**Minutes of a meeting of the Development Scrutiny Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy on Monday 3 September 2012 commencing at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs J Ali, Mrs S Lunn, A Jackson (substitute for Cllr Osborne) M Pettitt, D Sharman, R Smith, Mrs S Sutton and G White (Chairman)

**Absent:** Cllrs A Maycock and C Osborne,

**In Attendance:** Cllrs N Aldis and M Scott, the Town Clerk and 9 members of the public.

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| **1** | **Apologies**  Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Osborne and Cllr Maycock. |
| **2** | **Declarations of Interest**  Cllr Sutton declared a personal and pecuniary interest in all matters relating to RSPB which was her employer. It was noted that the only business concerning the RSPB was a pre-application presentation for information.  Cllr Aldis declared a personal interest in application noCB/12/02841/FULL as a governor of Sandye Place Academy. |
| **3** | **Minutes of previous meeting**  **It was resolved:** to receive the minutes of meeting of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 13th August 2012 and to approve them as a correct record of proceedings. |
| **4**  **i)**  **ii)**  **5** | **Planning Applications**  The following applications submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council were considered.  **CB/12/02488/ FULL** **Change of use of former village hall to a residential dwelling at Village Hall, The Green, Beeston, Sandy**.  The Chairman introduced the application which concerned the former Village Hall (previously a Baptist Chapel) on Beeston Green which had been empty for several years and was in immediate proximity to a listed buildings including Magnolia Cottage. Oral representations objecting to the proposed development were made by a near neighbour who expressed concerns affecting her property including risk of fire, access problems, invasion of privacy, vehicular fumes, proposed driveway on village green, infringement of grazing rights, overlooking, size of proposed garden and encroachment on village green, terms of deeds of her own property and reduction in property value. Another resident of Beeston Green raised concerns about the granting of rights over the village green and issues connected to parking on the green. Two written representations also objecting to the proposed development on grounds included above were noted by the committee.  Members considered the objections which included references to previous applications concerning the property and the application in some detail. The Chairman noted that planning legislation had changed since the previous applications and the NPPF included a presumption in favour of sustainable development and included the statement that change of use to residential “should normally be approved”.  **It was resolved:** to make no objections to the proposed residential development whilst noting that this decision was made without prejudice to any future decisions which the Town Council may be called upon to make about access across the Village Green to the property.   The Town Council was mindful of the interests of near neighbours especially the residents of Magnolia Cottage which is so close to the proposed development and expected that the material considerations they raised would be considered fully by the planning authority.  Central Bedfordshire Cllr Aldis noted that the application would go to the Development Control Committee of Central Bedfordshire Council C and so residents would have the opportunity to put their objections again at that point.  **CB/12/02561/ FULL Proposed dwelling, land at 28 The Avenue, Sandy.** Oral representations were made objecting to this development by a near neighbour and written representations were also conveyed to the committee from a further set of neighbours. It was noted that the No 8 Birch ? was mistakenly labelled No 9 in the plans. The objections expressed included noise and loss of privacy because of the proximity of the proposed bungalow to the neighbouring property. It was felt that any new development could ultimately lead to overlooking if windows were introduced to the gable and there would be a loss of light, the existing barn was a roost for bats.  Following discussion **it was resolved:** to support the application in principle on the basis that a small, single storey bungalow was a suitable development for the plot.  However, the Council wished to express concerns about the curious siting of the building on the plot and felt that the orientation of the building to the site left little room around the proposed development and had an impact on the privacy of neighbours.  **Beeston Timber Yard Appeal and Variations of Conditions**  The Chairman advised those members of the public who had attended to hear information about the proposed variations of conditions to permissions granted to Beeston Timber yard that these applications had been deferred to the next meeting since relevant paperwork had not arrived from Central Bedfordshire Council.  *(Cllr Scott left the meeting.)* |
| **6** | **Pre-Application Presentation**  The committee received a short pre-application presentation delivered on behalf of the RSPB by David Spivack, Area Manager Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and Rachael Murray, Project Manager for Sandy Wind Turbine. The purpose of the presentation was to explain the RSPB’s decision making processes and the background to an application for a wind tower which might come to the council in 2013.  Ms Murray reminded members that an application for a meteorological mast had been submitted by the RSPB in April 2012 and following approval this research mast had been installed in July 2012. Bat data and weather data was beginning to be available and this would be used to inform detailed environmental impact surveys over the next 6 months prior to the RSPB making final decisions about whether to proceed with the wind turbine project. It was anticipated that a planning application for the wind turbine might be made in February 2013 and the earliest that a turbine would be in place would be summer 2014. A further public consultation would take place in January/February 2012/13 when more data was available. Members asked questions about the project. The Chairman thanked Ms Murray and Mr Spivack for their input and they then left the meeting. |
| **8 i)**  **ii)**  **iii)**  **iv)** | **CB/12/02681/FULL Rear two storey extension with internal alterations to incorporate disabled accommodation at 1Bickerdikes Gardens, Sandy.**  Cllr Pettit declared a personal interest in this matter as he knew the applicant.  **It was resolved:** to make no objections to the proposed development which was considered appropriate for the site.  **CB/12/02586/FULL Two storey side and single storey rear extension at 25 Brickhill Road, Sandy. It was resolved:** to make no objection to the proposed development subject to the agreement of the next door neighbour as there would be encroachment on to the neighbouring plot in order to erect the foundations of the extension.  **CB/12/02603/FULL** Extension of existing garage with pitched lean-to roof and gable end in keeping with existing front extension. Part retrospective, as partially constructed with lower pitched roof at shallower angle. This will be raised and streamlined with existing extension roof at **2 Girtford Crescent.**  Three letters of objection had been received in respect of this application and they were summarised. Concerns included obstruction due to vehicles overhanging and frequently fully closing the public footpath because of the position of the garage and the shortening of the driveway, reduction in visibility, noise from the garage which is used as a workshop and previous disregard of planning regulations. Cllr Jackson then declared a personal interest as he knew one of the objectors.  **It was resolved:** to object to the grant of retrospective planning permission for the existing garage and the grant of planning permission for the raising of the existing garage roof.  The reasons for this are that the position of the proposed development is too far forward and had reduced the availability of off-street parking the consequences of which are detrimental to the amenity of the neighbours.  Cars parked on the driveway in front of the garage now “overhang” the end of the driveway.  Also the proposed development is not in keeping with the street-scene by virtue of the forward position of the garage.  **CB/12/02841/FULL** Replacement of existing single glazed windows with new double glazed powder coated aluminium windows, to include the replacement of vertical tiling and asbestos panels with insulated panels at **Sandy Place Academy, Park Road, Sandy.**  **It was resolved:** to support the proposed development as a welcome environmental improvement which would enhance both the appearance and the learning environment of the school. |
| **7** | **Items for Information**  Central Bedfordshire Cllr Aldis reported that the recent application by Frontier for chemical storage had been objected to by the Environment Agency and the application had been withdrawn.  Cllr Aldis further reported that the application for a dwelling at the rear of 31-35 Cambridge Road had also been withdrawn. |