

Tewin Parish Council

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9.9.08

Dear Parishioners,

Planning Issues Newsletter

At its meeting on 1 September 2008 the Parish Council agreed to advise Parishioners of a number of planning matters considered at that meeting.

Housing Capacity Assessment

The Local Development Plan, adopted in 2007, had designated Tewin as a Category 1 village, thereby allowing small scale development within the defined village boundary. Site 8 (the "chicken field" adjacent to Godfries Close) was the subject of an energetic campaign by Tewin residents. At the Local Plan Inquiry, the Inspector did not support the objections to Site 8, but did remove it from within the village boundary, because it was felt that the immediate needs for housing were better served by extending the village boundary to the north.

In early 2008, East Herts (District) Council (EHC) published a consultation document on Housing Capacity Assessment (HCA). This was commissioned in order that EHC might have a mechanism to respond to government housing targets for the south-east. It had been prepared by consultants ENTEC UK Ltd and sought to address the potential for further housing development in the District, consequent on the adoption of the Local Development Plan.

The HCA identified a number of possible sites and by using a measure of housing density arrived at a potential for 39 new dwellings, all within the village boundary and not including the Seven Acres development. The Parish Council responded critically to the methodology employed in the process, arguing that it was not robust, and in addition advised that a majority of the selected sites were unsuitable for development for a variety of reasons. The Council's response is available on request from the Clerk. Recently EHC has considered the many responses to the consultation document, has noted our comments and has indicated that, whilst the work so far done provides "an effective base", further work needs to be done to satisfy the needs of a "Strategic Land Availability Assessment".

New Affordable Housing Proposal

At the Parish Council meeting on 1st September 2008 the Parish Council was advised that a proposal for three affordable houses specifically for residents of the Parish, to be built on Site 8, was the subject of discussion between EHC and a local developer. Under the regulations such development can occur on a "Rural Exception Site" outside but abutting a village boundary. The developer makes it clear that the affordable housing proposal is a pre-cursor to the next step of applying to have the remainder of Site 8 reallocated for residential development.

The Council is seeking further clarification from EHC as to the specific demand for affordable housing from residents of the Parish and will keep the position under close review.

Development of the Garage site

The Parish Council has objected to an application for two dwellings to be built at the rear of the garage site on a number of grounds not least of which is the dangerous nature of vehicle access to and from Upper Green Road. The Council is further of the opinion that no application should be considered unless it includes plans for the whole site, including the existing garage structure and any necessary decontamination.

Kristina Lawson
Chairman of Tewin Parish Council