

# MINUTES OF HUNTINGTON EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

11<sup>th</sup> May 2012 7.00 p.m. at St. Luke's Church, Huntington.

## PRESENT

Chairman Cllr. M. Williams

Cllr. Jackie Creswick

Cllr. John Creswick

Cllr. N. Dodd

Cllr. D. Ferguson

Cllr. M. Kemp

Cllr. C. Walker

None Councillors

Public – 60

Clerk – Mrs. A. Wright

## APOLOGIES

Cllr. D. McQuay – work

Cllr. R. Shelton - work

Cllr. A. Wilcox - work

Cllr. Williams opened the meeting by giving a short presentation (pages ?? to ?? of the minutes book) on the Saughton Camp Phase B application. He explained that the Parish Council is simply a consultee in the planning process as are residents who he encouraged to submit their own comments to CW&C.

## DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests recorded.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public made the following comments:-

- The majority of residents feel the application is a 'done deal' which will be approved.
- The Sainsbury's junction should be redesigned and would have operated better as it was with traffic lights.
- Can't argue with the principle of providing more affordable housing for Chester residents on a brown field site. However these new homes should have proper services, schools, doctors etc and current infrastructure is not adequate to provide these services.
- A slip road onto the A55 would be good for the whole of Chester.
- Not about NIMBYism, (No in my back yard).
- Not against development if there is away the traffic and road issues can be made tolerable, obvious solution would be A55 slip road.
- Recently CW&C has suggested an A55 slip road would be dangerous and that it would make Huntington like every other urban suburb, although the new plans with roundabouts etc will do that.
- Should oppose development without the A55 slip road.
- Object to Gorse Way, Chester Road proposed traffic lights which will mean vehicles including large tractors and tankers will be stationary outside residential properties.
- Existing 9 inch sewer pipes from the Camp to the pumping station are not capable of handling existing flows resulting in sewerage flooding properties on Chester Road, Butterbache, Bachefield and Meadow Lane, these drains will handle sewerage from 1101 homes if phase B is approved not taking into account the church, school and commercial properties. Welsh Water has no proposal to update the drains in the next five years unless the developer funds an upgrade. Welsh Water objected to Phase A due to drain capacity however their objection was overruled by planners as Welsh water are only a consultee, and amendments were made directing storm water into Swales.
- The site does need some development but the full traffic implications of the development must be taken into account including impact on Sandy Lane, Saughton, Bruera and on the Sainsbury's junction, also need to take into account traffic to school and businesses at peak times.

- Phase B includes Special Conservation areas which will be damaged by the volume of housing proposed and the run off water.
- Phase B will shift the centre of Huntington from The Green, Chester Road making Huntington simply another pass through residential road.
- The infrastructure, roads and drains, should have been in place and functioning before the application was even submitted, no mitigation has been included for the sewerage system to help with current flows or those in the future.
- Inspector's decision stated building of phase A should not commence until it was proved that the Sainsbury's junction is working and that a slip road onto the A55 would depend of the junction's performance.
- How will Parish Councillors support the view that the Sainsbury's junction is not functioning?
- How will Parish Councillor work with residents against the proposal?
- How will Parish Councillor work with CW&C against the proposal?
- Proposed Gorse Way lights are unnecessary and will speed up the flow and volume of traffic along Gorse Way to the Sainsbury's junction.
- Who has stated we need this amount of housing?
- Issues are drains and the Sainsbury's junction which was totally grid locked at 5pm today. Need the A55 slip road.
- 'Aggressive soft measures' is a meaningless contradiction.
- Development of phases A & B will result in 600 cars along Chester Road, should be considering road parallel to A55 linking to the A41.
- Cycling routes and buses will not reduce traffic, most existing residents commute to work and can not and will not suddenly give up their cars.
- Drains overflow during heavy rainfall flooding Caldby Valley Nature Park and the brook.
- Gorse Way traffic lights will mean traffic backs up on Chester Road, the traffic survey was done in 2008 and there is visibly more traffic on Chester Road since then without new houses being built. New traffic survey is required.
- Traffic has increased as a result of the new Sainsbury's junction in Waverton, Bruera and surrounding villages. Traffic on the A41 travelling towards Chester is backed up in a morning to Waverton beyond the Poplars petrol station at Rowton.
- Against the A55 slip road as it will increase traffic in Huntington and Great Boughton from North Wales and beyond accessing Chester, will have large impact on Chester Road. It would cost the developer around £30m today but would be unlikely to be developed in the next 8 years and could cost around £70m then. Need to be aware of possible future impact of a slip road providing capacity for more development including on water works in the future making the area into a massive residential/urban sprawl.
- CEG have carried out a very poor consultation of residents not 'open and vigorous' as they state. The questionnaire only received 40 responses, the majority of people not completing it as questions were narrow and prevent residents giving their true opinions.
- Object to more housing.
- No industry in Chester the majority of residents driving to other areas to reach work, proposed soft measures are worthless.
- The sight was converted by CEG to brown field, why can't it be converted back to green field?
- Residents group has estimated a link road to the A41 would cost £1m. Has the Duke of Westminster's opinion been sought on the development and roads links?
- If not A55 slip road, then what, a solution is needed?
- It is extremely difficult accessing information on planning and highways, lack transparency.
- CW&C will financially benefit from the application going ahead how can they be impartial?
- 2002 7.5 tonne weight limit was removed from the roads to Farndon current access only restrictions will not prevent heavy traffic using the lanes.
- Land around the Rake and Pikel, marked as highways land belongs to residents through the Council.

- Traffic is getting stuck on the junction between lights from Caldly Valley Road blocking lanes, highways state this is happening occasionally but it is a regular problem.
- CW&C highways must not sign of the section 278 agreement.
- Caldly Valley Road is incorrectly classified as a B road, should be C taking into account its features including the narrowing of the road for the cycle path near Sedum which further reduces the roads capacity. How can we challenge the roads classification?
- Was MOD land should therefore return to farm land once use has ceased.
- CW&C were pro A55 link road until recently, why sudden change?
- Should not be allowed to build anything until the infrastructure is in place and working.
- Why was Phase A permitted before nil-detriment was proved regarding Sainsbury's junction, residents views were not taken into account, Why not?
- CEG spent £2.5m on Sainsbury's junction they wouldn't have done this unless thought would get permission for phases A & B.
- Building will take 6 to 12 years during which time the roads and junctions will get more clogged up, A55 slip road is the only solution, by the time this is recognised CEG, Bovis and Redrow will be gone and the Chester tax payers will be left with the bill.
- Increased pollution from traffic including large lorries on the route from Ireland to Europe.
- CW&C position was no development of phase A without A55 slip road, why the change of position? Measures could be implemented to limit traffic travelling through Huntington.
- Sainsbury's junction is terrible as a result of sequencing, takes 3 light changes to get out of Caldly Valley Road towards Vicars Cross Traffic lights.
- Seen 3 accidents recently on the junction.
- Plenty of housing already available in Chester area.
- Feel very angry about situation including Sainsbury's junction.
- Chronicle will be at the junction on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May to take photograph of those objecting to the junction.
- What is strategic planning doing, are they incompetent?
- Hatching was introduced at Gorse Way junction about 20 years ago and has worked well, should not be changed.
- Gorse Way, Sedum Close junction has severely impaired visibility splay, the impact of which has been worsened by increase in traffic, including heavy vehicles. Matter has been raised with highways who state visibility should be 43m in a 30mph zone but is actually 41m, average speed of vehicles identified by the speed indicator device was 38mph which would require a 67m visibility splay, but CW&C think the junction is acceptable.
- Speedwell junction is dangerous with cars losing control travelling from Sainsbury's, this has resulted in 6 or 7 accidents.

The Chairman asked for a straw poll on the following matters:-

Caldly Valley Road Crossing – it was agreed this was a good idea without additional housing although it was noted it would not benefit residents further up Caldly Valley Road.

Whitchurch Road Crossing – it was noted this is not in the Parish Council's ward but could benefit children walking to Christleton School, it was felt it was too far from the Sainsbury's junction, although locating it closer to the junction would impact traffic flows.

Tarvin Road Crossing – Would benefit residents without any additional houses.

Gorse Way/Chester Road Traffic Lights – opposed to proposal.

Rake & Pikel Roundabout – Would reduce speeds entering Huntington from Farndon direction.

It was noted that the Parish Council had tried hard to get TPOs on the trees on the island by the Rake and Pikel, however application retained the trees.

Sainsbury's Junction – Unanimous view that the junction is not functioning and has not demonstrated nil-detriment. Sequencing of lights and footprint is too small for the junctions design.

Parish Councillor expressed the following views:-

Cllr. Williams – Application is premature, no evidence Sainsbury's junction is functioning properly. Traffic data based on out of date with estimates built on top of the original 2008 survey. CEG should fund an independent traffic survey, also serious concerns about sewers/drains capacity and the proposed Chester Road traffic lights.

The 20% reduction in peak time traffic proposed by CEG using aggressive 'soft measure' seems at best highly improbable and unlikely to be achieved and would put an impossible strain on the local highways network.

Cllr. Ferguson – agreed with previous comments, planning decision should be made on facts not simulations based on out of date figures. Sainsbury's junction and other infrastructure must be working before anything goes ahead. Sewerage is a big concern with Nature Park flooding currently, need 2 or 3 foot pipe for a large estate. If these problems aren't resolved we will end up paying for solutions in the future.

Cllr. Dodd – Not opposed to sustainable development, this application is premature, nil detriment has not been proved at the Sainsbury's junction. A proper traffic survey needs to be under taken once road works in Chester have been completed; drains are a valid reason for objection. The proposal to reduce traffic by 20% is wishful thinking at best.

Cllr. Kemp – will take 10 years to complete building without phase B. There are serious issues regarding drainage. Site should be developed to benefit the community, should be looking at retirement project, hospice, residential units that the community wants and needs.

Cllr. Walker – Oppose application, traffic is a huge issue now takes 3 or 4 light changes to get out of the village. See not reason for lights at Gorse way will just force traffic down other roads.

Cllr. John Creswick – Strong case against phase B application, Sainsbury's junction not fit for purpose, is a disaster. CW&C have recently refused applications which have been approved on appeal costing authority £56,000, regardless of government in place inspectors don't fully take into account local views. Plans to reduce traffic are sadly mistaken; houses proposed will be expensive houses for professions who will use cars to commute. There will be some affordable homes but this will only been a small proportion of the total amount. There are plenty of other brown field sites which could be developed in Chester not just Saughton Camp.

Cllr. Jacky Creswick – Sainsbury's junction is a complete disaster and will result in more accidents with cars changing lanes and barging in. Residents were urged to e-mail councillors with their views. Up grade of Vicars Cross roundabout has also been a disaster and reduce safety with 6 or 8 vehicles now travelling down the slip road onto the A55 and trying to merge onto the road at once, drivers are now avoiding this junction increasing traffic at Hoole Road which backs up to Green Lane. We should be consistent that we don't oppose sustainable development, but the proposal is not sustainable. Appeal document states highways approved Sainsbury's junction just before the appeal leaving the inspector little room to refuse the phase A application, Why? The plan to reduce traffic by 20% is pie in the sky, most houses will have 2 cars, and it is not possible to cycle into Chester for safety reasons as the new cycle paths stop before you are out of Huntington, new bridge across the Dee might help. CW&C highways have been too slow getting a grip of the problems at Sainsbury's junction. 110% behind A55 slip road despite concerns about environmental damage as there is no alternative. Totally opposed to Gorse Way traffic lights. Is there any evidence that new cycle ways and additional buses have reduced traffic?

#### **PLANNING APPLICATION 12/01754/OUT**

**12/204 RESOLVED (unanimously)** – that the Council strongly objects to the planning application 12/01754/OUT for demolition of existing buildings and residential development associated formal and informal open space and sports provision, ancillary landscaping and car parking and off-site highway works on the Site of Former Saughton Camp Sandy Lane, Huntington, stating the following reasons:-

The Parish Council does not oppose sustainable development of the Saughton Camp site but does not believe the proposal is sustainable for the following reasons.

Application is premature nil-detriment has not been proven regarding Sainsbury's junction.

Full independent traffic survey needed before any application is consider, this should be funded by the applicant, CEG.

Traffic data submitted is unreliable due to age of survey on which estimates have been based and does not take into account development in other areas which rely heavily on road network including residential developments in Farndon.

Proposed traffic junction at the Gorse Way, Chester Road junction will be harmful to traffic flows in addition to be detrimental to residential amenity in that locality with queues of stationery traffic in a residential area.

Inability of drains and sewerage to cope with existing housing, increasing the likelihood of pollution including sewerage flowing into Caldy Valley Brook.

Residents were asked to provide their support should the application be refused by CW&C and go to appeal by inspector.

**The meeting closed at 9.00pm**

**The NEXT scheduled meeting is the Annual or First Meeting on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012 at Huntington Village Hall from 7.00pm, this will be followed by the Parish Assembly at 7.30pm.**

Signed .....

Dated .....

Ann Wright 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012