

Parish Council Report

CCTV at the Playing Field

In response to the recent criminal damage and anti-social behaviour at the playing field we will be installing a CCTV system. The cost will be at least £2,500 but we believe it will contribute to the safety and well-being of the community and save us money in the long run. In the meantime I would remind anyone who sees any suspicious activity in this area to report it directly to the police.

New Street Lighting

The planned installation of a new light along the Causeway is going ahead at an estimated cost of £2,000. This will light a particularly dark area of the village, making it safer for residents. It has also been agreed that a photo cell or time switch can be installed at a property in Crown Street, thanks to a public spirited resident, to achieve dusk to dawn light in a location where it has not been possible to install a new lighting column.

Braintree Road Development outcome of Planning Inspectorate Appeal

There is considerable disappointment in the village at the decision of the Planning Inspector to approve this outline development of 37 houses at appeal. When the application came to Braintree Planning committee there were very strong, thorough and detailed objections from the Parish Council and many residents. The objections were upheld by BDC who refused this application. However, changes in Government planning legislation resulted in the new BDC Local Plan being 'not adopted', meaning that they had not identified sufficient new homes for a five year plan, leaving a loophole for the developer to appeal against the refusal. It was agreed to write to the Minister responsible for Planning and also to English Heritage, expressing the Council's view that the Inspector did not take proper account of local views when hearing the appeal.

It is important to remember that Great Bardfield and the other villages of the Pant Valley have particular cultural, historic and landscape value and that future development should be very carefully planned and managed. If this is not the case there will be no such villages, they will lose their unique character and an important part of our heritage will have been lost.

The Parish Council has responded to the Second Phase of the Call for Sites writing to the Policy Officer at BDC in support of the concerns of Finchingfield Parish Council regarding the proposed development for 95 homes in Wethersfield Road and objecting to the proposal for a garden village development at Andrews Field, Great Saling. We are also mindful of the possibility of further development between Castle Shot and the Blue Egg in our own village.

Planning applications

The Old Warehouse, High Street. This application relates to the discharge of conditions in the original approval and required the submission of drawings for the proposed new door and roof lights. The Historic Buildings Officer determined that the design of the new door was not acceptable as a modern insertion to a listed building but approved the roof light design. Members agreed with this view.

Holly House, Dunmow Road, tree works: crown reduction of an apple tree and reduction and reshaping of a holly. The Parish Tree Warden had no objection.

The New House Crown Street: proposed erection of porch and internal alterations amendments to previous application. There was no objection to this application but it was

noted in our response that the design of the screen wall was not considered appropriate in its setting.

29 Bendlowes Road: erection of two storey and single storey rear extensions and alterations. There was no objection to this application but it was stressed that neighbours' views must be taken into consideration.

Weed control!

Our grass-cutting contractor was surprised to discover a very robust marijuana plant flourishing in Pipers Meadow. This was reported to the police and the plant was removed and destroyed. Did I hear some people say 'Spoil sport'?

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday, December 14th at 8pm in the Town Hall Committee room. The Public Forum is held from 8-8.15pm.

With Clerk and all members of the Parish Council I would to wish everyone in our village a very happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Janet Dyson, Chair.