

STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Planning Meeting held in the Village Hall on
Monday 17th December 2018 at 8.00pm

Present: Councillors J Clayton (Chairman), K Austin, S Traverse-Healy, C Upchurch, J Courtney
 SCDC Planning Officer John Koch
 In attendance: The Clerk with no members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Apologies were received from Cllr Jeffs, Cllr Wheatley, Cllr Belson and Cllr Drew.
 There were no interests declared.

2. COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM PARISHIONERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance.

3. TO AGREE A RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATION

3.1 Planning Ref S/4139/18/FL

Horse and Groom Public House, Baldock Road —Demolition of existing building and the erection of three roadside retail (A3) restaurants with ancillary (A5) takeaway together with associated parking, access improvements and landscaping
 (Mr Cunningham and Carlile, UK Property Options Ltd)

The Chairman welcomed John Koch, SCDC Development Control Team Leader, to the meeting and invited him to speak to Councillors.

Mr Koch referred to the planning application which was for three drive through restaurants (A5) which were single storey. There was an equipped play area as part of the plan, which might not be considered compulsory. New access onto the site and a road off were also planned. Hertfordshire County Council were the Highway authority for this application and at this time their view was not known. There was no mains drainage on the site so a septic tank would be needed. Comments from Anglian Water were also awaited. To date there had been representations made by residents on the noise and lighting and there was also a question on the ownership of the hedgerow. In the past planning consent had been obtained for a restaurant but an application for residential use was refused. Mr Koch stated that this type of proposal was the most likely to be acceptable.

Mr Koch was asked which chains the tenants would be. He advised that at this stage the tenancy was not part of the application.

A discussion took place on the development policy for rural locations. It was acknowledged that the site needed to be redeveloped. There was already a Public House on the site although it had ceased trading a number of years ago. Cllr Upchurch added that the existing site was an eyesore. The highway impact was a major concern where the units were classed as for passing trade. Cllr Traverse-Healy believed that it would be used as a destination site. Reference was made to similar sites where there was always a lot of traffic. It was noted that there were 8 cut throughs on the A505 between Royton and Baldock and these would be used to access the site. If there was a roundabout at Odsey with the cut throughs closed, as discussed over the years by the Parish Council, then this would help. It was acknowledged that the roundabout was unlikely to happen soon. Mr Koch suggested that a full account of concerns be submitted as part of the representation by the Parish Council. Those relating to the highway could then be put to Hertfordshire County Council. Cllr Traverse-Healy agreed to compile a response regarding highway safety. -STH

A discussion then took place on possible litter from the site. There was already an issue with fast food wrappers from Royston. The Chairman suggested that should the application be successful a Section 106 contribution to help with litter issues be considered.

Cllr Traverse-Healy referred to the current design of the proposal, stating that it was urban, and as this was a full planning application it was important that the design was acceptable. Mr Koch advised that the Landscape Officer was happy with the proposal. It was suggested by Councillors that the proposal might be more acceptable if the number of units was reduced from three to two. After further discussion a vote was taken where it was agreed to Object to the application on the

grounds of Highway Safety and Design. In addition to the points to be prepared by Cllr Traverse-Healy the Clerk was asked to comment that if the Developer was to reduce the number of units then the Parish Council would be more inclined to support the application.

Recommendation –Object

Steeple Morden Parish Council object to the Horse and Groom Application for the following planning reasons:

Transport

The site is not in a sustainable location with no public transport. All access to the site on the A505 must be made by car.

The A505 is classified as having both a through route and a local function in the current Local Transport Plan for Hertfordshire. This is exemplified by the fact that there are nine public road entrances and eight places where a driver can cross the dual carriageway or execute a U turn between A1198 and the Baldock East roundabouts. A distance of approximately 7 miles.

Hertfordshire County Council is currently undertaking an assessment of the road and are considering improvements for road safety.

Based on experience from other drive through sites this application will become a destination and increase traffic using and entering the A505.

There are significant housing developments planned and agreed with direct access to the road within a short driving distance of the site. 2,800 dwelling at Baldock North some 5 miles away and 300 dwellings a couple of miles near the Royston roundabout. In addition Bassingbourn Barracks is being reactivated. This will further encourage local use of the drive through facilities.

Steeple Morden Parish Council opposes further intensification of the site above the existing application for a restaurant until safety improvements have been made to the A505 along this stretch. The developer should contribute to this as it is clearly a destination but if South Cambridgeshire District Council is minded to approve then a Grampian condition should be considered that restricts use until the Highway improvement work particularly a roundabout at the Odsey Junction has been completed.

Litter

There will be an inevitable increase in litter, as a parish we are seeing increasing amounts of fast food wrappers discarded from passing vehicles. Conscientious volunteers litter pick but cannot access all areas within the parish. There must be some consideration to how this problem will be managed and assistance in dealing with the inevitable increase. Funding provision, through a Section 106 Agreement would be a requirement, to provide a more robust litter picking service.

Design

The development is situated in a prominent and sensitive position. It is considerably larger than the original public house and will be a dominating element in the rural landscape when viewed from the high ground of the Heath.

The submitted designs for the drive through restaurants are suited to an urban Environment and are not in keeping with the rural setting. Their brutal corporatist design jars with the character of the area.

Steeple Morden Parish Council asks that the development submitted to the South Cambridgeshire design panel as a category B referral before determination.

The Parish Council would be more inclined to supporting the application if the number of units were reduced.

4. OTHER PLANNING ISSUES

There were no other issues raised.

5. COUNCILLORS ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND REQUIRING THE URGENT ATTENTION OF THE CLERK

There were no issues raised.

There was no further business and the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Chairman

Date