

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Development Scrutiny Committee of Sandy Town Council which was held virtually via Zoom on Monday 24 August 2020 commencing at 6.30pm

Present: Cllrs A Gibson, J Hewitt, W Jackson, T Knagg, R Lock, M Pettitt, P Sharman (Chair) and S Sutton.

Absent: Cllr N Thompson

In attendance: Cllrs N Aldis, P Blaine, M Hill and C Osborne. Chris Robson (Clerk) and Anne Elliott-Flockhart (Administrator).

1 Apologies (13-2020/21)

No apologies had been received.

2 Declarations of interest (14-2020/21)

i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none

ii) Other Interests – Cllr Lock declared an interest in application CB/TCA/20/00426, St Swithun’s Church, as she is a member of the PCC, and application CB/20/02836/FULL – 7 Havelock Close, as she is a near neighbour, and accordingly would take no part in the discussion of the item.

3 Planning Applications (15-2020/21)

The following applications submitted for comment by Central Bedfordshire Council were reviewed and comments agreed.

31.07.20	CB/TRE/20/ 00384 Recreation Ground Bedford Road Sandy	Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: MB/TPO/03/0001. Raise crown to 5m and prune overhang to fence line to Lime Trees T1, T2, T3 & T5, remove deadwood and remove overhang by 4m to Sycamore Trees T4 & T5 at Recreation Ground, Bedford Road, Sandy. Resolved: to make no objections to this application.
06.08.20	CB/20/02305/ FULL 68 Bedford Road Sandy SG19 1EP	Rear double storey side/rear extension with new gable roof. Conversion of existing garage block into annex dwelling. Resolved: to make no objections to this application.
10.08.20	CB/TCA/ 20/ 00316 Green Gables 95-97 High Street Sandy SG19 1AL	Works to trees in a Conservation Area: Trim & shape the Lime Tree Hedge as it overhangs the pavement (1). Shape the crown to Maple Trees (2). Remove the Sycamore Tree & replace with a smaller tree or shrubs (3). Remove the two Prunus (4). Thin crown of weeping silver birch/beech tree by 20% (5). Trim boundary hedge at Green Gables, High Street, Sandy Resolved: to make no objections to this application.

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10.08.20	CB/20/00599/ FULL Winchester Road, College Road, Wesley Road, Sandy SG19 1DG	Change of use of 23 planters to be removed and replaced by parking provisions at Winchester Road, College Road & Wesley Road, Sandy. Resolved: to make no objections and to support this application.
13.08.20	CB/20/02782/ FULL 11 St Neots Road Sandy SG19 1LB	Erection of detached bungalow & associated works at 11 St Neots Road, Sandy. Resolved: to make no objections to this application.
18.08.20	CB/TCA/20/ 00426 Church of St Swithun's High Street Sandy	Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Prune group of cherry trees (G1) by 1-1.5m and reduce crown by 1m. Resolved: to make no objections to this application.
18.08.20	CB/20/02836/ FULL 7 Havelock Close Sandy SG19 1TE	Single storey rear extension. Resolved: to make no objections to this application.

4 Late Planning Applications (16-2020/21)

There were none.

5 Minutes of previous meeting (17-2020/21)

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of meeting of the Development Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 3 August 2020 as a correct record of proceedings.

6 Items for Information (18-2020/21)

i) To note any decision notices or outcomes of appeals.

The Administrator informed members that advance notice of an application for 18a The Green had been received. Notice has been given as access to the site is across The Green, which belongs to the Town Council.

Members noted that application CB/20/01621/FULL – Land rear of 9b High Road Seddington - for erection of a detached storage barn has been refused by Central Bedfordshire Council. The proposed development, by virtue of its excessive scale and bulk, would represent poor design, and as such would be out of keeping within the vicinity of the area and result in harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Members were informed about application CB/20/02659/VOC – Plot 2,2a and 3 Woodside Caravan Park, Thorncote Road, Northill for variation of condition 2 of

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planning permission CB/11/01301/FULL Change of use of land comprising of 10 caravans and associated ancillary development). Remove condition 2 and replace with condition restricting occupancy to any Gypsy Traveller. This application falls just outside the parish boundary.

ii) To hear from the Clerk regarding the MHCLG Consultation on changes to the current planning system.

The Clerk reported that the Consultation had originally gone to a meeting of the Town Council on 17 August where it was resolved that the Development Scrutiny Committee be asked to look at it. Unfortunately, neither the Clerk or the Administrator had had a chance to look at the matter in great detail before the Development Scrutiny meeting tonight.

The Clerk has contacted NALC for further guidance but was told that none would be forthcoming as it is felt by them that the entire document is relevant to Town and Parish Councils.

The Clerk has also contacted CBC for further guidance but had not heard back from them at this point.

The Royal Town Planning Institute have issued a statement but this may not wholly agree with the Town Council's views.

The Clerk is currently preparing a briefing document with the aid of a planning officer from another Town Council.

The Clerk suggested that the Committee could put aside some time at the next Development Scrutiny meeting to look at this document.

Members discussed this proposal. One member stated that the Council need to be clear about what they want to get out of this and what they expect the Clerk and Administrator to undertake. There are a lot of questions in the consultation, not all of which are relevant and some are difficult to understand. In his opinion there were two or three areas which should be looked at, such as making the local plan simpler, Community Infrastructure Levy and Communication.

Another member thanked the Clerk for the work already undertaken and agreed that members need to decide which questions they want to answer. Another member suggested that all members should read the consultation document and

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come back to the next Development Scrutiny meeting with suggestions which would then go back to Town Council.

A member suggested that Council only respond to the Government consultation which would give members longer to form their responses. The consultation document is mostly pictures with simpler text. Her concern is that once a piece of land is designated for development that is that.

Another member suggested that there are two ways of looking at the consultation, either that the planning system is being held up by the local authority and town councils or that developers are slowing matters down by sitting on land banks. He felt that the most useful document was the one from the Royal Town Planning Institute.

The Clerk informed members that he had a copy of this document and would circulate it to them.

Another member had concerns that there wouldn't be time to coalesce opinions ready for the next Town Council meeting. Another member stated that this was a monster of a document, the majority of which does not concern the Town Council at all. Council should only respond to the salient points. He is wary of some of the changes inherent to what is being proposed but Council can't spend hours debating it.

The Clerk suggested that he would pull out key elements, which could be circulated and then discussed at the next Development Scrutiny meeting.

In addition to the points mentioned earlier it was suggested that permitted development and local plans are issues which need to be added to the key elements that are looked at.

Members agreed this course of action.