

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via ZOOM) SPECIAL MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 pm**

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**UNCONFIRMED**

**Present:**

Cllr Peter Travis – Chair (PT) Cllr Ann Edney (AE) Cllr Elaine Butler (EB) Cllr Steve Eyles (SE)

**In attendance:** Cllr Barbi Lund – District Councillor, Hugh Williams – Clerk, David James – landowner and 20 members of the public

**1. Meeting agenda**

This special PC meeting was held to discuss only the Mendip planning application 2020/1686/OTS for the development of the land on Merfield adjacent to The Mead to build 29 houses and associated access road and site roads.

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllr P Restorick and Cllr L Oliver (County Councillor)

**3. Vote on application by Council**

Each Councillor was asked to vote on the planning application:

Cllr Edney said it was a difficult decision but having spoken to villagers she would vote against the application.

Cllr Butler said she was reflecting the view of the villagers, that she had spoken to, and none were in favour of the application so she would vote against it.

Cllr Eyles said he had originally supported a small development around Merfield but this was a disappointing 'bog standard' development and he now voted against it. He also asked whether it could be withdrawn.

Cllr Travis said he would be reflecting the views of the parishioners and would be voting against this proposal. He added that the original philanthropic proposal had now become a commercial development.

The Parish Council (PC) had voted unanimously against the proposed planning application and would prepare its response to Mendip.

David James (Merfield landowner) asked to speak; he said that the Ashford Homes planning application was not fully in accordance with his own proposals. However, he thought that for 6 years there had been support from the PC to develop this site and it would help meet the requirements in the Rode Neighbourhood Plan, especially with regard to housing for the elderly. He originally had wanted to put village facilities on the site but had been encouraged by the PC to put housing on the site.

The Chairman said it had taken 5 years to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, in which residents had rejected proposals for development on this site. The current application for 29 houses was disproportionate to the housing needs of the village and contrary to the Rode Neighbourhood Plan. He again asked for the proposal to be withdrawn.

#### **4. Working Party**

It was agreed that the PC would set up Working Party (WP) to prepare a response to Mendip. It was agreed that PT, EB, AE and SE would be on the WP with the help of Jim McAuliffe and Andy Pickett. The WP would prepare written objections to 2020/1686/OTS, it would also prepare Section 106 requirements for monies from the development, should it be approved and go ahead. The objections and requirements would be circulated prior to the next full PC meeting on 6 October at which the paper would be approved.

Parishioners were encouraged to make their own objections to Mendip.

SE said he would continue to liaise with David James and Tom Griffiths (Ashford Homes) to see if they were willing to change their minds. These meetings would be noted and minutes taken.

The Meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Next Meeting (virtual via Zoom):** Tuesday 6th October 2020 at **7.30 pm**

*Website: [rodeparishcouncil.webs.com](http://rodeparishcouncil.webs.com)*