

BIRDINGBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting of Birdingbury Parish Council **12th April 2016, held at The Birdingbury Club, Birdingbury**

Present

Cllrs' Turner(Chair), Davy, Morton, Preston, Tipton

1. Introduction

The purpose and timing of the meeting was in response to the delayed circulation of information from the Local Associations Information Service (LAIS) and Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) with regard to the "Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes" as part of the Housing and Planning Bill currently going through Parliament. The consultation closes on 15th April 2016.

The Parish Council are responding to the document LAIS1388 which outlines the issues and requests responses to various questions. The paragraph references are where the Council has made a specific response to a particular question in that document.

2. Response

The Parish Council fully supports the general approach and responses of LAIS1388. The following highlights the main issues of concern, and responses to specific questions that we consider important.

We object strongly to any proposal for "fast track planning" that dilutes the present involvement or makes optional the involvement of local councils (down to parish council level), both at "in principle" and "technical details" stages.

We agree to the basic notion of an "in principle" stage, but emphasise the continuing need for sufficient involvement of the local parish councils both in time and scope.

We object to the notion of "technical details" being reserved to the planners. "The devil" is always in "the detail" which the local community is likely to know and understand better than overworked planning personnel.

We are also concerned that the outsourcing to private providers of parts of the planning process would both serve to weaken the resources available in already stretched local council planning departments and dilute the benefits of local expertise and knowledge in the planning process. It also removes the democratic element of political supervision.

We agree with the LAIS note to question 1.5 that highlights that "many councils already find the timescales tight for considering planning application processes"

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and we are concerned that proposals to speed the process will severely weaken the practical ability of local councils and democratic right to assess and consult properly.

Question 2.6. We agree with the fundamental concerns expressed, and object to any proposals that a) make optional the requirement to consult with the community b) limits the level to district, borough or unitary level i.e. cuts out parish councils c) limits consultation to "in principle".

Question 2.7. It is not possible to respond until the detail of what information requirements on the application form is defined.

Question 2.10. We agree with the concern that reduced determination timescales will make it less likely that any discretionary consultation, at technical details stage, will take place. We wish consultation at parish council level, at this stage, to be mandatory. This may therefore require timescales to be extended beyond those proposed in order to make this practical.

Question 3.1. There appears to be nothing in the proposals on the planning process to incentivise the use of brownfield sites over greenfield. We believe that an opportunity is being missed in this respect.

Question 3.4. We believe parish councils should be able to comment on environmental effects at the "in principle" stage.

Question 4. We believe local communities should be consulted as to what goes on the small sites register.

We are concerned about the ability of third parties to apply for planning.

Note: It was agreed that the issue of a neighbourhood plan be discussed at the next Birdingbury Parish Council meeting.

Question 4.1. We agree that for the small sites register, small sites should be between 1-4 plots in size.

Question 4.2. We do not agree that sites should be entered on the small sites register without any need for a suitability assessment.

Question 4.3. We believe land outside the defined village boundary should be excluded.

Question 5.10. We agree that local planning authorities must notify and invite representations from designated neighbourhood forums in the preparation of a local plan.

Question 7.4. We do not agree that the option to apply directly to the Secretary of State should not apply to applications for householder developments. The

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right of appeal is a fundamental democratic principle for the individual, whilst the proposal favours the interests of big business.

Question 9.2. We agree that information regarding financial benefits should be recorded.

Question 11.1. We are disappointed that the proposals on development for schools does not set out requirements for open space in relation to buildings.

3. The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m
4. The next Parish Council Meeting is Tuesday 19th April at 7.30 p.m.

Signed (Chair)

Date