which has adverse impact on the natural environment (AONB) and the heritage asset built on the site. A site of 90 dwellings will need parking for at least 200 cars. The existing car parks will need to remain as such, reducing the developable area to about 10-20% of the entire site which is unlikely to yield more than 20-30 dwellings at most which would not be viable. Any proposal above 50 houses has to offer Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. The site is not in a sustainable location contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Barton – this brownfield site must be given priority. Surrey Hills and Natural England have been consulted and support the site. It is not great for car users but there are pavements to Grayshott. Any development would have to have a green travel plan.

Cllr Nicholson – The site will require a lot of screening should it go ahead but that is a planning application issue. It is a sustainable location as there are two bus routes within 1 mile of the site with frequent services every one or two hours..

Cllr Weldon – there are two conflicting requirements. WBC has an obligation to meet its housing numbers which have been passed to Haslemere in an agreed Local Plan. There is a conflicting obligation in the Neighbourhood Plan to protect our green spaces. The completion of the Local Plan is urgent, without it developers have an ability to challenge WBC decisions and take them to appeal. However if Surrey Hills AONB argue the site is compatible there is no reason to object.

Cllr Arrick – Amesbury School are interested in the existing sport field which would retain it for educational use. The entrance is off a roundabout 5km away from the middle of Haslemere, and 2km from centre of Grayshott. Residents would have to walk a mile for a bus which comes every 1-2 hours is laughable. It is not a sustainable site, a car is needed. It is in the AONB and AGLV, it is too far from amenities, it has no amenity or infrastructure. Housing should not be going to a more rural area which does not have the infrastructure.

Cllr Ellis – two points. Firstly mandatory housing numbers have been inflicted on us. This proposal does the least damage to nature and the community and is best option to allow development. Secondly, this is the outcome of the local democracy expressed in responses to LPP2 and our Plan and is supported by the local community.

Cllr Round – Council has to compare with Scotland Lane/Red Court as these are the two big sites. If WBC is caused to remove one it has to substitute with the other in order to keep the numbers up. This is WBCs problem not ours.

Cllr Matthes - it will become our problem. As green and local councillor I’m minded against big development but Surrey Hills AONB and Natural England say it is a decent brownfield site to be built on. Council must look carefully at planning applications.

Cllr Dear – major development outside development boundary, which was set by our Neighbourhood Plan, and defies any definition of sustainable contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan. It is in the AONB when the Council threw its weight behind preventing development of lesser AGLV land at Scotland Lane. Loss of educational facility without full justification.

Cllr Dear proposed to vote whether the inclusion of new DS06 is accepted for development up to 90 houses as specified in the local plan. Cllr Dullaway proposed an amendment that Council agrees to the inclusion of DS06 subject to the limit of development of up to 90 units only, being on land on which there were previously constructed buildings or hardstanding. The proposal is seconded by Cllr Keen.

Cllr Dear asked for a recorded vote which was as follows:

Against: Dear, Hewett, Arrick, Round, Odell,

For: Keen, Robini, Dullaway, Weldon, Cole, Barton, Ellis, Matthes, Lloyd, Whitby and Nicholson

RESOLVED:

With reference to site DS06 Council agrees to the inclusion subject to the limit of development of 90 units only, being on land on which there were previously constructed buildings or hardstanding.

Discussion on site DS08

Cllr Dear proposes Council should just go to a vote as to whether site DS08 should be included as the arguments for and against are largely the same as DS06.

Cllr Barton confirms the increase in numbers because the area of development has expanded.

Cllr Dear asked for a recorded vote which was as follows:

Against: Dear, Arrick, Round, Odell,

For: Keen, Robini, Dullaway, Weldon, Cole, Barton, Ellis, Matthes, Lloyd, and Nicholson

Abstain: Hewett and Whitby

RESOLVED:

With reference to site DS08 Council agrees to the amendment set out in the draft addendum.

Meeting finished at 6.58 pm

Signed.....
Chairman of Meeting

Date.....