



**WOODHAM FERRERS AND
BICKNACRE PARISH COUNCIL**
A QUALITY COUNCIL
QUALITY STATUS RE-ACCREDITED JULY 2012
ESSEX 'VILLAGE OF THE YEAR' - RUNNERS UP 2009



REPORT FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 13TH JANUARY 2015 OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION 14/01976/OUT – 110 HOUSES IN BICKNACRE/GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS

AGENDA ITEM 4/15

REPORT FROM CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCILLOR RICHARD POULTER

The main issue at the moment is the planning application by Gladman Developments relating to the land on the south side of White Elm Road. Residents have told me many good reasons why this development should not proceed, such as traffic problems, school occupancy, loss of agriculture land and drainage. The application ultimately will stand or fall on the question of the adequacy of the housing supply in the whole of Chelmsford City area.

This application is for about 110 houses in land outside the defined settlement of Bicknacre and is contrary to Chelmsford's local plan. Planning law states that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with local planning policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adequacy of housing supply is a material planning consideration. Government policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should meet in full the objectively assessed need for housing in their area. This means that each local planning authority is responsible for formulating its own housing target. Chelmsford has along with other adjoining local authorities instructed independent consultants to assess this need. This will be objectively assessed against various data, some of which is commissioned by Government and which will not be available until late February. The consultant's report is expected in May. In the meantime Chelmsford is not without a plan. All Councils are required to show a five year land supply for delivery of housing. Chelmsford has prepared an interim plan in advance of the consultant's report. This is objectively prepared based on information published by the Office of National Statistics. This shows a requirement for each of the next five years of 1039 dwellings. Projected completions over this period amount to 6210 dwellings sufficient for 5.68 years. Planning Officers at Chelmsford tell me that they are as confident as can be that their interim plan is robust and can be defended against planning applications for extra housing.

If Chelmsford's five year housing supply is sufficient then any applications to develop land outside the defined settlements should fail because there are no material planning considerations that indicate otherwise. If Chelmsford cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing then that is a material planning consideration and would be taken into account in the Gladman application. The other reasons put forward by residents, particularly drainage, would then assume greater importance.

I expect that the Gladman application will be refused as being contrary to policy and being outside the defined settlement of Bicknacre. I also expect this refusal will be appealed. An inspector will decide whether or not Chelmsford has an adequate five year supply of land for

Clerk of the Council:

Mrs K Kuderovitch
Parish Council Office,
Woodham Ferrers Village Hall, Main Road,
Woodham Ferrers, CM3 8RJ
01245 328988

E Mail clerk@wfandbpc.org.uk



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deliverable housing. Ultimately the success or otherwise of Gladman's application is dependent on Chelmsford's success in defending its figures rather than local considerations.

I remain totally opposed to this application and will do everything I can to see it refused. I will keep residents informed.

Councillor Poulter also made the following points on the areas of concerns raised by Parishioners:

- Flooding – acknowledged a historic problem in Bicknacre and questioned whether Gladman have addressed this issue satisfactorily.
- Traffic – this would be influenced by Essex County Council surveys and would be unlikely to carry great weight.
- Schools – ECC Education would be a consulted and they would comment on whether schools could cope.
- GP Surgery – was this financially viable? – the NHS/Primary Care Trust would be consulted.
- Affordable Housing – Site next to the Brewers Arms was an exception site – the affordable housing proposed by Gladman was not specific for Bicknacre. The Chairman asked Councillor Richard Poulter why the current site was not an exception site and Councillor Poulter reported this was not an Affordable Housing Association driven project.
- Overdevelopment – Councillor Poulter advised the development was inappropriate for Bicknacre and advised that Chelmsford City Council Planning Officers had advised that provisions had been made to meet their 5 year housing need.

AGENDA ITEM 5/15.

The Chairman of the Council requested that Councillors individually give their views on the planning application after consideration had been given to the reports prepared by the Clerk.

The following points/views were made:

- Councillors noted all of the comments and concerns made by the Parishioners in the presented report.
- Councillors requested the right to continue to make comment at all stages of any planning applications.
- Councillors acknowledged the need to have as much involvement as possible in the unfortunate event that this outline planning application was eventually approved.
- Councillors were concerned of overdevelopment of the village.
- Councillors noted the historic development of Bicknacre and suggested opposition to any further development.
- Councillors present at the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of 8th January 2015,

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- stressed the overwhelming amount of parishioners against the proposal.
- Councillors acknowledged there was a housing need, and that some parishioners may welcome the opportunity to downsize etc. but in the current form, the development was not suitable for Bicknacre and a precedent would be set for future developments.
 - Councillors noted that the quality of the houses were of the minimum standard required.

REPORT FROM THE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

The Clerk reported that at the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of 8th January 2015 she was asked by a Parishioner if the Parish Council could promote an Action Group group using the Parish Council web page. The Clerk had indicated that she did not think that it was possible and promised to look into this. The Clerk advised that she had taken advice from the Essex Association of Local Councils and was correct. The following is what the Parish Council may wish to consider, should an Action Group be formed:

- An Action Group can apply to the PC for a small grant to enable them to meet – (ie. £100) as their campaign is for the benefit of the Parish.
- An Action Group could set up a free web site at essex-info.net.
- The Parish Council could, in the event a full planning application was submitted, offer an agenda item for a representative of the group to come and address the Council.
- The Action Group can copy the Clerk of the Council on their activities.

The reason the Parish Council cannot promote the group on their web site is the Parish Council have now debated and resolved a course of action and it would be wrong to promote a groups views after that (as what if they changed direction/were controversial/offensive etc.).

The Clerk reported than Danbury Parish Council had strongly opposed this application for a number of reasons.

VOTE

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council lodge the views of the Parishioners in the form of the report and not to support the development. The Chairman asked for a show of hands in support of this proposal and it was recorded by the Clerk as unanimous. The Clerk to lodge with Chelmsford City Council.

K. Kuderovitch, Clerk to the Council
14.1.15

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