

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 18TH APRIL 2017, 7.30PM
AT WM CEP SCHOOL, NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING

Present: Mr R Selkirk (Chairman)
Mrs T Dean
Mr S Harriott
Mr R Byatt

Mrs L Javens
Mr P Stevens

Also in attendance:
In excess of 40 residents

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
17/218	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> were received from Mr Bullard, Mr Collins, Mr Merchant, Miss Barkham and Mrs Smyth			
17/219	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – none other than those routinely declared.			
17/220	<p><u>WELCOME</u></p> <p>Mrs Dean introduced the planning application and Mr Selkirk welcomed everyone to the meeting; he asked all members of the Parish Council to introduce themselves.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk explained that this dedicated meeting of the Parish Council's Planning Committee had been specially convened to consider the planning application for proposed development of land rear of 239 -259 London Road, West Malling: TM/17/00506/OA Outline Application: Land rear of 239-259 London Road West Malling Applicant: Retirement Villages Developments Ltd The development of land to the rear of London Road to consist of the development of an extra care development of 79 units (comprising of apartments and cottages) all within Use Class C2; associated communal facilities; provision of vehicular and cycle parking together with all necessary internal roads and footpaths; provision of open space & associated landscape works & ancillary works and structures.</p>			
17/221	<p><u>COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS</u></p> <p>Mr Selkirk adjourned the formal part of the meeting and invited comments from residents.</p>			
17/222	<p><u>WMPC'S RESPONSE</u></p> <p>Mr Selkirk re-convened the formal part of the meeting to enable members to formulate comments for submission to T&MBC. After members had discussed the application, it was agreed that Mr Selkirk formulate draft comments incorporating the various points; these draft comments would be circulated to those members present and once finalised would be submitted to T&MBC by the Clerk</p>	RS	✓	

Subsequent to the meeting the following comments were formulated by Mr Selkirk. The Clerk then submitted them to T&MBC.

Re: TM/17/00506/OA London Road Retirement Village Planning Application

Background

West Malling Parish Council held a public meeting to discuss this planning application with local residents. Around 40 residents attended. Residents were advised at the outset that the application was an outline application for the site and access, that the details were therefore illustrative, and that a preferred alternative use for the site, such as the Parish Council's suggested long term car park for workers, could not be used as a valid objection to any application.

Nevertheless, a large number of comments were made which concerned the detail, and we include them here for completeness for your information should any reserved matters be altered.

No vote was taken of residents, but the clear majority of attenders opposed the application.

West Malling Parish Council views.

The Parish Council strongly opposes the application on the following grounds.

1. Green Belt

The proposed planning application is entirely within the Green Belt. A housing use is therefore inappropriate unless there is special community need for the development.

2. Special Community Need

We do not believe the applicant has demonstrated any Special Community Need for the proposal either within West Malling Parish or within the Borough.

The applicant appears to suggest that the properties being offered for sale are unusual in our community. In fact the development at Neville Court and Old Parsonage Court both comprise properties for sale. In addition there is accommodation for older people with some centrally provided services at 'Lavenders' and 'St Marys Court', Churchfields.

The Borough Council supported the Parish Council's opposition to an age restriction on properties built on the former Police Station in Police Station Road, arguing that the Parish was becoming too unbalanced demographically with provision for older people.

Housing has for many years commanded a premium in West Malling as a result of the attractive Market town and wide range of services available in the centre. West Malling Parish Council therefore argued in our response to the Borough Council's Draft Local Plan, that the greatest housing need in our community is for low cost housing for young people and families. The applicant advised visitors to the exhibition prior to Christmas that the properties within the proposed retirement village would be likely to be sold at

above the market price in West Malling.

We understand that the Borough Council has assessed the need for this type of accommodation throughout the Borough, and has identified sites which more than satisfy that need.

3. Access

Whilst the principle of the access has been accepted by Kent County Council Highways, we would comment that we believe the applicant has underestimated the demand for parking, particularly for support services. Residents are not bound to contract with on-site service providers. More vulnerable residents may require multiple visits during the day for cleaning, personal and medical care, bathing, shopping and social needs all of which can generate overlapping parking demands. These require careful assessment with regard to onsite parking provision .

Yours sincerely



Claire Christmas
Clerk to West Malling Parish Council.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS AT THE PUBLIC MEETING.

Impact on Key Services

The applicant makes a statement that the introduction of a large number of elderly people with central support services would not impact on local health services. Whilst it may be the case that support services will reduce the demand in comparison to a provision without those services, it must clearly be the case that an additional 73 retirement properties targeting individuals likely to require those services are likely to place a greater burden on our local GP surgery.

Type of Housing

The design of this planning application includes the provision of a number of large blocks of flats which are out of keeping with the private houses which surround the site, and could be intrusive to adjacent neighbours by reason of their location, height and roof top balconies referred to within the application..

Deliveries

The development does not take into account the number of delivery vehicles likely to be needed to service a development off this type such as online shopping.

Foot Access

	<p>This planning application has no direct foot access to West Malling, except via London Road and Town Hill. The gradient of the latter makes it challenging for older residents, the exact ones the applicant is hoping to attract. The desire to run a shuttle service into West Malling is unlikely to be financially sustainable.</p> <p>Screening Several residents commented that the screening of the proposed large blocks of flats was insufficient or ineffective in providing a viable way of 'hiding' the development., giving new residents a clear line of sight into neighbouring gardens. Residents felt that due account had not been taken of the height differences across the site which would result in the properties being even more intrusive.</p>			
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15pm</p> <p>Signed.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>			