TANGMERE PARISH COUNCIL



Tangmere Village Centre

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Minutes of an Extraordinary Council meeting

held on 25 July 2023 at Tangmere Village Centre

**Present:**

Councillors Roger Birkett, Trevor Ware, Simon Oakley, George Bailey, Regan Du Closel and Kate Beach

**In attendance:**

Caroline Davison – Parish Clerk and RFO

11 members of the public

District Councillor David Betts

**Apologies for Absence**

306. Apologies had been received from Councillors Andrew Irwin and James Stanbridge.

307. Councillors Nathan Parkinson and Donald Wright were absent from the meeting.

308. In the absence of the Chairman to the Council, Councillor Andrew Irwin, the Vice

Chairman to the Council, Councillor Roger Birkett was elected as Chairman for the

Meeting.

309. Eleven Members of the Public and District Councillor David Betts were welcomed to

the meeting.

**Declarations of Interest**

310. Councillor Simon Oakley declared non-pecuniary interests, in general terms, as a member of West Sussex County Council (WSCC).

**Tangmere Strategic Development Area**

311. This Extraordinary Council Meeting had been convened to determine the Council’s position to the recent consultation on proposed change to the red line boundary of the Tangmere Strategic Development Area and a new provision in plans for relocation of Community Orchard. (Planning Application Reference Number TG/20/02893/OUT).

The Tangmere Parish Council (TPC) had received an extended consultation deadline of 27 June 3023 to submit their comments.

Councillor Simon Oakley reported that since initial discussions regarding these proposals were held at the Full Council Meeting on 6 July 2023, Councillors had held a number of meetings including one with Chichester District Council on 24 July 2023. Councillor Simon Oakley presented to this Meeting a detailed report summarising comments from recent meetings in response to the consultation and the background to decisions made regarding the inclusion of the land to the west of Saxon Meadow in the CPO area and the importance of this as a location for the new Community Orchard. Councillors subsequently commented individually on the key aspects.

312. **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND CONCERNS RAISED IN RESPONSE TO THIS CONSULTATION**

As the starting point for Tangmere Parish Council’s determination on this consultation the Parish Council considered what was in the long-term interests of **the whole of Tangmere’s community and environment, not only at present but also in the future once the TSDL is built out.**

The range of green infrastructure required under the Tangmere Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) and in CDC’s Proposed Submission Local Plan (PSLP) for the TSDA includes a Community Orchard. It was always the desired intent and vision that this would be located in one designated area, to be used as a public amenity space, a gathering space where people and nature could work together. An area which is publicly accessible and where community events can be held.

The TNP, CDCs existing Local Plan and the PSLP all include the whole of the field W of Saxon Meadow. That inclusion was partly because of local planning policy which seeks to protect the setting of the Grade 1 listed church and the Conservation Area. That policy intent arose from the extensive public consultation associated with the TNP, CDC Local Plan and SDL Master Planning processes.

The mechanism to achieve both above aims was to designate the field W of Saxon Meadow as a Community Orchard, whose control would be past to a body (either TPC or a Community Land Trust) whose legal obligation would be to retain that land use in perpetuity and hence prevent it being built on. By locating the Community Orchard on the western half of Saxon Meadow it would also meet all the desired criteria with its location on the boundary of the existing and new development and immediately to the South of the planned cycleway and footpath running East to West. It would be easily accessible from both existing and new development. TPC strongly expressed the requirement for the Community Orchard to remain in its proposed location,

With regards the proposed alternative Community Orchard provision, the fragmenting of it into effectively three sections would result in not only a reduction in the area provided (given the need for boundary protection and watercourse maintenance access (note WSCC’s LLFA consultation response), pose considerable maintenance challenges (multiple sites with longer boundaries), but more importantly reduce usable space for community activities. All of this would make the viability of this element of the TSDL’s green infrastructure questionable. The narrow and fragmented form of the proposed alternative provision effectively changes it to a landscaping feature.

In the absence of the field W of Saxon Meadow being designated as a Local Green Space (which would give it the same status as Green Belt), and noting that less than 0.1ha would be required under LP Policies for open space provision for the amenity open space needs of Saxon Meadow properties, the proposed amendment to the TSDL would effectively enable the capability, in land ownership terms, for most of it to be built on. It was of serious concern that current verbal assertions of intent as to what is proposed for this field are not legally binding. Intentions can change overnight to make use of legal capabilities.

Saxon Meadow Tangmere Ltd (SMTL) and Saxon Meadow residents, in their submissions to CDC, have raised a number of other objections and issues to the wider application. If this planning application for an amendment is approved by CDC, then it must be a concern that further amendments will follow which will continue a process of unravelling what green, transport and community infrastructure has been sought and secured to date.

In SMTL’s letter to TPC of 24 July, the assertion that a foot and cycleway is only required to be 2m wide is repeated. it appears this is based on table 5.2 in LTN1/20 that covers widths of cycleways only, where 2m is stated in that table as an absolute minimum for a cycle lane at constraints. Table 6.3 of that document states that the minimum width of a shared foot and cycleway is 3m.

As stated in WSCC’s LLFA response, a minimum of 3m from the top of a watercourse’s bank is required for maintenance access. This issue is of particular relevance to the Northern element of the alternative Orchard provision, as it would considerably reduce the indicated orchard area. Complications arise if the maintenance access and the watercourse are in different ownerships.

Overall, the issues with regards this amended application are:

* Is the intent of the TNP and the Master planning process for the SDL, to protect the field W of Saxon Meadow from development, compromised by removing the remaining part of that field from the application area; and

In the absence of any legal agreement or land use designation, which prevents development of the field, then removal does compromise that policy intent. An avenue to explore is whether a suitable legal agreement could be achieved, e.g. via the CPO2 process, to prevent development of that field. In any event, a future review of the TNP would need to pursue designating this field as a Local Green Space.

* Does the proposed alternative community orchard provision meet the policy requirement? The fragmented layout of the alternative Community Orchard provision degrades its size, functionality and viability (e.g. in maintenance terms). As such it does not present as an acceptable alternative. In the Report to CDC’s Planning Cttee meeting of 31 March 2021, the area of Community Orchard provision was stated to be 0.46Ha (in a single rectangle). It is not clear as to what area the alternative provision covers, noting the issue of watercourse maintenance access below.
* It has also not been shown as to how appropriate maintenance access to watercourses will be achieved given the proposed alternative provision. The practical effect, of the required 3m maintenance access buffer, on the form and function of the Community Orchard has not been shown or apparently considered.

As Chichester District Council is aware, through its communications with Officers and Councillors, TPC is disappointed and concerned to have been only advised about the planning consultation regarding the amendment to the red line in the SDL at the same time that all members of the general public became aware of the same. Residents would have been aware before and after acquisition of the land that there were plans for the western half of the field to be included within the TSDL and designated as a Community Orchard.

313. **TANGMERE PARISH COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RED LINE BOUNDARY AT SAXON MEADOW**

PLANNING APPLICATION TG/20/02893/OUT

Tangmere Parish Council (TPC) agreed a very strong three-part **OBJECTION** to the proposed amendments to this planning application.

To summarise the basis for this objection:

**Point One**: Tangmere Parish Council determined it had not been demonstrated in the amended layout shown in the plans supporting the planning application that appropriate access could be achieved for watercourse maintenance. There is a requirement for a minimum of 3 metres from the top of a watercourse’s bank for maintenance access.

**Point Two:** In the view of Tangmere Parish Council the proposed alternative provision for Community Orchard does not fulfil the stated Policy requirements for and function of a Community Orchard.

**Point Three:** In the absence of any legally binding provision to protect the field to the west of Saxon Meadow from future development, Tangmere Parish Council strongly objected to the removal of the western half of the field from the Tangmere Strategic Development Location (TSDL). Chichester District Council was urged to pursue mechanisms to provide legal protection from development for the entirety of the field West of Saxon Meadow.

314. Tangmere Parish Council understood that this amendment to the TSDL red line was being considered strictly as a planning application at this stage and therefore its comments needed to be limited accordingly. It was agreed however that supporting comments would be included with the formal response.

As stated at its Full Council Meeting held on 6 July 2023, the Parish Council remains extremely concerned that neither CDC nor the developer made an approach sooner to inform and consult the Parish Council regarding an amendment to the overall planning application which suggests a key change to the TSDL and the provision of the Community Orchard, an essential element of the Green Infrastructure of the expanded village. It would seem that the amount of time, effort and collaborative work between TPC, CDC, the developers, appointed consultants and the high level of consultation with residents of Tangmere Parish themselves had been forgotten. The importance of the development and shaping of the policies within the TNP, to define the TSDL, the careful consideration of what are the key elements of infrastructure and where these would be best placed to serve the local community had been seemingly ignored. Tangmere Parish Council represents the whole Parish and would strongly suggest it hasn’t been able to adequately consult due to being caught off guard itself.

**Dates of Forthcoming Meetings**

315. Dates of forthcoming meetings were noted.

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| Date of Meeting | Committee |
| 1 August 2023 | Environment Committee Meeting |
| 8 August 2023 | Village Centre Committee Meeting |
| 15 August 2023 | Tangmere Allotments Advisory Group (not public meeting) |
| 29 August 2023 | Finance Committee Meeting |
| 7 September 2023 | Full Council Meeting |

Meeting ended 8.00 pm

**Signed : ………………………………………………….. Chairman**

**Date: ……………………………….**