



WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Minutes of the **Planning Committee** meeting held on Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 7pm at Wootton Community Centre, Harris Way, Wootton, MK43 9FZ.

Open Forum	There were several members of the public present who wished to discuss and observe discussions on agenda item P25/020 (24/02439/MAO – Land North of Hall End Road). Cllr O'Dell moved this application be heard after P25/024 as he wished all present (members and public) to hear the update in relation to Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan and members present were in agreement. There were no other members of the public or press present and so the meeting continued without adjournment.			Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(1).
Present	Cllrs O'Dell (in the chair), Bygraves, Hensher, Lincoln, Lloyd and Randell. In attendance: Cllr Wheeler, who spoke in his capacity as Governor of Wootton Upper School and Borough Councillor for Wootton and Kempston Rural. In attendance: Sue Edgar Playford (Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer).			
Absent (no apologies received)	Cllr Tyerman.			
Agenda no	Agenda item title	Resolution	Action	Power
P25/013	Apologies for absence. Cllr Noakes.	Noted for the minutes.	Clerk to keep on file.	Local Government Act 1972, Part V, s85 (1+2) & Sch 12, Part VI, p40.
P25/014	Disclosure of local and/or disclosable pecuniary interests. None.	N/A.	N/A.	Localism Act 2011, Ch 7, s31.
P25/015	To consider any dispensation requests received by the Clerk in relation to local and/or disclosable pecuniary interests, not previously recorded.	N/A.	N/A.	Localism Act 2011, Ch 7, s33.

	No requests received.			
P25/016	Report from outside organisations – for information only. None.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.
P25/017	List of correspondence received (copies of correspondence can be requested from the Clerk) – for information only. None.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.
P25/018	Minutes of the previous meeting. Members of the Planning Committee are asked to receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 8 th January 2025.	Resolved to receive and adopt. Proposed: Cllr Lincoln. Seconded: Cllr Randell. Resolved by all present.	Clerk to keep on file.	Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, Part VI, p41 (1).
P25/019	Matters arising from the minutes – for information only. None.	No further comments received.	Clerk to keep on file.	N/A.
P25/020	a) Planning Applications – for resolution. 24/02426/MAF – Land Off Bedford Road. Development of 50 residential units (Use Class C3) with provision of access, landscaping, vehicle and cycle parking, sustainable urban drainage systems and other associated works. 24/02439/MAO – Land North of Hall End Road. Outline application with all matters reserved except for means of access for the erection of up to 90 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable draining system and vehicular access point.	This application was determined after 24/02439/MAO. Resolved NO OBJECTION. Proposed: Cllr Lloyd. Seconded: Cllr Hensher. Resolved by all present. This application was determined after agenda item P25/024. All residents present confirmed their intent to object to the proposal and a number listed pertinent points they intended to include in those objections. After detailed discussion it was resolved TO OBJECT based on the following material considerations: <u>Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2040/National Planning Policy Framework</u>	Clerk to take forward.	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

		• In addition to Wootton’s Neighbourhood Development Plan, this site did not feature within Bedford Borough Council’s Local Plan 2040. Although not yet adopted, the Local Plan 2040 sought to retain Policy 7S from Bedford Borough Council’s Local Plan 2030. This policy considers development within the countryside, noting development proposals should respond to a community need, have identifiable community support and contribute positively to its surroundings. This proposal did not provide that evidence nor accord with that policy. • Policy DS5(S) of Bedford Borough Council’s Local Plan 2040 denoted the distribution of growth within the Borough, referencing the completion of sites previously allocated in Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans. This proposal did not feature in either and so did not accord with that policy. • The proposal sought to use land which sat within open, rural landscape rather than the built form of the village and would encroach harmfully into the rural landscape, resulting in a significant and permanent visual alteration to the surroundings.		
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Chairman

Date 12th February 2025

		• The proposal conflicted with NPPF Policy 124 which sought to make as much use as possible of brownfield land, whilst considering the economic and other benefits of agricultural land, such as this. • The proposal conflicted with NPPS Policy 154 in that it did not meet any of the exceptions listed thereunder. <u>Wootton Neighbourhood Development Plan</u> • The proposal did not sit within Wootton's designated Settlement Policy Area; • Policy W2 (Housing Delivery). Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan identified sites for up to 105 homes and did not include this site; • The Neighbourhood Development Plan referenced low-density development and accompanying Village Design Statement specified 20 dwellings per hectare. This application referenced 35 dwellings per hectare and given this was an outline application only, concerns were raised the dwelling style when known would also not accord with the Neighbourhood Development Plan;		
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		• Objectives (Housing). This application was not sympathetic to the area; • Objectives (Environment). This application did not protect, improve or enhance community open space; • Objectives (Sustainable Community). This application did not seek to reduce traffic congestion in the area; • Policy W1 (New Residential Development). This application would affect and compromise an area of open land which had great significance to the form and character of the village; • Policy W1 (New Residential Development). This application did not seek to protect or enhance the existing corridor for local habitats or wildlife; • Policy W12 (Development Design Criteria). This application did not protect or enhance the existing street scene, nor would it protect adjacent properties from being overlooked or loss of daylight/sunlight. It would create both visual bulk and noise pollution. <u>Further Material Considerations</u> • Existing dwellings at Hall End, Studley Road and the 'Little Wootton' development would be		
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		adversely affected by loss of light and privacy; • Hall End Road (a well-used route for vehicles and some pedestrians into the village and upper school) was recognised as a narrow country lane, already suffering from severe congestion and parking issues (not least during school pick-up and drop-off times). The increase in traffic (following delivery of the proposed development sites within Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan) – including construction traffic – would maximise the road's capabilities. A large section of Hall End Road (from Keeley Lane) had no pavement meaning pedestrians were forced to walk in the road (with no available remedy). This proposal was therefore contrary to Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework. • The proposal was an overdevelopment of the site and not in keeping with the current street scene. • Current infrastructure would be unable to cope with the demands of this proposed application. • Ongoing flooding issues would be exacerbated were this proposal permitted. The 'Little Wootton' development was erected using		
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		concrete piles¹ due to drainage/flooding issues on site. Further works to properties affected by damp/flooding issues have since been necessary. Concerns were raised that these properties and those at Studley Road and Hall End (many of which were already subject to flooding) would be further affected by flooding issues due to this proposal. BBCllr/CIlr Wheeler spoke as Governor of Wootton Upper School to confirm the school had lodged an objection, siting concerns relating to the adverse effect this proposal would have on drainage and traffic/road safety. Were Bedford Borough Council minded to approve the application, the following planning conditions were necessary: • The point of ingress/egress from Hall End Road must include tactile paving; • All roads must be regularly cleaned to ensure all traffic have safe passage. Given the proximity of Wootton Upper School, timings to include: 7:30-8:30am, 12-1pm and 2:30-4:30pm;		
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¹ Pre-cast or cast-in-place concrete columns – used to anchor and support structures by transferring the weight of those structures to deeper ground.
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	b) Planning Approvals (by Bedford Borough Council) – for information only. None.	• Surface water within the development must not be permitted to flow onto Hall End Road or into adjoining developments, • Construction traffic access to the site required careful management. Such traffic should not be permitted to access the site during school core drop-off and pick-up hours and must be routed via Ridge Road and Keeley Lane to Hall End Road to avoid Fields Road – a known safe route to school. Cllr O'Dell referenced the Borough Council's Right to Speak scheme for members of the public who were considering attending the Planning Committee meeting of Bedford Borough Council at which this application would be determined and the Clerk agreed to provide the relevant link here. Proposed: Cllr Lincoln. Seconded: Cllr Randell. Resolved by all present. All residents present were thanked for attending the meeting and left at 7.40pm.		
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	c) Planning Applications withdrawn (notified by Bedford Borough Council) – for information only. None. d) Planning Refusals (by Bedford Borough Council) – for information only. None. e) Planning (other – including Bedford Borough Council and the Secretary of State). None.			
P25/021	To request above application(s) be considered by the Full Planning Committee of Bedford Borough Council.	Resolved planning application 24/02439/MAO be considered by the Full Planning Committee of Bedford Borough Council. Proposed: Cllr Lincoln. Seconded: Cllr Lloyd. Resolved by all present.	Clerk/BBCllr Wheeler to take forward.	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.
P25/022	To consider representation of the Council at the Full Planning Committee meeting of Bedford Borough Council discussing the above application(s).	Cllr O'Dell expressed his wish to represent Wootton Parish Council at the appropriate Full Planning Committee meeting of Bedford Borough Council. Resolved to note the above. Proposed: Cllr Randell. Seconded: Cllr Lloyd. Resolved by all present.	Clerk to take forward.	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.
P25/023	To receive a report from Cllr O'Dell following his attendance at the Full Planning Committee meeting of Bedford Borough Council on 20th January 2025, to reinforce Wootton Parish Council's objection to the removal of condition 8 attached to Planning Application 23/02636/MAR – allowing permitted development rights to be reinstated (Planning Application 24/01842/M73 – Land on the South of Keeley Lane. Major S73 Variation of Condition Application. All reserved matters for residential development of	Cllr O'Dell detailed his attendance at the Full Planning Committee meeting on 20th January 2025, noting he was unable to overturn the case officer's recommendation to remove condition 8 – thus allowing permitted development rights to be reinstated. Cllr O'Dell argued not	Clerk to keep on file.	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

	up to 20 dwellings, public open space, landscaping, access to Keeley Lane, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated infrastructure, pursuant to outline permission 22/01035/MAO).	enough weight had been given to the relevant policies within Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan, however the case officer argued to the contrary. Cllr O'Dell recommended permitted development rights be a focus when next reviewing the Neighbourhood Development Plan.		
P25/024	To receive a report from Cllr O'Dell regarding the status of Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan and to resolve a suitable course of action.	Cllr O'Dell detailed an online briefing he had attended with Cllrs Lloyd, Wheeler and the Clerk at which Jon Shortland, Bedford Borough Council's Chief Officer for Planning, Infrastructure & Economic Growth had provided an update in relation to changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and ongoing review of the Borough Council's Local Plan 2040. The Local Plan 2040 review was held up not least because of speculation over the potential arrival of Universal Studios to the area and the number of dwellings to be delivered by the Borough Council. During the presentation Wootton's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was held as an example for other parishes who had yet to consider one, or who were currently drafting one – not least, as Wootton's NDP had a housing allocation. The Parish Council was heavily criticised during the NDP	Clerk to keep on file.	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 & subsequent.

		production process for including such a provision, however the allocation was providing protection against speculative applications. A NDP review was needed before March 2027 and Cllr O'Dell noted councillor workshops were being held by Bedford Borough Council in April/May 2025. BBCllr/Cllr Wheeler wished to record his thanks to all involved in the NDP process, including planning professionals.		
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Meeting closed at 7.53pm.