

Bridge's Green Spaces Under Threat- Act now

Planning application for the proposed housing development on the Brickfield site in Mill Lane is being considered at a meeting on:

**TUESDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2009
at 6.30PM**

**AT THE GUILDHALL NEXT TO THE
WESTGATE TOWERS IN CANTERBURY**

If granted this would:

- Adversely impact on Bridge's **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**
- Threaten 75 species of endangered and protected birds, smooth and crested newts, dormice, badgers and 9 species of bat
- Destroy **ancient hedgerow** all along Mill Lane
- Seriously increase the risk of **flooding** in the area
- Massively **increase traffic** on a narrow, pathless road
- Fly in the face of the majority view of villagers that there should be **no further building outside the village envelope**
- Fail to give anyone a 'foot on the housing ladder', as has been repeatedly suggested, because all properties are for **100% rental only**

**Make sure your views count-
Come to the meeting and help us retain the
beauty and tranquillity of our village**



The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge

PUBLIC MEETING
28th January 2009
in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm

Good evening and welcome to tonight's meeting of

The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge

Below are set out six basic issues on which we want to comment and on which we invite you to express your concerns. If time allows we may be able to cover others.

There is a tear-off membership application form below, which we hope you will use to show support for what we are doing and to help with the not inconsiderable cost of print.

1. What villagers want and do not want, with reference to the Village Appraisal, The Village Plan and the Housing Needs Survey. What sort of Bridge do we want for the future?
2. No feet on the housing ladder.
3. Finite open land, natural habitat, biodiversity and previous refusals of development.
4. Corral's site and health implications.
5. The conflict of interest that arises out of the ownership of Brickfield.
6. Traffic and access
7. **Work with us to prevent the picture above from becoming the picture below . .**



For information contact

Emily (01227) 830364
Gary (01227) 832742
David (01303) 265737

Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge Membership Application Form

Please send this application together with your remittance of £5 or whatever you can give to :
Jo Apps at :
3 Bourne View, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent

Name

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Tel :

Email :

They'll do it anyway whatever I say, 'they' always do, so what's the point?

WRONG!

Despite the high-handed way in which most decisions by government local and national these days are made on issues such as the proposed Brickfield development, and the presence of large bolt holes included in planning legislation, expressly to provide local and county councils with something through which to drive their coaches and horses, despite all that, we still live in a 'Democracy'. We do, we really do. Ask King John's Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt.Gt. Grandson.

Test the theory by asking an elected member of Bridge Parish, Canterbury District or Kent County Council to deny it. Having been elected under what they would claim was a Democratic process, they won't, couldn't, can't – how could they?

That said, ask them to explain why they might be thinking of going ahead with support for the Brickfield development when by a simple democratic majority, **your village when last consulted said NO.**

With that in mind, could we urge you to write, in your own words and under your own signature (each member of the family) saying what you think, using simple, plain English, referring to some/all of the six points set out overleaf plus any of your own to any/all of the following people listed below and quoting:

Planning Application No: CA/09/00056/FUL.

That is what you have to do if Democracy is to work

1. Case Officer Karen Stephens, Development Control, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW.
2. Ward Councillor John Anderson, c/o C.C.C. at the above address.
3. Chief Executive Mr Colin Carmichael, at C.C.C.
4. Council Leader Mr John Gilbey, at C.C.C.

If everyone living in Bridge, and any others who may feel the same as you, wrote to each of those listed above, the ensuing paper snowstorm would leave them, and the elected members of the Development Control Committee in no doubt of the decision they have to make.

NB You do not need to write four different letters, just do one and copy it to the other three.

PARISH OFFICE
BRIDGEFORD HOUSE
BREWERY LANE
BRIDGE
CT4 5LF

PROTECTING RURAL BRIDGE
4 BOURNE VIEW
BRIDGE
CT4 5LJ

4th December 2008

TO BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL,

We would like to introduce ourselves as we are a group recently set up working in and around the village of Bridge. We have called ourselves **PROTECTING RURAL BRIDGE** and are a diverse group of people from all around the village and surrounding area. Our aims are to enhance and protect the landscape from the ever increasing demands of development and to save the environment from changes that would be detrimental to our plants, wildlife and landscape.

We are not against sympathetic, small developments in the right locations, or people extending their properties as their families grow, but are strongly against developments that impact negatively on the environment and which are not democratically decided upon.

We have formed at this time, because, like many residents, we have strong views about the proposed affordable housing development on Brick Field, Mill Lane, Bridge ('AH'). We are not happy about the proposal for the following reasons;

- i) The AH was promoted to villagers by Bridge Parish Council ('BPC') and others, as a way for villagers to get on to the property ladder. We now understand that six of the properties will be for rental and only two will be co-ownership. There is no evidence of need from the village for social rental housing and the evidence for co-ownership housing is insignificant;
- ii) We feel that BPC failed to consider all the facts in detail when helping to locate a site for development and think this location is totally unsuitable. The AH is to be sited on Brick Field, a green field with AONB status, a Special Landscape Area and outside the village envelope. Climate change and loss of biodiversity obliges everyone including BPC to ensure that everything possible is done to mitigate and address these pressing problems. The AH will clearly not achieve this.
- iii) The section 106 agreement will override existing planning considerations which many villagers would not realise or support. BPC is in fact doing a disservice to the village by permitting a development to go ahead without the usual planning safeguards. Once BPC agrees to the section 106 agreement, planning consent is virtually a rubber stamping exercise by the local authority. BPC should not be party to these 'loophole' Government policy mechanisms which undermine the legitimacy of our planning system and democratic accountability;

We would like BPC, therefore, to re consider the facts in light of our legitimate concerns and we put the following questions to BPC for clarification:

1- The Parish Plan Survey 2006 sent out to households in Bridge clearly states on page 26 that the strongest response of all (156) that there should be no further building outside of the village envelope. How can BPC justify supporting a development which is clearly outside the envelope?

And if so, do BPC consider that their views are more important than the people they represent and so have ignored this response?

2- How has BPC addressed the concerns expressed by the people in favour of AH identified by the survey sent out by the Rural Housing Trust where 11% said they would not like to see any further building of any kind, yet alone outside the village envelope and of the one's who said they were in favour of a possible development, although they were not asked about inside or outside the village envelope, expressed concerns of - pressure on existing services, expansion of the village and loss of rural feel?

3- Can BPC show evidence that this site was chosen democratically, by contacting all landowners in and around the village to give them the chance to come forward to sell or donate land in the prescribed manner? If so can you please provide us with the details?

4-How do BPC explain this site as the most suitable looked at, when other locations clearly met the criteria set out by the housing trust much more closely, namely closeness to village amenities (when the site is one of the furthest away and outside village envelope), good access (when this is poor and the site was twice previously rejected on these grounds) and impact on the environment (also an issue for previous rejection as an AONB, green field site)?

9th Feb 2006

5- Was the location voted on by the full council and if so is this in BPC minutes? Does BPC have a conflict of interest policy and if so was the fact that Brick Field is owned by CCC ever discussed as a potential conflict/ and if so how was this resolved?

6- We understand that neither the BPC or the housing association approached any residents who will be directly affected by this choice of site and take into account any concerns they may have before commencing with the plans? Please confirm this is so, or please provide details of who was approached and when?

7- How can the choice of site be justified against two previous rejections in the 1970 's and 1980's which concluded, amongst other things that the impact on a landscape of outstanding natural beauty would be too damaging and that Mill Lane could not accommodate further vehicular traffic?

8- The development has been presented to the parish as a means to 'get on the housing ladder' as clearly defined on BRIDGE VILLAGE web page and this is no longer the case as the majority of dwellings are for renting only. Why did the HA with BPC approval (July 08 minutes) change from part ownership to renting only for all but two dwellings? If the reason was due to poor response from potential purchasers, can we see the data please?

Rick

9- How does the BPC justify the development of rented social housing (i.e. not shared ownership) when this has been shown to provide no long term benefits, and moreover stigma and extended dependence to residents? (Dwelly et al 2006 rethinking social housing doc. Smith Institute London)

10-We have biological records of bee orchids, 9 species of bat, crested and smooth newts, slow worms, badgers and many protected species of birds centred on this site. Did BPC consider the extensive wildlife and plant species before choosing this location for consideration for development?

11- In light of the above, how can the development be justified alongside BPC environmental Policy, which clearly states that each member and employee should have an understanding of the

effects of their actions upon the physical and social environment in which they live, work and relax and in their own mission statement (No 13) say they will support and encourage animal and plant diversity? Building houses on a Greenfield sight, outside the village envelope clearly does not comply with this and to say that surveys are/will be carried out when records already exist is not an answer, as this should have been looked into before progressing any further at all.

12-Does BPC have a policy towards the health and safety of its inhabitants when considering planning applications? And if so what allowances have been made for the proximity of the proposed development to Corral's Kerosene depot whose safety procedures are to evacuate to a half mile radius in the event of fire and who are experiencing recent environmental actions from CCC re spillages and odours?

13- Can BPC and Southern Housing show evidence that this development will comply with building requirements to be carbon neutral? It would appear that Southern Housing is only doing the legal minimum. Surely more is required especially as all new housing will have to be carbon neutral by 2016, only a short period away.

14- In September 2008 an ambulance was unable to access a property in Mill Lane, due to the narrowness of the road and parked cars and recently a fire engine got stuck in Brewery lane and had to reverse causing extra time to attend. How will the residents of the new development be protected from potentially fatal delays resulting from this inaccessibility?

15- How will the already oversubscribed school places be managed in light of KCC's policy of closeness to the school not any longer the main criteria to get a place?

We would ask BPC to hold an extra ordinary meeting to discuss each of these issues in detail and give us your findings on each of the points raised, as we intend to analyse them in public, so would like your clarifications before doing so.

We would also ask that you give these important questions your full attention and answer our concerns before considering the 106 agreement, which we understand has been approved by CCC.

Yours Sincerely



Rejection Notes

Gary Harrison



On behalf of and representing:

PROTECTING RURAL BRIDGE

Biodiversity

“Supporting and encouraging plant and animal diversity”

(Bridge Parish Council’s environmental policy)

Protected species inventory included in planning application documents for the Brickfields site (source: Kent and Medway Biological Records Bureau for Bramley Associates ENQ/07/158):

- **Smooth newts**
- **Great crested newts**
- **Common frog**
- **Slow worm**
- **Grass snake**

Protected species inventory **NOT** included in planning application documents for the Brickfields site (source: Kent and Medway Biological Records Bureau for Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge ENQ/08/349):

- **Corn Parsley**
- **Blue Fleabane**
- **Bee Orchid**
- **Badgers**
- **9 species of bat**

81 species of bird -75 protected species (RSPB red/amber status/BERN/BAP)-including:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| -Little Egret | -Teal | -Little Owl |
| -Mallard | -White Wagtail | -Moorhen |
| -Wren | -Whitethroat | -Stock Dove |
| -Siskin | -Linnet | |
| -Yellow Hammer | -Jay | -Tawny Owl |
| -Cuckoo | -Pheasant | -Red-legged Partridge |
| -Coot | -Woodcock | -Green Sandpiper |
| -Garden Warbler | -Turtle Dove | -Collared Dove |
| -Nuthatch | -Golden Oriole | -Spotted Flycatcher |
| -Coal Tit | -Blue Tit | -Long-tailed Tit |
| -Black Redstart | -Magpie | |
| -Turtle Dove | -Bullfinch | |
| -Sand Martin | -Waxwing | |
| -Mute Swan | -Lesser Spotted | |
| -Red Kite | Woodpecker | |
| -Marsh Harrier | -Skylark | |
| -Nightingale | -Swallow | |
| -Grey Heron | -Grey Wagtail | |
| -Hen Harrier | -Goshawk | |
| -Kestrel | -Sparrowhawk | |
| -Merlin | | |
| -Hobby | -Sand Martin | |
| -House Martin | -Yellow Wagtail | |
| -Lesser Redthroat | -Song Thrush | |
| -Willow Warbler | -Blackcap | |
| -Pied Wagtail | | |
| -Green Woodpecker | | |
| -Corn Bunting | | |
| -Chiffchaff | | |
| -Swift | | |



Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge Spring 2010 Newsletter

We are delivering this leaflet to residents in Bridge to inform people of the facts regarding the recent pumping of raw 'filtered' sewage into the river Nailbourne and outstanding matters with regard to the Brickfields housing proposal. 'Filtered' refers to a mesh, like a chicken wire that is placed over the sewage pumps to stop some of the solids and toilet paper getting into the river.

According to notes from the Little Stour and Nailbourne Management Group, parish councils along the Nailbourne were notified that pumping of screened sewerage was about to start at the end of March because sanitation was lost in many low lying areas including Bridge. It was recommended that the clerks should notify parish councillors immediately and make sure that Canterbury City Council Environmental Health department were also fully aware in order to make sure warning signs of the dangers of sewage were put up, because no warning signs had been put up on the previous occasions when Southern Water pumped sewage into the Nailbourne. No signs went up in Bridge until April 16th, more than two weeks after the pumping started. It was only after complaint letters about the sewage had been published in the Kentish Gazette, that signs were erected in Bridge (pictured above), on the 16th April by Southern Water.

Risks to Public Health

There are serious diseases that are attributed to exposure to sewage including hepatitis, polio and cholera. As far as we know, nobody has contracted them yet but dogs have been ill and taken to the vets after going into the river and some residents have suffered sickness, diarrhoea and vomiting. One of the most likely causes is Norovirus, a virus that is commonly found in raw sewage and can survive for up to 90 days in water. The government has recently warned local authorities of the increased dangers of Norovirus through exposure to sewage.

Wildlife

In recent articles in the Sunday Times, there have been reports on the effects on wildlife of pumping sewage into rivers. The European Commission is preparing to take the UK to court over this practice. Sensitive species such as the Great Crested Newt, Smooth Newt and other water borne vertebrates and invertebrates will be the first to suffer from exposure to raw sewage in the Nailbourne. Other wildlife will follow.

More houses = more sewage and more surface water

CPRB in its campaign to protect the Greenfield site, Brickfields, from development, informed Bridge Parish Council, Canterbury City Council, Environment Agency, planners, councillors and Southern Water about the lack of sewerage capacity in Bridge and how this situation would be made worse by granting a planning application that would add sewage into the network. We argued that the sewerage capacity study provided by Southern Water for Brickfields was wrong. It is wrong. Our sewerage system cannot take any more sewage. The Brickfields development would also cause more surface water to enter the ground and find its way into the river, causing a greater frequency of flooding. Much of Bridge is designated as being at high risk to flooding by the Environment Agency.

Your help needed

Please write and complain about the pumping of sewage into the Nailbourne to Mr L Dawson, CEO, Southern Water, Yeoman Road, Worthing, Sussex BN13 3NX and send a copy to our local MP (currently Julian Brazier) - House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA

Secondly, write and ask that the Brickfields planning application CA/09/00056 be brought back to planning committee as it is a legal requirement, to be reconsidered in light of all the matters explained above. Write to Karen Evans, Planning Office, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW

Please also write to Bridge Parish Council about what has been going on. Make your views known. We would also like your support to help us persuade them to listen so please either phone or text 07759 535180 and leave your name and contact details or email joanna.apps@binternet.com and we will send you further details, and updates on progress.

The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge: Newsletter July 2010



The former Corral's Oil Depot site that is up for sale for development-a far more sustainable and sensible option for housing than the greenfield site of Brickfields.

What is The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge?

The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge ('CPRB') was set up in 2008 by concerned residents in Bridge to campaign against the development of the Brickfields site for housing and to raise awareness of environmental issues more generally in Bridge.

Brickfields, as most of you know, is located off Mill Lane in Bridge and outside the village envelope. It is a greenfield site, in a conservation area, within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Special Landscape Area. It is bordered on Mill Lane by an old hedge, which is teeming with wildlife including many protected species. This special area will be lost forever if the houses go ahead and before too long, more houses will follow because a precedent will have been set.

What is the CPRB doing to try to protect this area?

CPRB is challenging the planning permission granted by Canterbury City Council in the High Court. We believe that important matters were not taken into consideration. For example:

- The developers will **destroy 50 metre long, 3.4 metre high of the old hedge**. The so-called replacement is no replacement at all. The new hedge will consist of saplings that cannot be allowed to grow more than 600mm high and situated far back from its original position, for visibility.
- The **sewerage system is not fit for purpose**. Raw sewage was pumped for the third time in 10 years into the Nailbourne river for almost 4 weeks this Spring to stop sewage entering people's homes. Clearly, the sewerage system cannot cope with existing homes, never mind for any more.
- There is a **brown-field site** available, close by in Bridge, see above. It is an eyesore and should be developed as soon as Southern Water has properly resolved the sewerage problems.

CPRB has made a **village green application** on Brickfields and Watermeadow. See overleaf for a map of the land subject to the application, shaded grey. There is to be a public inquiry

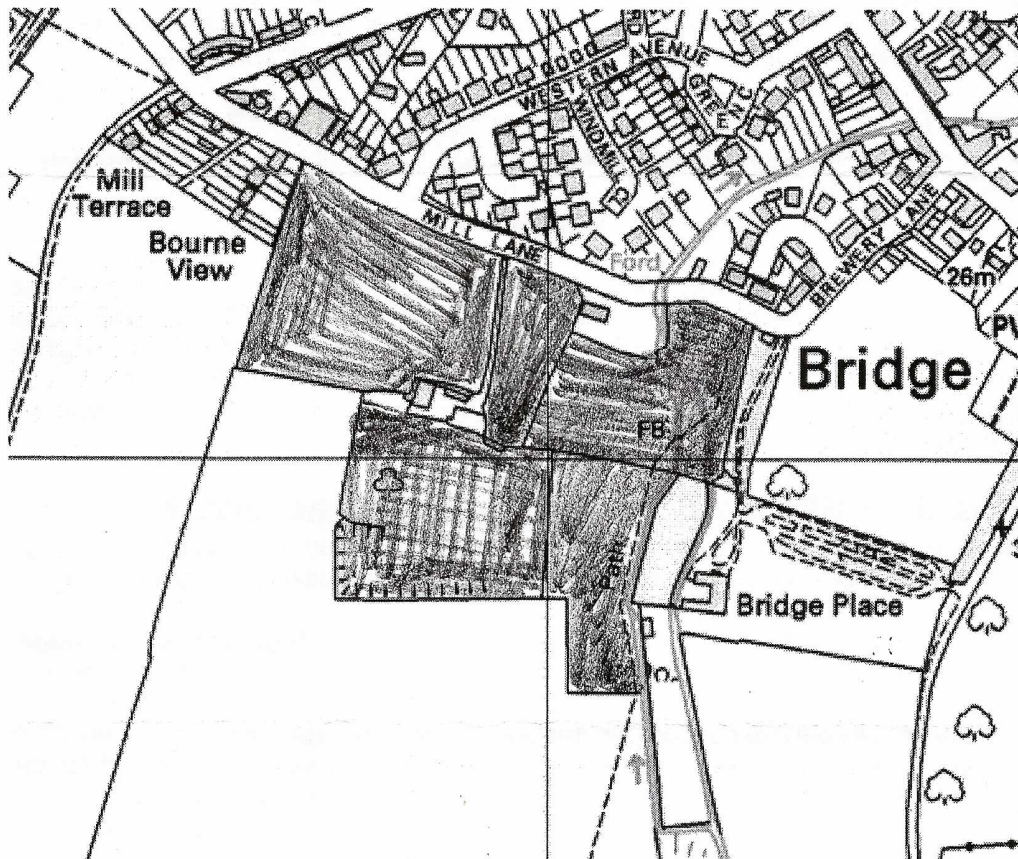
into the matter at the Guildhall in Canterbury starting **September 6th 2010**. If we succeed in getting this area registered as a village green, it will stop development and preserve this area as it is now. It will not take away grazing rights or mean children's play areas, cricket pitches, duck ponds or maypoles will be built! Registration keeps the status quo. For those interested in reading a recent important case on village greens from the Supreme Court, follow this link. It will put the above rumours to rest!:

http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/decided-cases/docs/UKSC_2009_0167_Judgment.pdf

What extra help is needed to protect this area now?

There are three ways you can help to protect this area. Firstly, if you have used any of this land for walking or any other recreational purposes between 1988 and 2008 and have not yet been in touch with us please contact Emily Shirley, at Netherbury, Meadow Close Bridge, Tel. 01227830364, email:emilyshirley@hotmail.co.uk. We need **evidence of local use of Watermeadow and Brickfield** for the Public Inquiry and we also need people to give oral evidence at the inquiry.

Secondly, CPRB needs to **raise money** to get professional help with both the judicial review and village green inquiry. We need to raise at least £5,000. If you can contribute anything towards this please send your donations (cheques payable to the Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge) c/o Gary Harrison, 4 Bourne View, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent CT4 5LJ. All those who send donations will be kept informed of developments and told how the money is spent so please include your name, and address, phone number or email with your donation.



Thirdly, new members are always welcome. If you can give a little of your time or if you just would like to be kept informed of what we are doing you can **join CPRB**. Please text or phone Jo Apps on 07759 535180 for further details. Membership costs £5 and helps to pay for the printing of our newsletters. Other projects being considered by CPRB is a Landscape and Biodiversity Appraisal of Bridge.

The Campaign

TO PROTECT RURAL BRIDGE

SAVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE ■ SAVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE ■ SAVE OUR COUNTRYSIDE

SAVE
OUR
GREEN
FIELDS

Bridge Parish Council agrees more building on green fields around Bridge



Bridge under pressure to develop green fields

For many years now Canterbury City Council has been under pressure from the government to create more housing in the area. They in turn have looked out to surrounding villages to see where they can build. The result has been increased development of green field sites in the whole area. Bridge is no exception.

With its attractive aspect, thriving shops and excellent school, Bridge is a prime target for development. Property developers are also keen to build here because house prices are relatively high and there is more money to be made. The CPRB believe development should be limited to 'brown field' (non agricultural) sites.

Parish Council gives go ahead for building

In the early summer of this year a survey was conducted to gather the views of local people about housing development. Most people said they did not want further building on green fields around Bridge, yet at the last meeting of the Parish Council in September our councillors agreed to another development in the Brickfields off Mill Lane and a new project in fields off the Patribourne Road next to the Doctors' Surgery.

Why have the views of local people been ignored?

Plans for the potential new developments were presented

Why have the views of people in Bridge been ignored?

one morning in August, but many people were unaware of the presentation, or unable to attend and express their views.

The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge is pressing for a further public meeting so that villagers can have their say. So far the council has not agreed. These issues may affect you in future if not right now, so please give us your views and support us in our campaign.

Help us to save our green fields for future generations

The Campaign to Protect Rural Bridge is run by a group of local residents. We have been working for years to try to prevent the over development of Bridge. In the last fifty years



the village has almost trebled in size and despite our efforts building has recently occurred on areas of outstanding natural beauty.

We believe Bridge has seen enough new development and we don't want any more. Our local infrastructure and facilities simply will not cope with more and more people. Please join us to protect our village.

THE CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT
RURAL BRIDGE

CALL MARIE ON
01227 832057
TO OFFER YOUR SUPPORT

OR EMAIL
emilyeshirley@hotmail.co.uk