

North Mymms Parish Council

Notes: Public meeting at North Mymms Memorial Hall on 5th March 2015 at 8.15pm

Re Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan consultation

Parish Councillors Teresa Travell, Linda Saffer, James Bentall, Jacqui Boulton and Bill Storey

Members of the public present – 54 (at the start of the meeting)

Chairman, Councillor Teresa Travell, welcome and introduction. She gave apologies for Parish Councillors Stephen Boulton, Keith Pieri, John Simpson, Ron Wheeler and Kerry Langton who were unable to attend. She explained why Councillors Boulton and Pieri attended the WHBC Development Management Committee meeting that evening.

Members of the public invited to speak

A Member of the public asked for a show of hands of people who do not like the Local Plan proposals. The Clerk counted 48 people raised their hand

People were then asked to raise their hands if they did not object to the Local Plan but just for the Welham Green area = nobody raised their hand.

The Clerk noted several people did not put their hands up for either count.

Parking in the Dellsome Lane area has got worse, it is more difficult to park in controlled zone and uncontrolled parking in Dellsome Lane area is extending outwards, If there is development away from the centre of the village more people will drive to the shops – if parking deteriorates cannot see what could do to address it, more restrictions pushes people to park their vehicles further away.

General store and other infrastructure was proposed with previous Marshmoor development proposal (development didn't happen).

People will come to the centre of the village and parking situation should be avoided rather than let it happen.

Welham Manor resident commented that she is sympathetic to development but is concerned about development extending beyond Welham Manor housing itself because it's a narrow road, vehicles parked on road, difficult to pass, its often impossible to get in or out of the driveway. Most cars are parked on the drive/nobody uses their garage to park. If proposed sites development goes ahead with 45 houses, looking at 90 cars = streets can't cope. Increasingly difficult to access on to Dixons Hill Road (rat run through Welham Green) Don't think that Welham Manor can sustain any more traffic / resources in the road cannot cope.

Persistent problems with sewage - she reported sewage blockages / overflows 2, 3 or 4 times a year.

Green Belt land – development will eradicate the edge of the village. Going to get village creep, out and out further into the Green Belt.

Planning applications from the owner were successfully defended because of the Green Belt. Land gets 'boggy and floody'.

Owner apparently gave notices to person keeping horses there to vacate the land (alleged because he knew could be built on).

Cars and new flats (Dellsome Lane?) – surface water flooding whenever there is heavy rain showers. Drainage cannot sustain the new building proposed in the Welham Green area.

Housing takes five years to build, doubt people will be compensated for loss in value.

Comment by Claire Taylor NMDGBS that planning permission was refused by Sec of State due to no sufficient access and three sides adjoining the Green Belt (WG3 site).

Local Plan to last to certain date and all the houses may not be built? The Chairman commented that the proposals currently out for consultation wont necessarily happen.

Skimpans Farm is not suitable

pipe takes industrial water into stream

two accesses on lethal road
Dixons Hill Road is not suitable road for all the traffic

Comment from person who said they went to drop in consultation at Brookmans Park and were encouraged not to say what don't want but to say what is least worst.
Marshmoor.

Alleged that Lord Salisbury does not want to build. WH10 owner does not want to sell land, allegation that developer put site forward without permission?

Schools is an issue, with increased population the schools are nearly all full, already at crisis point. Concern stated by parent that their 3 year old child won't have place to go to school.

400 houses proposed, 35% affordable, social housing.
16 houses in Brookmans park, comment – does it not appear to be social engineering – they don't want social housing?

400 in Welham Green and everywhere except Brookmans Park is expanding, its your position (Parish Council responsibility?) to put the balance straight ...

Several strong comments on Brookmans Park not having fair share of housing sites
Have to respond on valid planning reasons.

Challenge assessments on sites.

Low Capacity but criteria no different for assessment on sites so why allocate none to BP?
have assessments been made accurately, have assessments taken everything fairly into account?

All sites are in Green Belt, some criteria for BP less favourable sites applies same as for WG sites Can't see how WG10 is more favourable, floods, access, harm Green Belt

Why have sites been considered if they were not put forward by land owner. WHBC Officer said only way to find out would be go through land registry and 1000 sites were put forward so not practical to check every site.

Sometimes land gets planning permission without land owner permission.

Site for local plan has to be deliverable.

Local Plan has different rules from planning applications. SoS Eric Pickles statement about Green Belt applies for planning applications and not to putting forward sites for Local Plan.
National Planning policy - Council has to make sure land can be delivered, should check who owns or has option on land.

Welham Manor site activity, comment it has been measured, checked sewer, what do next is put together costs of infrastructure, there must be some cost to doing this

Allegation that its speculative developers (wife owns land and she has not put it forward?).

Comment that 112 houses is too much, we live in a village, houses should have gardens, not be cramped, need to be incorporated into the existing village.

Criteria WG6 floods is serious concern with this site.

Hatfield against incinerator, New Barnfield site under threat, it is in the plan, HCC would like to take it out of Green Belt, asked people to say to WHBC no don't want to alter Green Belt boundary, if want to keep separation between Welham Green and Hatfield need new Barnfield site. Reinforce it in responses (point 5 CS4). There is lots in the consultation report documents apart from housing.

Already have traffic calming on Dixons Hill Road, plus two cars per dwelling coming out on to the road – 800 additional cars, junctions not easy to use now, bridge narrow for the vehicles using it, extra pollution CO2, lead, nitrous oxide.

Various comments on landowners, illogical way sites have been assessed, Brookmans Park has influence.

Comment on Councillor who is on Welwyn Hatfield Planning Committee.

Why is Welham Green being allocated 80% of Traveller sites? Should not be concentrated in one area of the Borough.

Nobody enforces breaches of planning.

Park Homes on Marshmoor, would proposals mean it will be taken over by Travellers?

New Garden City in north Herts support - could have all the relevant infrastructure, don't have it in Welham Green and limited capacity and opportunity to provide new infrastructure. Garden Village/town has been put forward, takes time to plan and build so for the future, it is not being dismissed.

Object to Skimpans development. Skimpans Close is edge of village, children play on street and if get 75 houses that will be ruined

Stables site across from Potterells development would not really affect anyone directly.

Need to look out for sites not in the Green Belt, 6/8 flats can be built instead of one house.

120 houses is inappropriate but new houses do need to be built, suggested people look around for blocks of land where could be building (build houses where old garages used to be), everyone is responsible for doing what we can to identify sites.

Surprising where extra dwelling can be situated eg cottages extra property at the end.

Infill concern about cramming in every nook and cranny.

Comment that development of Marshmoor would not inconvenience anybody. Response it would have huge impact on village, traffic, ribbon development – don't realise impact it will take built area towards southern Hatfield

Mixed development - people who live there will not necessarily work here / others come to work and will live elsewhere.

Previous proposal build on Marshmoor included shop/school. Note name it's a 'marsh'.

Welham Green already infilled, works quite well and doesn't overawe the village character.

No point in building if dwellings don't go to local people – Council does not have jurisdiction over private property (new flats Dellsome Lane let out to Barnet Council).

Alternative sites east of railway where travellers site is – Foxes lane to Bulls Lane could accommodate same number houses as Holloways Lane.

Affordable housing/social housing 25% allocate to local people, Housing Association now provides them rather than Councils.

Our children won't be able to afford even social housing in the area.

Important to understand Borough Council has to have a Local Plan and, if Govt doesn't accept it is sound, it becomes a free for all for developers.

Independent consultants assessed housing need – query number?

Coalescence, must keep gaps between towns and villages,

Proposals must be realistic. Plan of some sort is better than no plan, inevitable some building to meet population increase. (comment re Welham Manor houses built were objected to at the time)

Welwyn Hatfield taking 48% dwellings in the wider area, Enfield/North Herts etc.

Govt have to approve plan and don't have to do what residents want.

Comment: don't want 100 houses behind me, planning permission refused several times, sewerage problem for a week/water coming up toilet, water comes from allotments, area floods every year, will be catastrophe if there is not some spectacular new drainage system.

Query option to convert business park? Permitted development currently offices/business units being converted into housing.

Some units on business park are empty - why does Marshmoor need industrial development

Could incentivise redevelopment of existing buildings.

Brookmans Park don't get target figure so other areas have to take some of the quota.

National Planning policy applies where there is no up to date Local Plan in place. When change of Government policies might change but there is so much pressure in South East UK will have to build houses whoever is in Govt.

What is likelihood that less favourable sites could come back – don't know.
There will be another chance to comment on Local Plan but will be limited
Value in sending letters, quantity of responses will have an impact but should have planning points. People urged to speak to neighbours and encourage them to respond to consultation, plenty of information from Residents Association and Green Belt Society on their concerns.

Head of Planning WHLife - local people have knowledge and WHBC are keen to hear if there are better alternatives.
Complacency is an issue, Green Belt Society delivered letter to every house in the parish.
Objection that land is in Green Belt won't get anywhere, need reasons.

Comments on political influence - distribution of sites should be for planning reasons. 200 each for Welham Green and Brookmans Park would be fairer.

Flood, traffic, schools infrastructure applies to every site. Everybody generally interested in their own village. Parish Council represents all wards. People must write their own points. Put forward alternatives, what would we sacrifice?
Green Belt land is sacrosanct.

Numbers come from statistics, hope lower numbers could be justified.
Inadequate allowance for windfall with redevelopment of sites, permitted development conversion of buildings (offices etc can be turned into flats, internet – changes to shopping and home working)

Disproportionate allocation of Traveller Sites to Welham Green area. 80% for whole district. Important not to concentrate in one area.
Why being allowed to carry on expanding numbers of units – do not apply for planning permission before carrying out work. Enforcement appears to be ineffective

*Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contribution to the meeting. She encouraged people to complete the comment sheets, if not ready to hand in now they can be delivered to Parish Council office within the next few days.
Meeting finished 9.50pm*