

# Barton Mills Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Meeting of Barton Mills Parish Council

held in the Village Hall on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at 7.00 pm.

**Circulation:** Cllr Robert Lewis (Chairman)  
Cllr Amin Harji (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Kay Blanchard  
Cllr Pamela Boura  
Cllr Garry Flack  
Cllr Keith Fuller  
Cllr Frances Lewis  
Cllr Steve Mullender  
Cllr Charlie Peachey  
District Cllr Tim Huggan  
County Cllr James Waters  
James Bercovici (Clerk)

### 1. **Courtesies and Apologies. Declarations of Interest.**

Present: Cllrs Amin Harji (in the chair), Pamela Boura, Charlie Peachey, Keith Fuller, Steve Mullender  
Apologies: Cllrs Robert Lewis, Kay Blanchard, Frances Lewis, Garry Flack, Clerk: James Bercovici  
Declarations of interest: item 2 a. Steve Mullender who did not vote

Cllr Pamela Boura took the minutes.

### 2. **Planning.**

Note - *ITALICS: Parish Council comments passed to Forest Heath DC.* **Forest Heath DC decision**

#### **General and for consideration:**

##### a. DC/14/1071/FUL - Development Site Bridge Farm Close: 6no. two bedroom apartments

There were about 10 residents of Worlington Road and Bridge Farm Close present and they were given the opportunity to speak.

Mel White who is a resident of the existing flats on Bridge Farm Close, said that children currently play on the grassed area where the proposed flats would be built. She was concerned about reduced visibility at the Bridge Farm Close junction, overlooking of her apartment from the windows of the proposed building and the loss of the communal car parking area in view of the parking problem already experienced by visitors to Bridge Farm Close.

Peter Whittish, a resident of Bridge Farm Close, was concerned about any reduction in visibility at the Bridge Farm Close junction and about access along Bridge Farm Close for emergency vehicles in view of the nature of the existing parking, a problem which would be increased as the result of the loss of parking associated with the building of the proposed new apartments. He was also concerned about the narrow footpath into Mildenhall. He said that at the time he purchased his property, he was told that there could be a single storey commercial building built but the proposed building was much higher than this and would block the light and the view from adjacent properties.

Richard Hayward, a Worlington Road resident, said that he accepted that the site should be used for some purpose but that the building proposed was far too big and the roofline was too high. The area at present had a rural feel and the size of the proposed building was inappropriate.

Matthew Davies who lives in Worlington Road directly opposite the proposed apartment block, was concerned about the change of use from a commercial development and the height of the proposed building. The scale and design of the proposed block was only in keeping with the existing flats and not with the general area and was inappropriate for a site next to the road. He was also concerned about overlooking and loss of light.

Abigail Davies of the same address, said that she had held a meeting with Charlotte Ballard (the FHDC planning case officer) who had been very helpful. She had confirmed that loss of privacy, loss of light, drainage and parking issues were all valid planning grounds for objecting. Mrs Davies thought that the design of the proposed building was oppressive and the scale of the building was out of keeping with the area. The loss of parking was an issue, especially if it resulted in parking on Worlington Road which would be dangerous. She believed that there had been interest in using the site for a commercial purpose but that Bellway Homes were demanding an unrealistic price.

Christopher DeNiet emphasised that the footway to Mildenhall did not meet current standards. He was concerned at the height of the proposed building and about the loss of light.

Robert Beavis said that he agreed with all previous comments. He was especially concerned about parking, as Bridge Farm Close was already very densely parked. Any proposal to remove parking spaces was inappropriate. He alleged that the parking situation was not correctly presented in the planning application as this indicated that 6 parking spaces would be created when, in fact, there would be a net loss of around 10 spaces as a result of the proposed development. He was also concerned at the impact the proposal would have on the visual amenity of the Mildenhall Conservation Area. The proposal was not in keeping with the general environment of the area. The existing apartment blocks are set back from the road and are therefore separated from the older low density development on the north side of Worlington Road. A new large building close to the road could also be a precedent for the adjacent proposed development on the south side of Mildenhall Road.

It was suggested by a resident that more housing might lead to more crime. It was noted that both houses and vehicles had been broken in to in Bridge Farm Close. The need for more housing and more affordable housing should not over rule commonsense. Although there were drainage issues connected with the proposed site, the most important issue was the appearance.

The Parish Councillors then discussed the proposal and were unanimous in supporting the views of residents. It was agreed unanimously to object to this planning application because:

- The proposed building is too high and out of scale with existing development fronting Worlington Road. It would have a visual impact on the Mildenhall Conservation Area.
- There would be a net loss of much needed parking space.
- Overlooking and loss of light would affect neighbouring properties.

Residents were urged to submit their comments to FHDC individually and it was noted that the objections of 2 residents had already been recorded on the website.

#### **Forest Heath decisions. Awaiting Forest Heath decisions and pending appeals**

- b. DC/14/1088/HH - Puffin Lodge Station Road: Erection of single storey rear extension.
- c. F/2014/Variation of Condition 2, 9 and 10 of Planning Permission F/2011/0278 - Barton Mills Chalk Quarry, Chalk Hill.
- d. AP/14/0014/REF APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL Ref. DC/14/0146/FUL - 36 Mildenhall Road: Erection of a one-and-a-half storey dwelling and alterations to vehicular access. Previously, Cllr Boura thought this overdevelopment of the site. Cllr F Lewis agreed. Cllr R Lewis decided to declare an interest; Cllr F Lewis followed suit. Cllr Boura proposed objecting on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site and because the layout is not in keeping with the rest of Mildenhall Road: three in favour, two against. RE-FUSED. Cllr Boura proposed no changes: all in favour (Cllrs Mullender and F Lewis abstained).
- e. DC/13/0927/OUT - Land South Of Worlington Road: Outline application - residential development of up to 78 dwellings with creation of new vehicular access (Major Development and Departure from the Development Plan). *Note: plans had not been received in time for the January meeting. Cllrs F Lewis and R Lewis declared interests. Cllr Boura suggested that if the plans were the same as those discussed in December, the comments submitted by her and Cllr Harji could be submitted to FHDC but, if they are different in any way, an extension could be asked for. Cllr R Lewis thought the plans should be considered properly at the next meeting. He thought the public should be notified of this in the Barton Miller and that the plans should be available for the public to view from 6.45pm before the start of the meeting.* The Parish Council has received strong objections from some local residents: Leonard Laker of Worlington Road and David Little of the Old Station.

Note: this item was brought forward to the beginning of the meeting (after item 0). Cllr Boura thought there are two independent issues: the development of the field, creating a suburb of Mildenhall, linking Barton Mills with Worlington. Second, the plans themselves. Cllr Peachey said he opposes the proposal as it is outside the development line (Cllr F Lewis said the Parish Council had agreed this policy several years before). Cllr Peachey said, also, that this is good agricultural land which is needed. Cllr Harji thought that if other proposals had been rejected because they are outside the development line then this should be rejected as well; on the other hand, he could see the need for more houses. One local

resident commented that she had applied for permission to develop on her land and had been told 'no' categorically. Cllr R Lewis outlined FHDC's need to build outside the development line if there is a strategically good reason. Cllr Waters said FHDC has no 5 year land supply and will find itself 700-800 houses short. The Clerk outlined Mr Laker's letter objecting to the application. Mrs Laker expressed particular concern about the pedestrian access. She said she had witnessed three accidents on Station Road in the last three years.

*Cllr Boura proposed that the Parish Council objects to the application on the grounds that it would create a suburb of Mildenhall within Barton Mills, it would link Barton Mills to Worlington, there would be considerable issues with both traffic and pedestrian access and it is outside the development line: all in favour.*

Cllr R Lewis encouraged members of the public to write in to FHDC with their objections. Cllr Boura offered to attend the Forest Heath Development Control meeting to reinforce objections but said she would be unable to attend if it is on 2nd July.

### **Forest Heath Decisions**

None

### **3. Any other business (with consent of the Chairman)**

None

### **4. Date of next meeting: 12th September 2014**