



# **GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR  
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Minutes of an interim meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016** commencing at 8.15pm in The Jubilee Room, Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham.

**Present:** Cllr B Von Clemens (Chairman), Cllr D Griffin (Deputy Chairman), Cllr Ms A Baker, Cllr Mrs A Beckley, Cllr A Frith, Cllr S Joyce, Cllr Mrs S Hunt, Cllr Mrs V Potheary, Cllr Miss N Purkis and Cllr D Walsh.

**In attendance:** Mrs Julie Hawkins, Planning Committee Clerk.  
Mrs Clare Ratcliffe, Deputy Town Clerk  
Non-member Cllr R Evill  
One member of the press  
58 members of the public.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman explained to members of the public that when considering planning applications, the Council can only take into account issues which are relevant to planning and can only recommend that an application is refused where there are sound and clear cut planning reasons to do so.

The Chairman stated that local opposition or support for a proposal is not in itself grounds for a recommendation for refusing or granting planning permission unless it relates to valid planning reasons which can be substantiated. The Chairman reminded those present that opinions notified to the council cannot be kept confidential as they will be put on a public record.

**164. To receive apologies for absence.**

There were no apologies.

**165. Declarations of Interest - Members are required to comply with the requirements of Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 discloseable pecuniary interests.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**166. Planning Application:**

**Planning Application No:** 2/2016/0149/OUT

**Proposal:** Develop land by the erection of up to 50 dwellings, formation of vehicular and pedestrian access, (outline application with all matter reserved).

**Location:** Land East of, Barnaby Mead, Gillingham, Dorset.

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and outlined the application.

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

The Chairman explained to members of the public that an outline planning application means that the applicant is looking to establish the principle of developing the land and this means that not all of the detail will be approved at this stage.

The Chairman informed the meeting that in the event that outline planning permission is granted, subsequent applications that are called 'reserved matters applications' will be required. A reserved matters application will determine details such as the appearance and scale of the dwellings, the layout, the access and landscaping. This current application is an outline application with all matters reserved and the Chairman stated that the applicant is looking to establish the principle of developing the land for residential purposes and has deferred determination of the other matters. He confirmed that this is a legitimate approach and councils have to determine outline applications of this nature.

**The Chairman invited local resident, Mr Peter Maddock to speak.**

Mr Maddock gave the following verbatim report:

*'This is a meeting on planning – planning for the future of our children, our grandchildren and in my case great grandchildren. The Local Plan at Policy 15 dealing with the Green Infrastructure promises everything we might wish for. Green spaces interlacing our town, retention of our three rivers corridors and so on – Utopia indeed.*

*The Local Plan at Policy 17 for Gillingham tells us that new development must maintain a sensitive transition between town and surrounding rural areas to avoid affecting views out to the countryside, and the Council seeks to protect and improve the natural historic environment. Specifically at Paragraph 8.70 it is required that any development will need to respect the character of Bay. It is also stated in the plan that any site must have Flood and Transport assessments and associated infrastructure requirements. You do not have the former, and with regard to the latter, the Highways Department have requested more time. The Environment Agency has not made any fulsome comment yet, research on the Flood Zone is underway as statistics are outdated with fresh water and also sewerage disposal. The Three Rivers partnership emphasises the importance of the corridors of the Stour, Lodden and Shreen Water and also sets out to have an integrated network of informal green spaces around the town.*

*The application will close the Shreen Water Corridor entirely between Bay Bridge and the High Street and this site is the only potential Green Area remaining in the North East of the Town to be part of the envisaged green network.*

*This application for 50 dwellings would amongst other restrictive matters clearly destroy the individual character of the Hamlet. Fortunately, however on 29 March this council ratified the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan which includes a proviso, and I quote "Any development here should respect the character of the area and should not be detrimental to the neighbouring Hamlet of Bay which should retain its individual character. You therefore have at your disposal the legitimate means to justify the decision which many Gillingham people want, which is to recommend the District Council to refuse this application. I note here that the objections received exceed well-over 200 (270 at the last count) which clearly demonstrates the choices that people consider would be of greater benefit to them and the retention of this field as a Local Green Space.*

*Finally I would especially ask you to note that within the National Planning Policy Framework this field East of Barnaby Mead satisfies every detailed point (and there are 12 in total) with the criteria for being granted the designation of Local Green Space. There are few such sites, if any, in Gillingham that do fully meet this criteria'.*

The Chairman thanked Mr Maddock for his comments and reminded members that the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan is only a draft document and has not been adopted by the council.

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

**The Chairman invited local resident, Mr Simon Kidner to speak.**

Mr Kidner gave the following verbatim report:

*'In determining the outcome of this application to build 50 houses on the green and pleasant land East of Barnaby Mead several bodies, including this one, Gillingham Town Council, will consider a number of policies, facts and opinions before coming to their decisions.*

*The matters which each body considers will vary from at the grass-roots level the opinions of every day folk, who live, breathe and die in Gillingham, to high level national policies driven down from Whitehall on various bodies and local government organisations. Equally the constraints within which each must make their decisions will differ. In some bodies national policies may need to be given more weight than in others, in other bodies local facts will be of more importance than averages relating to the whole country or region.*

*I contend that at Town Council level, the first body to consider the application, the body closest to the people of Gillingham and the opinions given greatest weight should be those of the people of Gillingham.*

*The other bodies which in due course will consider this application will be required to give more emphasis to higher level matters and the opinions of those whose knowledge and interest is in the district, regional and even national levels issues.*

*If you truly represent the town and its people you will want to put the matters that effect Gillingham, this town of ours, at the centre of your decision making and to give due weight to the opinions of those you represent – let other bodies worry themselves about the things that do not directly affect this town and its residents.*

*I put it to you that this application will bring no benefit to our town, it will bring no jobs, it will contribute very little if anything to the town's under-resourced infrastructure, it will in all likelihood actually be a net consumer of the infrastructure and worsen the existing situation, it will not result in any re-generation of brownfield sites or empty, dilapidated buildings, it will not make any real difference to housing supply in the town due to the scale of other developments already with planning permission or at advanced stages of planning. But what it will do is take away forever a green open space that is of great amenity, landscape, ecological and environmental value to the people who live in the town today, and those who will live here in 30 years time and those who will be living here after we are all too old to care – but they will because their town wont have the open views across the Shreen to the downs in the distance, the green sponge to mop up the flood water, the birds, bats and mammals that live and forage in the field, they will only have more brick walls and hard landscaping that would have been better located elsewhere'.*

**The Chairman thanked Mr Kidner for his report and invited local resident Mr Joe Kelliher to speak.**

Mr Kelliher made the following verbatim report:

*'To date the council has received well over 200 objections to the proposal to build houses to the East of Barnaby Mead. This is a significant number for this town.*

*The residents are all saying the same thing. We have plenty of houses already; we also know that Gillingham is already providing land needed by North Dorset District Council for the biggest planned expansion of Gillingham.*

*There will be approximately 2400 houses built to the South and South East of Gillingham. Why would the Town Council now agree to infill Gillingham and further urbanise this town?*

*NB. This figure is will be approximately 1800*

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

*By any measure there is already a shortage of open green spaces in Gillingham Town.*

*I refer to the land East of Barnaby Mead. The council has successfully protected this valuable open Green Space in the past and this land has been used and continues to be used as an informal recreational Green Space by the people of Gillingham*

*The policy the Town Council will have in their minds tonight, namely the New Plan details clearly that the council needs to protect Open Green Spaces for informal recreation use. So the policy that was used in the past to successfully protect this land still exists today.*

*Why would anyone in this room expect you to vote in favour of this proposal tonight? When the Town Council in the past has protected this land using the same policy.*

*Gillingham Town Council has also in the past reasoned and stated clearly that the building of any houses on this Green Open Space will destroy the character of Bay.*

*The most recently adopted plan strengthens the Town Council's ability to protect this field by the inclusion of an amendment made by the Inspector Mr David Hogger. The amendment specifically states that the building of any uses on this land must not affect the character of Bay. This is clearly an endorsement of the Town Council's position on this matter.*

*It is perfectly reasonable to say that the character of Bay is created largely due to the 2Ha of Green Open Space that lies between Bay and Barnaby Mead. So I ask you to reject this plan to build houses on the green open space East of Barnaby Mead. I ask you because protecting this green open space will be consistent with your own new policy, The New Plan. I ask you because the specific amendment by Mr David Hogger that the building of houses must not affect the character of Bay. I respectfully request that you reject this proposal'.*

**The Chairman thanked Mr Kelliher for his comments and invited local resident Mrs Ann Hicks to speak.**

Mrs Hicks gave the following verbatim report:

*'You have heard from my friend the technical and legal reasons why this proposal should be objected and why the area should be included in the enhanced green infrastructure network of Gillingham.*

*In the North Dorset Local Plan, Part 1 8.55, you will see that the area being the only one left in the North East of the town, fits perfectly into the stated need for, and I quote, "an enhanced green infrastructure network, focused primarily on the river corridors linking new developments to key locations such as the town centre". The Town Design Statement recognises the value local people place on the town's landscape setting and river corridor.*

*In 8.63 it states that the council seeks to protect and improve the natural and historic environment of the town and all applications for development at Gillingham will need to consider the impact and mitigation measures for the potential effects on these features and designations. Protecting the green field site, protecting the character of Bay, maintaining the Shreen corridor is this. It is a green field site enjoyed by locals from all over the town and should remain so.*

*Support for objecting to any development comes not just from Gillingham residents but also residents from surrounding villages and Shaftesbury, who visit our town.*

*Enough is enough. There must be left in the town, areas of natural, and I stress, natural beauty. We are not an off-shoot of some London suburb, who would be happy with a man made walk area. When you get down to the guts of it, we are a semi-rural town set amidst the most beautiful countryside and proud of it. To maintain that sense of belonging and to keep in touch with that countryside, we should*

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

*have within the town, at least some area of green field site and this is the only one left in the North East of the town.*

*The National Planning Policy states it is for “improving the condition in which people live, work, travel and take leisure”. Not if the proposal for building on this site is accepted.*

*Concreting over a green field site, closing the Shreen corridor and destroying the character of Bay improves nothing. This green lung should mean more to the town than a drop in the numbers game.*

*I know that the town council has plans to revive the High Street. How can emptying more cars directly onto it, aid that plan? It is already awkward to negotiate – slow, stop, start. What would be the thinking of spending a massive amount of money on a by-pass, avoiding the town centre only to then put more cars onto it? Traffic will stop people visiting it and then no amount of new shops will draw people in.*

*I respectfully ask the Town Planning Committee to object to the proposal and recommend that the site be designated a green field for the enjoyment of the public of Gillingham’.*

**The Chairman thanked Mrs Hicks for her comments and invited local resident, Mr Herbie Light to speak.**

Mr Light informed the meeting that records for Bay Farmhouse go back as far as 1674 and stated that in his opinion the proposal constitutes an overdevelopment of the site, and will have a detrimental effect on the character of both Bay Farmhouse and the Hamlet of Bay.

Mr Light referred to the Flood Risk Assessment provided by the applicant and stated that it was his understanding that the document had been produced prior to the latest recommendations from the Government with regards to climate change, and therefore the information contained within the report is out of date.

Mr Light stated that whilst he understood that details will be dealt with during the reserved matters stage of the application, he was concerned that the applicants had indicated an intention to provide a children’s play area next to a drainage pond and raised concerns over the health and safety implications.

Mr Light raised concerns over proposed parking arrangements and the availability for electric cars to be charged and stated that the proposed number of dwellings was, in his opinion, an overdevelopment of the site.

**The Chairman thanked Mr Light for his comments and invited local resident, Mr Ivan Faulkner to speak.**

Mr Faulkner informed the meeting that he is a resident living in close proximity to the single point of access, and expressed his concerns over the current parking problems being encountered by residents living in the area. Mr Faulkner stated that people working in the town currently use Barnaby Mead for parking and this is causing a problem to local residents. Mr Faulkner raised concerns over congestion in the High Street and Station Road and stated that the proposals will exacerbate these problems. Mr Faulkner referred to the junction of Barnaby Mead and the High Street and informed the meeting that this is a main pedestrian route to and from school for children of all ages, and in his opinion there is a duty of care to ensure their safety. Mr Faulkner stated that whilst he understood that the road is wide enough, parked cars reduce the width and create an unacceptable condition for road users.

**The Chairman thanked Mr Faulkner for his comments and invited Ward Member Cllr Mrs Potheary to speak.**

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

Cllr Mrs Pothecary thanked the members of the public for their comments and stated that the strength of feeling is apparent. Cllr Mrs Pothecary stated that if the council decide to recommend refusal of the application then there needs to be good reasons within planning law on which to object.

Cllr Mrs Pothecary referred to concerns over parking in Barnaby Mead and stated that whilst she sympathised with these concerns, the problem could be addressed by double yellow lines. Cllr Mrs Pothecary informed the meeting that Dorset County Council Highways Authority has not yet made a comment, which is unusual at this stage.

Cllr Mrs Pothecary referred to drainage issues on site and informed the meeting that Dorset County Council's Flood Risk Management team have submitted a holding objection and explained that in the planning process this will be given more weight than any comments made by Gillingham Town Council.

Cllr Mrs Pothecary explained the difficulties that will be involved in objecting to the application on planning grounds and referred to the National Planning Policy Framework document. Cllr Mrs Pothecary explained that whilst the NPPF leans towards designated green spaces, the area East of Barnaby Mead is Grade 4 land and considered not worth saving.

Cllr Mrs Pothecary stated that she had been given a clear remit from local residents and would be fighting their corner. Cllr Mrs Pothecary emphasised the need for robust planning reasons in order to persuade North Dorset District Council, and stated that in her opinion the land would eventually be built on. Cllr Mrs Pothecary stated that it may be possible to negotiate a lower number of high quality houses with integrated green spaces but with regards to the application as it stands, she pledged to support local residents in objecting to the application.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Ms Baker to speak.**

Cllr Ms Baker raised concerns over the Transport Assessment document produced by the applicant and stated that the findings do not take account of local knowledge. Cllr Ms Baker referred to the data which had been collected from junctions and stated that in her opinion much of the traffic problems currently experienced in the High Street are as a result of the pinch points and parked cars. Cllr Ms Baker stated that in her opinion the Transport Assessment was 'a red herring' and insufficient data for the High Street had been provided. Cllr Ms Baker stated that with regards to sustainability the report does not add up and referred to the data provided for buses in the area.

Cllr Ms Baker referred to the recommendations of the Manual for Streets 2007 document which states that new development should be sustainable for walking and cycling. Cllr Ms Baker stated that in her opinion the proposed development, as presented, is not permeable and the existing Public Right of Way to the north of the site is too narrow to accommodate bicycles.

Cllr Ms Baker referred to the concerns of local residents over the condition of the road surface at Barnaby Mead and emphasised the need to make sure the road is repaired and maintained to a good standard.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Walsh to speak.**

**Cllr Walsh made the following verbatim report:**

*'I want to start by clearing up some misunderstandings from some correspondence received, of which I have read every one.'*

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

*There is mention of the destruction of Green Belt. If it were green belt then it would be protected land but this is not designated Green Belt in fact there is no greenbelt in North Dorset, the only green belt in Dorset is in Bournemouth.*

*Quote “The environmental damage that will be caused to the roads by construction vehicles during the building of the estate and the increase of vehicles following the building”. I understand your frustration but the construction stage of a development is not a planning consideration. Extra problems will arise for all services Water, Electricity, & especially Sewerage. The Developer has to put in place all services for provision of any new housing development.*

*Quote “We already suffer greatly from parked cars in Barnaby Mead (people who do not live here)”, exactly it is not a problem caused by anyone within Barnaby Mead development, outsiders parking within your streets must be sorted out by Highways.*

*Quote “The entrance would be difficult for any emergency vehicle to navigate”. This will be covered by the Highways department’s methodology and response.*

*Quote “The sight line into the High Street is extremely poor and at busy times relies on courtesy from other road users to enter the High Street”. This will be covered by Highway.*

*Quote “The widths of the roads on the estate are extremely narrow. Outside my property it is extremely narrow and this is made worse by many parked cars”. This will be covered by Highways.*

*Quote “The sight lines from Barnaby Mead into the High Street which is the ONLY ACCESS from the proposed Development are poor and more vehicles pouring into the High Street will be very dangerous. Again this is exacerbated by parked cars near the junction. This is a dangerous area for old people from Barnaby Mill and for pedestrians including many schoolchildren crossing this junction”. Issues of safety and road capacity will be considered by Highways.*

*Quote “50 houses at the end of Barnaby Mead would add at least 200 car movements plus associated services vehicles, a day to the road, which is narrow and originally designed to serve the 30 (now 31 + Barnaby Mill flats) houses first built in the road”. DCC Highways will assess all these points through the set methodology calculating predicted vehicle movements and safety.*

*Quote “There are also two dangerous bends, due to inconsiderate parking; Methodist Church and No. 1, and by 19A, opposite 22 Bayfields, where accidents are about to happen - hopefully they won't be fatal”. I hope so to, o but this will be assessed by Highways.*

*With regards to the impact on wildlife from the loss of hedges ditches i.e. Birds, Newts, Hedgehogs & Mice. These are issues that are very closely looked at and monitored. As is stated in the Bats and Reptiles Mitigation Plan along with the Biodiversity Mitigation Plan. All conditions agreed in mitigation are enforced and adhered too.*

*Quote “The planners, developers, NDDC and the town councillors know the price and cost of everything but the VALUE of nothing. Over the years Gillingham has been abused by developers aided by the NDDC and Town council and this should stop forthwith”.*

*I read in the press, quote, “If Town Councillors do not refuse this we will not vote for them”. Town Councillors do not get paid for what they do and in their own time they work very, very hard representing the people of Gillingham, and having received training in Planning they know that there has to be justifiable reasons to evidence their decision. Sometimes it isn't the decision that everyone wants but we ensure that we get the best outcome we can for those we represent.*

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

*As we have heard, we are here to look at access and the principal of development on this site. The grounds for all planning decisions, approval or refusal must be based in Planning Policy, Planning Law because it is law and therefore has to be evidenced. The overriding policy document is the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 adopted on the 15<sup>th</sup> January this year, a very up to date document.*

*I have been asked, what is the difference between this application and the Chantry Fields one because I did champion the objection for Chantry Fields and I worked day and night, fought tooth and nail to prevent that development, and we won. The reason we won was that the development was never part of our Local Plan in fact it contravened our Local Plan. Saying our Plan was unlawful, the land owners and developers sought leave to challenge our adoption of it at the Highest Court in the Land. Well last Friday I announced to members of North Dorset District Council that the decision made by the Honourable Mr Justice Jay presiding Judge, was that there was no basis for such a challenge and permission was refused. Our document was both Sound and Legal.*

*I attended the whole of the Independent Examination of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 in my position as portfolio holder for planning for North Dorset. Mr Maddock and Mr Kelleher quote policy and Planning Law, the same policy and law that they spoke of at the hearing on the 18<sup>th</sup> March last year at the invitation of the Secretary of State's appointed Inspector, Mr David Hogger who examined the Local Plan on behalf of the Secretary of State. That hearing session looked specifically at and I quote:*

*Issue 8: Gillingham, including Gillingham Southern Extension (Policies 17 and 21) Gillingham Town (Policy 17).*

*The agenda was as follows*

*8.1 The availability, sustainability and deliverability of the proposed locations for growth at Gillingham: Station Road and South and South West of Bay (Land East of Barnaby Mead).*

*Most importantly it looked at the Council's position in the event that it can be conclusively demonstrated that either of the above locations are not sound (e.g. not justified or deliverable). As Mr Hogger stated in session, he had carried out a site visit to look at the site. Mr Maddock and Mr Kelleher will agree that they were given all the time that they wanted to put their case across and their discussions with the Inspector lasted a considerable time, in fact this site was looked at more closely than any other during the 2 week hearing process.*

*In December last year we received the Inspector's final report and at paragraph 86 he states and I quote:*

*"The main area for residential growth within the town of Gillingham is on land to the south and south-west of Bay. I understand the importance of the open character of this site to local residents but the site (which is within the settlement boundary) is within walking distance of the town centre and other community facilities and I am told there are no impediments to its development. I acknowledge that Bay is identified as an 'area of local character' in the 2003 Local Plan<sup>41</sup> but I agree with the Council that provided the character of Bay is respected then the provision of about 50 well designed dwellings on the land is justified."*

*Mr Hogger whose final decisions were challenged by PCL Planning, Sherborne School and Cancer Research UK, those wanting to develop Chantry Fields were refused leave to do so by the High Courts. Who said there was no case to answer, they were very happy with the examination carried out by the Secretary of State's appointed Planning Inspector. The deadline now passed, there is no challenge to that final decision or any other part of the Local Plan, it is an adopted Plan and all within it are both Legal and Sound.*

*Previously in 2001 another Secretary of State's delegated Planning Inspector examined this application after the District Council considered it and resolved that they would have refused the application on 3 reasons:*



**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

1. *The application would seriously erode a valuable open piece of passive amenity land and is therefore contrary to Local Plan Policy GH2.2 (as proposed to be modified) which seeks to protect this area of land as an Important Green Gap between the Barnaby Mead area of the town and the Bay Hamlet.*
2. *The application will add to the existing over-supply and development of greenfield sites in the town and is therefore contrary to PPG 3 paragraph 32 which states that there should be a sequential test and a presumption that brownfield land will be developed before the release of greenfield land.*
3. *The application and resulting increase in the population will add additional problems both to the under supply and existing inadequacies of the relevant community infrastructure in the town.*

*In Paragraph 23 of his report he states:*

*“although the appeal site does have some limited intrinsic landscape value, this is of insufficient weight in itself to justify with holding planning permission for housing development within the settlement boundary. I also do not accept that it is necessary to preclude development of this land to safeguard the character of the Bay area of the town. These conclusions are consistent with those drawn by yet another Inspector who reported on the emerging previous North Dorset Local Plan. A further conclusion on this issue is that there is no strong basis for retaining this land as future public open space to serve the recreational needs of the population as the existing and proposed provision should cater adequately for these needs to the NPFA (National Playing Fields Association) standards. Moreover, the District Council has not seen fit to identify this land as proposed open space or a recreation area in the emerging North Dorset Local Plan. Consequently, I find no conflict with Settlement Policy H or Environment Policy I of the structure plan or Policies 4.6 and 4.8 of the emerging NDLP,”*

*Now let us look at this, we have two Planning Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State the first in 2001 and the second 2015, last year and The Honourable Mr Justice Jay all stating that our Local plan is both LEGAL and SOUND and being supportive of the said development at Bay which is part of the Local Plan, which was unanimously adopted by North Dorset District Councillors. They have been part of the whole plan-making process throughout its life and the Four Public Consultations that I held for it, after which every comment made by a member of the public was listened too and debated.*

*In Planning Applications there are certain organisations that have to be consulted, these are known as Statutory Consultees and being armed with recognised methodology they are asked about such issues as Schools, Highways, Flooding and more. They are recognised and respected experts in their fields. The Environment Agency and Water Boards look at flooding and waste water issues/ Dorset County Council Highways department look at roads and also Road Safety issues. When the application reaches North Dorset District Council’s Planning Committee, a representative from DCC Highways will be present to give his comments and reasoning for them. The Committee members then have the opportunity to question.*

*And before anyone says “Those People are not local, they have never been to Bay” the person who will respond to this application knows the issues as well as every one of you here today.*

*If the Environment Agency opposes this development on Flooding or Waste water, then it will be refused unless ways to mitigate are found. In their response they wrote:*

*“To prevent flooding and minimize the risk of pollution, I suggest that no development shall take place until precise details of foul and surface water disposal shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.”*

*We have not received the final comments from Highways department but if they oppose this development on highways issues or safety grounds, it will be refused unless there is a way to mitigate their objections.*

*This proposed development has gone through many processes; I held 4 years of Public Consultations We do not have any grounds based in Planning Policy or Planning Law to refuse this outline Planning application of access and the principle of housing.*

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

*The layout is indicative, just an indication of what the development could look like but the actual layout, design and landscaping will all come through at the reserved matters stage, which will come back here for recommendations to be made.*

*In my four years of planning I have never known an application to have been appraised by two Planning Inspector's on behalf of the Secretary of State before getting to this stage of outline planning. Neither Inspector's words will be ignored; they will be given great weight.*

*Mr Hogger stated:*

*"that provided the character of Bay is respected then the provision of about 50 well designed dwellings on the land is justified."*

*Rather than say we don't want any houses, for which there are no grounds the inspectors have said so let us work to ensure that we get the best development possible, one that does respect the character of Bay.*

**The Chairman thanked Cllr Walsh invited Cllr Griffin to speak.**

Cllr Griffin thanked Cllr Walsh for his report and concurred with his comments. Cllr Griffin stated that in his opinion a reduced number of houses would be appropriate for the site and suggested that 'self build' projects for local people should be encouraged.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Mrs Beckley to speak.**

Cllr Mrs Beckley stated that whilst she sympathised with the concerns of the local residents over the loss of a green area, the field is privately owned, there is no public right of way into the field and therefore, unfortunately, members of the public have no right to use it. Cllr Mrs Beckley stated that in order to object to the application there needs to be sound planning reasons and many of the objections raised by members of the public are not. Cllr Mrs Beckley referred to the comments raised regarding parking in Barnaby Mead and stated that in her opinion the current problems were no different to any other estate within the town.

Cllr Mrs Beckley stated that many issues will be addressed during the reserved matters application; however, she would like to see a reduced number of houses on the site built at a decent distance away from existing dwellings.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Joyce to speak.**

Cllr Joyce asked if a report had been received from the Highways Authority.

The Chairman confirmed that a report has not yet been submitted.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Mrs Hunt to speak.**

Cllr Mrs Hunt stated that whilst she sympathised with the local residents there needs to be good planning grounds on which to object to the proposal. Cllr Mrs Hunt stated that despite the backing of the Planning Inspectorate for up to 50 houses she would like to see a reduced number.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Frith to speak.**

Cllr Frith reiterated the concerns regarding traffic and expressed his disappointment on the lack of information from the Highways Authority.

**166. Planning Application 2/2016/0149/OUT continued:**

**The Chairman invited Cllr Miss Purkis to speak.**

Cllr Miss Purkis referred to the environmental impacts and stated that the concerns raised regarding the loss of wildlife habitat has been addressed within the application.

**The Chairman invited Cllr Evill (non-voting member) to speak.**

Cllr Evill expressed his sympathy with the residents and stated that the application will result in the access road having to accommodate four times as many houses as it was designed for. Cllr Evill stated that in his opinion this is a significant green space and the proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the area. However, Cllr Evill stated that despite all the opposition to the development he felt pessimistic.

Cllr Ms Baker referred to the Planning Inspectors report from 2001 and reminded members that the recommendation was for substantial landscaping of the area and this was a similar recommendation to that of the emerging Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Walsh agreed with Cllr Ms Baker and stated that issues such as landscaping will be dealt with at the next application if outline permission is granted.

Cllr Ms Baker reiterated her concerns that the proposals are an overdevelopment of the site.

Cllr Mrs Potheary reiterated her concerns that the density of the proposed development would be too high.

**The Chairman invited Mr Kidner to speak.**

Mr Kidner suggested that the loss of the green space should be resisted in the absence of a Green Spaces Strategy.

**The Chairman invited Mr Maddock to speak.**

Mr Maddock reiterated his concerns over the loss of the green space and referred to the 12 points of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Cllr Walsh applauded Mr Maddock for his efforts over many years in fighting the application and expressed his disappointment that more people had not supported him and Mr Kelliher in the past.

The Chairman summoned up the meeting and the vote was as follows:

Five voting members supported the application.

Four voting members recommended refusal of the application.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Gillingham Town Council supports the application.

**Closure:**

The meeting closed at 9.30pm