



TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Frankie Killby

3 Pilgrims Court, Cuckoo Hill, Bures, Essex CO8 5LF

Tel: 01787 227700 · Email: clerk@terlingandfairsteadpc.co.uk · www.terlingandfairstead.org.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of Terling and Fairstead Parish Council Planning Committee held on Wednesday 10th November 2021 at 7.30pm, at Terling Village Hall, Terling

Present : Mrs S Alder
Mr R. Dixon
Mrs S McNamara
Mr M Tugwell

10 members of the public

Mrs S McNamara was elected Chairman

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received and accepted from Cllr Playle, Cllr Webster and Cllr Halfhide.
2. **Declaration of Interests:** None declared.
3. **Minutes of the Last Planning Meeting** – The minutes of the Parish Council Planning Committee meeting held on 9th January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
4. **Meeting Open to the Public:** SM invited members of the public to speak at the beginning of each item.
5. **Planning App: 21//02910/FUL and 21/02911/LBC - Conversion of chapel (Use Class D1) to 1 x 2-bedroom house (Use Class C3, United Reformed Church, Church Road, Terling**

Comment from member of the public:

- *It would be preferable for the building to be used for something other than residential use, although we would not like to see it fall into disrepair*

RD stated that this is the second application for change of use. The first (ref BDC/18/00896, in March 2018) was withdrawn after many objections including those of T&FPC.

This application is almost the reverse mirror to that proposed in 2018 includes removing 25% of the building to the rear (constructed in c1970) to provide a rear garden. There is no car parking and no mention made regarding the graves only refers to respectful retention of headstones.

The Marketing Report, prepared by Fenn Wright, and included as supporting information as part of the Application, concludes in March 2020, has not been brought up to date with evidence of marketing since this time. RD advised the meeting of the bids received as stated in the Fenn Wright report as well as comparable examples of similar premises sold, and the prices achieved in the wider Essex area with change of use.

There was no commentary on the change of use classes order made in Sept 2020 and evidence of proactive marketing since this time. At the moment the building has Class D classification.

There has been no contact from the URC with the Parish Council and the wider community and apparently no attempt to find any other user. The agent's board had been laid on the ground in front of the chapel for months (pictures will be submitted as part of T&FPC response).

RD advised meeting that both Historic England and BDC Public Health and Housing had commentary on BDC planning portal objecting to the proposal.

The Planning Committee will now prepare a response to BDC objecting to the proposal, referring to its previous response in 2018.



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6. ***ECC Ref: CC/CHL/85/21 – Chelmsford North-East Bypass***

Comments from members of the public:

- *Concerns about transport, access and how this affects the Longfield and A12 widening Schemes*
- *Does not seem to be joined up thinking regarding the various schemes*
- *Lack of information for local residents or interested parties.*

RD explained that the various schemes are subject to different planning bodies e.g Essex County Council, District Councils and Development Consent Order application made to the Planning Inspectorate.

RD is attempting to arrange a meeting with the relevant ECC Cabinet member for infrastructure (CLLR Lesley Wagland) and will liaise with our County Councillor, Cllr Playle.

The Planning Committee will prepare a response to ECC by the due date which will include reference to the combined programmes set to be affected by this application, Longfield and the A12 widening and the apparent lack of joined up thinking between ECC Highways, Longfield and Highways England (now known as National Highways).

It was agreed T&FPC should include the most recent Longfield Newsletter and their letter of 25 October from Longfield to Statutory Consultees (of which ECC is one) in its response to ECC.

It will be placed on the public record the lack of direct contact to parishioners who are set to be directly affected by these works during the construction stage especially along Dukes Lane and Cranham Road.

7. ***Longfield Solar Farm – Revisions to Boundary Statutory Consultation and DCO Application to Secretary of State***

Comments from members of the public:

- *Concern regarding the huge loss of land and impact nationally on food security*
- *Lack of consultation with local community*
- *'The Problem with Solar Farms' booklet has been produced (consent to be sought for wider community circulation)*
- *Many comments from the public referred to the scale of the project. This most recent application to the Planning Inspectorate now attempts to enlarge the land take and increases the scale of battery storage area*
- *No information regarding access at any number of points and how this may be impacted by the Chelmsford NE Bypass by to Drakes Lane and Cranham Road routes for construction traffic to advance Longfield*
- *Disappointed at the response from the Police and Crime Commissioner to the Parish Council's concerns regarding the safety of the batteries in the event of fire. This will be robustly challenged at public examination in due course*
- *What are the implications for our carbon footprint of building and removing the solar farm? Solar panels are not recyclable. Many trees could be planted on the site. Grassland is a very effective carbon absorbent*
- *Why trash our environment for a short-term solution?*
- *Lack of communication and information from Longfield, mere reference to updates being on the website and no paper trail or physical posting of notices to advise the wider community was considered poor*



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- *Latest newsletter not received by everyone and difficult to access on the Longfield website*
- *How permanent will the access for construction of the site be? Will service roads become permanent?*
- *Long-term concern that when the site is no longer needed for the Solar Farm it will become a brown field site and then used for housing development.*

The Planning Committee will prepare a response focussed on Longfield letter of 25 October 2021 and updated newsletter. It will in addition draw attention to the apparent lack of joined up thinking evidenced between ECC Highways for the Chelmsford by-pass scheme, A12 widening with National Highways. It would appear from the three separate programmes available in the public realm they are set to all overlap with the consequent traffic management issues for existing business and residents as well as construction traffic.

It will also refer to comments based on the increase of scale, concerns regarding access especially in light of other proposed schemes and the continued lack of proper consultation with the wider community.

MT suggested T&FPC approach BDC for commentary on their responses to Longfield newsletter and letter to all statutory consultees, also Hatfield Peverel PC should be approached.

The meeting's attention was drawn to the Links Solar Farm to the south of Braintree which was c 163 acres and stated to be capable of 35mw generation. This was advancing through the Planning Department at BDC and already has in excess of 120 documents on the BDC planning portal. There are other Solar Schemes coming forward to Local Planning authorities close by. Longfield is a direct application (DCO) to the Secretary of State and all local authorities are statutory consultees. It is expected many of these sites presently before these separate authorities, will be consented prior to the formal planning DCO application for Longfield.

8. *A12 Widening – DCO Application to Secretary of State*

RD stated that this is also a DCO application. The implications for the villages need to be considered as it is said the application is now being advanced by the Planning Inspectorate in a number of separate phases.

9. *Date of next meetings*

Parish Council Meetings, 7th December, 7.30 pm, Square & Compasses, Fuller Street
18th January, 7.30 pm, Terling Village Hall

Post meeting note

Today, (10th November 2021) National Highways posted revisions to its submitted DCO application which will impact the Hatfield Peverel and Witham junctions. Public consultations are being held by National Highways, details of which will be posted on village website and village hub in an effort to promote a co-ordinated community approach to commentary on these revisions.