

Minutes of Meeting on the 7th November 2023
Elmstead Parish Council Planning Committee
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Councillors Amanda Brennan, Adam Gladwin, Maxine Jeggo and Gill Williams

Also present: Mrs Baxter (clerk), Cllrs Michael Hare and Martine Ward, 3 representatives from Latimer.

The meeting opened at 7.00pm

23/010 Apologies of Absence

None.

23/011 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests

None.

23/012 Approval and signing of the minutes from the meeting held on 7th February 2023.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 7th February 2023 as true and accurate.

23/013 Public Speaking

No public speaking.

23/014 Meeting with Latimer

A meeting with Latimer who are developing the Garden Community and have been undertaking their first phase of consultation.

After introductions the project manager explained that Latimer are part of the Clarion Housing Group which is the largest social housing provider in the UK. They have been involved with the garden community for 2 years and have acquired options from Mersea Homes. They will be the master developer, developing the planning application and overseeing the delivery of infrastructure, although they won't be delivering it all themselves. The timeframe they are hoping for is that after they submit the DPD to the Secretary of State and an examiner is appointed the examination will be in early 2024. They hope that it will be adopted in summer 2024, and they are working towards a hybrid application submission then.

They are working on the Phase 1 detail; homes, employment and community infrastructure. There are 3 rounds of consultations due through to New Year.

All profits are returned into the group to deliver more affordable homes which is why they are the preferred partner.

They are building communities with health, retail and jobs. Commercial return is not the main driver.

There will be no gas, they will be maximising solar panels and battery storage.

Over the next few weeks they will be sharing their exhibition documents.

Cllr Gladwin told Latimer that the Parish Council is concerned that it does not have any representation on the Garden Community Committee, and that there has been a bias towards Wivenhoe and Colchester.

There was a discussion regarding how best to engage and let residents know about engagement events. It was suggested that events should include a few hours during the day and a few hours in the evening. Latimer said they would try and reach as many people as possible.

The council asked if they have the dates for the November/December events and offered to help advertise them.

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Latimer were asked about their track record and responded; Ebbsfleet, Kent, Sherford, Plymouth, Cambridge Northwest and another. They added that this one is unique and they won't be working in isolation, Homes England will probably be involved.

The council asked if people from social housing in London will be moved to the Garden Community. The answer was no, people will come from Colchester and TDC's housing lists. The exact tenure split is still to be decided. TDC has 3,000 – 4,000 on their list and Colchester has about 500-600.

The council was told that there won't be 9,000 homes, the latest policy suggests around 7,500 to 7,750. Latimer don't control all the land though, there might be 3rd party parcels that push the numbers up. They own the majority of the land. They have options to purchase. The council shared its concern that with half a link road the development will turn into a big cul de sac with traffic swamping Clingoe Hill. We were promised that the link road would be built first. We don't think that people will use the bus, they will be driving to school and doctors etc.

Latimer were told the link road was fully funded and would be delivered prebuilding. However for it to be completed it needs further funding. They don't know the gap between the cost and the funding. The gap will be filled through planning agreements. The road will be a done deal once those are done. Latimer's interest is in completing it or they won't be able to build more houses. Latimer will need to mitigate the disruption. They will keep vehicles off the road during busy times and this will be enforceable.

For the infrastructure delivery they will be building it at the right time, they will build the primary school first. There will have to be enough children for it to be viable to be opened though. They will be creating jobs, there will be employment spaces for SMEs and small businesses. They are considering further education, a college. Possibly a green construction skills training college.

Phase 1 will likely be north of the A133 relatively close to the A133. 6 storey buildings are not viable. It will be 2 to 3 storeys predominantly, there may be some 4 storey buildings on a retail lease. They can deliver high density with 2/3 storey terraced buildings.

The council is worried about the density.

Latimer said that they are looking at reducing the car parking requirements for new homes and considering a car club, e-bikes, e-scooters and extra initiatives such as a free bus ticket initiative. They are also thinking about mobility scooters, where to charge and store. They will put them in front of people's doors.

Council raised concerns that some Garden Communities don't have amenities.

Latimer responded that the DPD has clear requirements to deliver community amenities.

Latimer's financial hurdles are more flexible and can flex to deliver amenities early with the housing. At Sherford they had already done Phase 1 when Latimer arrived and they pushed for placemaking. Ashford/Ebbsfleet have done beautiful homes but no amenities. With no master developer you get piecemeal delivery.

Health is on Latimer's radar. They have been speaking with ICB (integrated care board) about service facilities. They are looking to have a care facility with a community facility next door for vaccinations etc.

They are looking to attract local businesses, no chains, and are providing incentives on rent. They will be curating the non-residential areas.

Latimer are not building the business park. They don't have the option on that land. The country park is part of Phase 1.

The council related that the solar farm in the green gap did not go down well.

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Latimer responded that there are different available uses for the green gap. The link road will be a barrier to free walking as the underpasses are likely to be flooded.

The land south of Allens Farm will be BNG (biodiversity net gain) land to enhance biodiversity. They have to provide SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) to the east of the link road. There will be no housing to the east of the link road.

The council related that the NP (Neighbourhood Plan) goes up to the GC boundary and we are keen to integrate with the GC so that we get a good transition from the GC to the countryside to the village.

Latimer will be looking to maintain footpaths and cycle routes etc. The secondary school will be positioned for connectivity via those.

Farmers are saying that there is more flooding now. Lanswood responded that drainage is a big issue. Their overall strategy will be to have greenfield run off rates. This will give a 1 in 100 year flooding event. There will be a water plan with lots of blue areas. Climate change will be factored in.

The stewardship and land management are very important, the governance will evolve and the residents can decide on that. They are awaiting advice on waste collection.

Latimer have responded to TDC's consultation for the Ardleigh NP with an objection, as the GC should not be included in the NP.

The Latimer representatives are happy to meet with us again.

They confirmed that their consultation event is on Thursday 30th November 9.30am to 6.15pm. They will look into continuing it later.

Latimer representatives and Cllrs Ward and Hare left.

23/015 23/00594/DOVU5 (relating to planning permission reference 18/01884/FUL)

- i) To discuss any comments to return to TDC on the draft Deed Of Variation for the allotments at Pavilion View.*

The clerk went through questions she had raised on the draft DOV. Should the PC be a signatory to the deed? Is the management committee responsible for the gaps between the allotments and the surrounding paths? Is there a commitment to keep these well maintained? Is the Allotments Work Specification referred to in the First Schedule Part 4 1.1 the same as the soil specification? What about a water supply or standpipe? Will it be TDC doing the quarterly reviews referred to in the soil specification? Can the £2,000 legal fees be increased as our conveyancing costs are more, approximately £3,100. Part 5 1.9 refers to dwellings which adjoin the allotments but there aren't any?

The committee confirmed for the clerk to put all these queries to TDC. To also ask about whether there is a right of access for allotment holders to cross the management company land to reach the allotments and whether allotment holders will be able to use the adjacent parking spaces.

- ii) To discuss any comments to return to TDC on the Allotment Soil Specification.*

The committee agreed the soil specification but would also like to ask; under 3.1 monitoring and review and 3.5 remedial measures it refers to the maintenance team and management company, should this be the Parish Council?

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

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23/016 **Items for next agenda or for information only.**
None.

23/017 **Date of next meeting if required.**
As required.

There being no further business Councillors were thanked for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 9.22pm.

Minuted by Mrs A Baxter

Contact: elmsteadparish@gmail.com Telephone: 07907 610381

Signature

Date