

Greatham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Greatham Parish Council Planning Committee
held at Greatham Village Hall on Thursday 28th May 2009

Present Cllrs A Bridgman, A J Booton, P J Larner, C A Rudd.

Also present Mrs A Rozario (clerk)

The meeting was declared open at 7.30 p.m.

- 1. Apologies for Absence** Cllr Ascherl and Cllr Fellows
- 2. Chairman's Announcements** The Chairman pointed out the fire escapes in the event that there was a fire at the village hall.
- 3. Declarations of Interest** Cllr Rudd declared a personal interest and will not therefore be participating in the discussion.
- 4. Planning Application No: 51346/001** – Fern Farm, Longmoor Road, Greatham, Change of use of land to caravan site for single extended gypsy family to include two mobile homes, two touring caravans and associated day room and alterations to site access.

Cllr Bridgman asked if the applicant was present, and would he like to say a few words to the meeting regarding this application. Mr D Shea Snr was present. Mr Shea confirmed the application was in the names of both himself and his son, also known as Mr Daniel Shea (Jnr).

Mr Shea said he would not be prepared to answer any questions at the meeting and his consultant could be contacted if anybody had any questions. Mr Shea's consultant was not present at the meeting.

Cllr Bridgman commented that the application had been filed on the 8th May 2009 with EHDC and on the following Monday, 11th May Mr Shea had proceeded to place the caravans on the site before obtaining the correct planning permission.

Cllr Bridgman summarized the application, stating that the application was for a Greenfield site to be used as a dwelling site for an extended gypsy family. The gypsy status of the family is in some doubt since 1989. If they were a legitimate gypsy family, then they would possibly have a right to live on the field. The application depends a lot on the status of the family, who have apparently lived in homes since 1989. The family were of a non-travelling status when the family lived at 8 Woolmer Cottages along the A325.

The extended family in the application were Mrs Shea Snr (aged 79), Mr D Shea Snr and his wife Mrs D Shea, their son Mr D Shea Jnr and his partner Miss C Murray. Cllr Bridgman confirmed that members of the family owned properties in Bordon. Mrs Shea Snr previously owned 8 Woolmer Cottages, Mrs Shea owns 16 Royal Drive since 30th March 2007 and also owns 3 Royal Drive since 17th December 2007. Mr Shea Jnr owns 21 Royal Drive since 30th March 2007. All of these properties are now for sale with Chaplins in Bordon.

Cllr Bridgman commented that if the extended family owns 3 houses in the area why do they want to live on a gypsy site.

Cllr Redman arrived at this point.

It was queried whether plant or business machinery would be kept on the site as the application does not include any request to keep plant or business machinery on the site. Mr Shea Snr made no comment.

Cllr Booton said this application although described as on the outskirts of the village, is actually in one of the most residential areas. There are two sites nearby, one in Hawkley and the other in Bentley, but neither are in heavily residential areas. If it was confirmed that Mr D Shea was a bona fide gypsy he would still be concerned as it is such a heavily residential area.

Cllr Booton also felt that if the family were not true gypsies then it was doing the real gypsy families an injustice. He felt that the site had been prepared to a set criteria to match the report prepared by Mrs Heines, the consultant.

Cllr Bridgman then opened the matter to the floor to answer any questions.

Mr Gooden, said he felt that the applicant had shown a total disregard for the planning laws, by moving the mobile homes and caravans on before the application had been heard. He was worried that there was nothing to stop the applicant from moving more homes on to the site. He also felt that the site's access is not suitable for the amount of traffic entering the property. He disagreed with the comment that the applicant travels all summer as the applicant was present during the whole of the summer of 2008. The site was already a noise and nuisance to those living nearby. Mr Gooden said that every tree and all the grass had been taken from the site and that the trees which were removed due to being dangerous, were only dangerous because Mr Shea had dug too close and made the roots show.

Mr Price commented that the conifers were not planted in 2008 but only planted about 2 months ago. He too said he had no objection to gypsies, but if someone wants to come to the village, then they should want to integrate within the village, not cause disruption. He also queried the entrance at the top of the field as this has been put in and had not been there prior to Mr Shea owning the land. He also asked when the plot had been turned into a "farm".

Cllr Booton replied that the site had been drastically altered to make it fit the criteria needed for a gypsy site.

Mrs Fran Carter said that her daughter had just been refused planning permission and she had been asked to put in place a number of measures. Mr Shea had not lived in the village like Mrs Carter's daughter and yet he seems to be able to just go ahead and do what he likes.

Cllr Booton read a letter received from Daryl Phillips of EHDC dated 17th April 2009 regarding Fern Farm Field which stated " With reference to concerns over the possible use of the land for the siting of mobile homes for residential purposes, despite concerns raised, this did not occur over the Christmas or Easter period. The owner of the land is aware that such a use requires planning permission, and has advised that he has no intention of breaching planning law."

Mr David Rudd who has lived in the village a long time confirmed that Fern Farm was previously scrub land which used to home pigsties, but no pigs have been farmed at this site over the last 50 years.

Mrs Cheesman asked whether the mobile homes are in fact mobile. Cllr Bridgman confirmed that there are two mobile caravans and two homes which are less mobile.

Cllr Booton confirmed that the Parish Council have no planning powers, they can only make a recommendation to EHDC. The District Councillor Mrs Judy Onslow had been invited to the

meeting but she had declined. It was felt that the District Councillor should have shown a greater support to the village.

Mrs Cheesman asked whether the field could be reinstated to its previous natural state. Cllr Bridgman confirmed that the application must be decided before any further action could be agreed. EHDC would need to make the decision but it will take into consideration the recommendations by Greatham Parish Council.

Mrs MacDonald asked who actually owned the land as she had thought gypsies didn't own land but were allocated a piece of land by the council.

Mr Shea did at this point comment that not all gypsies are poor and they do own land.

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that the land is owned by Mr D Shea.

However, the piece of land falls outside of the settlement policy boundary and normally the presumption would be against planning being permitted on the land, but as the application is made using traveller status, this changes things. An application would not be granted if not a gypsy family.

Mrs Jerrard asked whether anybody could write to EHDC with their comments. Cllr Bridgman confirmed that this was the case.

Cllr Bridgman closed the question time.

Cllr Bridgman then summarised that Mr Shea's status as a traveller is in doubt due to the applicant family owning 3 properties in Bordon at present, therefore where is the need for them to live on the land. Planning permission needs to be sought by all land owners and most people are expected to submit an application, gain permission, and then carry out the work, not the other way around.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that the Parish Council write to EHDC objecting to this application. The Parish Council voted unanimously to take this course of action. Cllr Rudd abstained from voting.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council will write to East Hampshire District Council objecting to the application on the grounds that the applicants are not true travelling gypsies and the site is outside the settlement policy boundary and is in a densely populated part of the village.

The meeting was closed at 8.20 p.m.