

PEOVER SUPERIOR PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman - John Bennett
Vice Chairman - Gordon McGrath

Minutes of an Open Meeting of Peover Superior Parish Council

Held on 18th March 2010 at 7.30pm at Over Peover Village Hall

The Chairman, Mr John Bennett, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and asked the Parish Councillors to introduce themselves.

Members of the Parish Council present were John Bennett, Gordon McGrath, Barry Weinholdt, Peter Clarkson, Bessie Coppack, Peter Clarkson, Anthony Dobell and the Clerk. Jill Wille joined the meeting at 8.15pm.

John Bennett outlined the process for the meeting. The Parish Council wished to use the meeting as a means of hearing the views of the community on the application for Woodside Poultry Farm. He asked that people respect each others views and opinions and that no arguments should take place here.

The Planning decision was to be taken by Cheshire East Councillors at a Strategic Planning Board Meeting at 2pm at Macclesfield Town Hall on the 5th May 2010. Cllr Macrae and Cllr Walton are on this board. Members of the public are allowed to speak (for 3 minutes) at this meeting should they wish to do so.

The Parish Council would be putting forward views both for and against the proposals in its submission to Cheshire East Planning Committee. However individuals need not rely on the Parish Council to speak for them. They must submit their own responses to Cheshire East.

Three points were emphasised to the meeting

1. The parish Council is generally in favour of Affordable Housing where there is a genuine local need
2. The Woodside Poultry Farm Site needs to be improved in some way.
3. The design of the proposed affordable housing is not in keeping with the character of the village.

Principles of the Application.

Application is for 15 Houses, 5 shared ownership and 10 rented properties. The application is for 5 x 3 bed properties, 9 x 2 bed properties and 1 x 2 bed bungalow, a Farm shop and Offices. To be built in Cheshire Brick with white render and grey slate roof. The viability of the farm shop is in this case a planning issue as it is an enabling factor to the affordable houses. Therefore the houses and the commercial venture are inextricably linked.

Planning is allowed in the Greenbelt in certain circumstances, one of which is for the provision of Affordable housing for local people (Policy GC1).

To understand what was meant by affordable the meeting was informed that the cheapest rent would be around £65 per week.

The Council have been to visit Antrobus Village affordable housing and have seen first hand how, when done well, such a development can be an asset to a parish. In Antrobus' experience people move on from these properties over a 5 - 10 year period. Also a robust Section 106 is vital in ensuring these properties are made available to people with strong connections or to essential workers such as school teachers, farmers from the parish. The meeting was clear that Barclays' workers cannot be classed as essential workers.

The Developers have compiled a register of 43 interested people and are submitting this as evidence of local need. As far as the meeting was aware the list has not been validated and although there is genuine interest from within the parish, concern was expressed that a number of those on the register of interest had tenuous links with the parish. The parish council have not been allowed to see anymore detail than that which is available to the public and so cannot validate it. For there to be a proven local need the ratio of people to houses needs to be 3:1.

The Majority felt that the village needs revitalising as the population is getting older and younger people are priced out of the parish. Affordable housing offers an opportunity to both young and old to help regenerate the parish and prevent it from becoming a dormitory!

20 years ago the school intake was made up of at least 20 families who lived in the parish, now approximately half this number make up the school intake with families having to live outside the parish because they cannot afford to live here. With the Parish Plan showing that 94% of people thought the school important, we need to make housing available for families. Also, community life can only be enhanced by having a wider more diverse age range.

Of concern to the meeting was the design of the houses. They are all to be in one long "barrack" type line. The Meeting felt this was completely out of keeping with the village. Concern was expressed that the housing would stand out as affordable housing and therefore could create divisions within the community. Within the parish plan it states that any affordable housing should be in keeping with the parish.

Neighbours to the development highlighted to the meeting the proximity of the housing to their properties. Although within planning limits the 25 meter distance was felt to be very close to neighbouring properties. Also the access to the site off Grotto Lane would make a highways hazard for such a small lane should the development be approved.

There were many opinions on the farm shop and offices. This shop is to be run by the land owner and concern was expressed for the viability of such a venture. Some expressed the opinion that it was up to people to support the shop and a shop would create some local jobs for people in the parish. The parish plan showed that people were against any more office developments within the parish. Concern was expressed over what would happen to the office and farm shop buildings if the offices were to be vacant and the shop fail.

The Chairman concluded the meeting making it clear that the parish council will put together a robust and comprehensive response to the planning department, outlining the need for a greatly improved design. However he urged individuals to respond themselves. Full details of who and where to write to were given to the meeting and the council asked that if people were writing a response and were happy to copy the council in then they would appreciate seeing individual responses.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm.