

Little Easton Parish Council

IAN BROWN  
Parish Clerk  
& Responsible Financial Officer  
Email: lteastonclerk@gmail.com



72 ST. EDMUNDS FIELDS  
GREAT DUNMOW  
ESSEX CM6 2AN  
Tel: 01371 871 641

Minutes of the **Little Easton Parish Council** Extraordinary General Meeting held in the **Memorial Hall** commencing 6:00pm on Wednesday **15 JANUARY 2020**

Present: Cllr Dodsley Cllr Rush Cllr Keefe Cllr Hindley Cllr Fowell

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| 19/129 | <b>NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b><br>Apologies received from Cllr Rodwell   |
| 19/130 | <b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING</b><br>None given   |
| 19/131 | <b>SIGN THE OFFICIAL PRECEPT REQUEST FOR 2020 AT £25,612.00</b><br>Precept request duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk  |
| 19/132 | <b>CONFIRM ACCEPTANCE OF WICKSTEED QUOTATION NO 17/JH/12102018/B AT £6,970.00 FOR THE RENEWAL OF PLAY AREA SAFETY SURFACING</b><br><b>RESOLUTION</b> to Approve acceptance: Proposed Cllr Hindley, Seconded Cllr Rush   |
| 19/133 | <b>COMMENT ON PLANNING ITEM</b><br>UTT/19/3124/FUL – 3125/LB - BROOK END FARM STABLES EASTON LODGE PARK ROAD - DEMOLITION OF OUTBUILDINGS. CONVERSION AND EXTENSIONS TO STABLES TO FORM 9 NO. DWELLINGS. ASSOCIATED PARKING AND AMENITY SPACE<br><br>Council unanimously OBJECTED to this application, the grounds for this objection can be read at APPENDIX A<br><br>CLERK to ACTION submission to Planning |
| 19/134 | <b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S) – JANUARY 29 – MEMORIAL HALL – CLOSE 6:22pm</b>  |

Signed.....Date.....

## APPENDIX A

# Little Easton Parish Council

**IAN BROWN**  
Parish Clerk  
& Responsible Financial Officer  
Email: [Iteastonclerk@gmail.com](mailto:Iteastonclerk@gmail.com)



**72 ST. EDMUNDS FIELDS**  
**GREAT DUNMOW**  
**ESSEX CM6 2AN**  
**Tel: 01371 871 641**

16 January 2020

Planning Department  
Uttlesford District Council  
London Road  
Saffron Walden  
Essex CB11 4ER

Dear Sirs,

**UTT/19/3124/FUL & 3125/LB - Demolition of outbuildings. Conversion and extensions to stables to form 9 no. dwellings. Associated parking and amenity space. LOCATION: Brook End Farm Stables Easton Lodge**

This council OBJECTS to this application on the following grounds:-

### **Planning Applications UTT/19/3124 FUL & UTT/19/3125 LB - Brooke End Stables**

Little Easton Parish Council (LEPC) have reviewed the above planning applications and wish to register their formal objection to the planning applications. The stables were built by the stepfather of the Countess of Warwick and are an integral part of the Easton Park Estate. The Parish Council would wish to see the continued use of the premises as a working stables and feel that the site is unsuitable for use as residential properties. The detailed planning reasons for our objection are as follows:

### **Development Boundary & Sustainability**

The proposed development site is outside the Little Easton Village development boundary in a relatively isolated location and therefore gives rise to a number of issues in terms of sustainable development.

The issues in terms of sustainability are acknowledged by the applicant within the application. In assessing the options of converting the stables to offices (Assessment of Potential Re-Uses of Brooke End Stables, Strutt & Parker 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018), section 8.10 states *“The property is located at the end of Park Road - a narrow, private road - only suitable for small quantities of traffic. It is also several miles from the nearest public transport link, so would be inappropriately placed for those who do not have the use of a car to travel to work”.*

Section 9.16 of the same document states *“The position of Brook End Stables at the end of a privately owned Estate road does not allow for easy access to public transport. This would not only deter visitors who are reliant on public transport, but also deters from the sustainability of the overall scheme”.*

If these sustainability issues reflect negatively on other potential uses of the site, the same issues are equally relevant to the conversion of the stables to residential accommodation.

The document also states that conversion to residential dwellings will generate traffic movements of up to 66 vehicles a day (section 5.1.6) which is a considerable number of traffic movements for “a narrow, private road - only suitable for small quantities of traffic” (also section 5.1.6).

We would welcome further clarification from the UDC Planning Officer as to what he means by defining the site as a “Reasonably Sustainable Location” and why this site is deemed as sustainable.

LEPC would also disagree with the contention in section 5.17 of the Planning Statement (Strutt & Parker, December 2019) that either Little Easton or Great Easton have the amenity of shops within the villages. There are no shops within Little Easton or Great Easton and the nearest shops are in the town of Great Dunmow which is five miles by car or a walk of several miles to the nearest bus stop.

### **UDC 2005 Local Plan Policies**

The relevant policy regarding the conversion of rural buildings to residential use from the current Uttlesford District Council Local Plan (2005) is policy H6. The policy states that the conversion of rural buildings to dwellings will be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that there is no significant demand for business uses, small scale retail outlets, tourist accommodation or community uses.

It is the view of LEPC that there is an ongoing and significant demand for continued use of Brooke End Stables as a livery business. The previous tenants ran the stables as a successful and viable livery business for ten years and the only reason that they were unable to continue running the business is that the planning permission applicant gave them notice to quit the premises.

It is difficult to understand how the document “Assessment of Potential Re-Uses of Brooke End Stables” (Strutt & Parker 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018) can state that “*it is difficult to find good quality and reliable livery tenants*” (section 7.1.page 6) when the applicant has just given an excellent long term tenant notice to quit. It is worth noting that the previous tenant would still be running the stables successfully had they not been given notice to quit.

It is well known that the business was a viable proposition for the last ten years. The stables consistently had a full yard of 22 horses and ran a waiting list for vacant stables. The demand for stables remains high as there are few other facilities locally for local residents. The Parish Council have had enquiries from parties interested in taking over the running of the stables and if the stables were to open again they would fill up very quickly.

Section 7.6 of the Strutt & Parker document states that there are “*limitations on being able to provide additional facilities that are expected to command higher rents and rates of return such as providing areas to ride such as indoor arenas, outdoor rings and trails and connection to a Bridle network*”.

Brooke End Stables has an outdoor ring and direct access to a wide range of bridleways and trails right outside the front gate so it is difficult to see how this conclusion can be reached.

### **Re-letting of Brooke End Stables**

#### **(S.7 of “Assessment of Potential Re-Uses of Brooke End Stables” (Strutt & Parker 19/11/18))**

This section of the document states that the current condition of the stables is poor with potential refurbishment costs of £555,720 (section 7.4). The applicant has owned the property for more than 15 years and would presumably have had responsibility for structural repairs as the landlord of the property. It is difficult to understand therefore how the property has been able to fall into such a state of disrepair to require such significant refurbishment costs prior to letting to the next tenant.

The fact that refurbishment costs are required does not mean that there is not still significant demand for continued use of the property as a livery. The test required in Local Plan Policy H6 (a) has therefore not been met.

The table in Section 7.6 of the assessment document is somewhat misleading as it only mentions a rent figure of £35.00 for DIY livery. No mention is made of timescales or annual rental returns. As the current average DIY rental livery is about £35.00 per week, this section should fully explain that this rental amounts to £1820.00 pa per stable. This translates to a tenant income of over £40,000pa for all the stables (assuming 22 stables as that is how many horses were previously stabled at Brooke End).

### **Heritage**

LEPC feel that the application does not adequately address the concerns raised in the Place Services heritage comments on the previous application for this site.

### **Highways Objection**

LEPC have noted the consultation response from Essex County Council Highways Dept that states the proposal is not acceptable to them as the legal line of public footpath no 17 (Little Easton) will be obstructed by the proposal and to date no application to divert the footpath has been received. LEPC would wish to understand any diverted route for the footpath before planning permission is granted.

### **Biodiversity Sites and Habitats Checklist**

The Biodiversity checklist (Place Services June 2015) submitted as part of the application states that the proposed site is not within 250 meters of any ancient woodland or Local Wildlife site. This assessment is at odds with the Constraints Sheet which details the site as being within 250 meters of Ancient Woodland and within 100 meters of a Local Wildlife Site (Middlefield Wood – Site number UFD 179). This discrepancy needs to be explored and rectified.

### **Affordable Housing**

Should the Planning Officers be minded to grant planning permission for this proposal, LEPC would like to echo the comments of the UDC planning officer (Mr C Theobald) in respect of affordable housing.

Section 2.1 of the Planning Statement (Strutt & Parker December 2019) states that the application site is 0.497 Ha in area. This area is just 0.003 of a hectare less than the 0.5 Ha threshold for 40% affordable housing as set out in Policy H9 of the 2005 Local Plan.

LEPC would agree that this would appear to be somewhat contrived and designed to avoid having to provide an affordable housing element to the proposal. LEPC would respectfully request that if planning permission is granted, the applicant should be required to provide the appropriate affordable housing for the benefit of the local community in line with Local Plan policy.

Yours faithfully,

I Brown

**Ian Brown**

**Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer**

**Littles Easton Parish Council**