**LGPC response to planning application 20/01927/FUL**

Following the Parish Council meeting of the 3rd August 2020, Little Gaddesden Parish Council would like to make the following response:

There are a number of inaccuracies in the application, as follows:

1. The footpath is drawn in the wrong place, as the path should line up directly with the entrance gates to the Church.
2. There are no hedges on the perimeter of the land.
3. The Land Registry shows that legal title to the land is vested in the Mead Trust and not Goldsmith Land as stated. This needs to be clarified.
4. The address given for Goldsmith Land is not the registered address. This needs to be clarified.

Our understanding of the application is as follows:-

Asked for:

1. Replacement of existing fence.
2. Extension of existing fence - 53m section.
3. Extension of existing fence - 24m section on the southern boundary.
4. Extension of existing fence - 50m section on the western side between 53m & 24m.
5. Removal of existing access gates between plot 17 and plot 16 (plot 16 is the assumed name of adjacent plot away from the Church).
6. Movement of public footpath away from historic starting point at the Church gates, thereby replacing public access gates with fence. This gate has no vehicular access to the field.
7. Building new public pedestrian access gate at new location indicated. This gate is for pedestrian access for the proposed moved footpath. [This does not appear to be mentioned in the application or the plan but it must be implied because the proposed vehicular gate would not be a suitable footpath gate]
8. Building of vehicular access gate for access to the field directly on to the highway.

LGPC response

1. LGPC does not object to the repair of the existing fence in the same style as the existing fence. However, we would note that the existing fence is a mixture of post/wire and fence/rail. LGPC objects to the replacement of the fence/rail fencing with the inferior post/barbed wired fencing and for consistency all replacement fencing should be post and rail. This is to maintain the character of the setting adjacent to the curtilage of the Grade 1 listed Church. This applies to all fencing listed below.
2. LGPC objects to the extensions of the existing fencing (53m). LGPC wishes to maintain the openness of the fields as outlined in the Article 4 Direction on the land. Part of this line may have been previously fenced, but this was removed many years ago for open access for grazing sheep on this and neighbouring land.
3. LGPC objects to this section of fencing (24m on the southern boundary) as it is a new piece of fence across open fields, contrary to the Article 4 on the land. The Article 4 was put in place to protect the Conservation Area and the AONB from unwanted visual and physical barriers on the otherwise open aspect of this historic grazing land.
4. LGPC objects to this extension of the existing fencing (50m section between 53m & 24m) as it is a new piece of fencing across open fields. The fences applied for in 3 and 4 would enclose historically open land, contrary to the Article 4 on the land. The Article 4 was put in place to protect the Conservation Area and the AONB from unwanted visual and physical barriers on the otherwise open aspect of this historic grazing land.
5. LGPC objects to the removal of the internal access gate (“Existing gate”) between plot 17 and 16 as it provided the only access point from plot 17 to the highway via plot 16. The access point of plot 16 is adjacent to plot 17. LGPC views this proposed gate removal as deliberate deprivation of existing access to the highway. We can only speculate that this is to increase the likelihood of obtaining a separate highway access onto plot 17. We also note that both plots 16 are 17 are or have recently been owned by the same company, so an easement provision should have been simple. No justification has been put forward.
6. LGPC objects to the movement of the existing public footpath (incorrectly drawn) from the entrance gates of the Church to the location indicated. This is an historic (greater than 200 years) route to the Church from the village of Little Gaddesden. Any movement of the footpath would be a destruction of a significant part of the village’s history. The existing line of the footpath provides an important viewing line to the impressive side of the Grade1listed Church as one approaches it. The movement of a footpath is not, in any event, a matter to be dealt with in a planning application. No justification, such as ‘proposed development’ has been given for its relocation.
7. LGPC objects to the implied building of a new public pedestrian access gate in the location indicated (required for the proposed move of the public footpath), for the reasons above in answer 6.
8. LGPC objects to the application for vehicular access to the highway as there is an historic and suitable access to the highway a few metres away via plot 16 (discussed in point 5). Suitable easements could simply be put in place between the landowners of plot 16 and 17. In addition, we believe that this is a dangerous place for a vehicular access, as it is the primary access point to the Church. i.e. peak pedestrian access to the Church, a tight turning circle and an informal disabled parking point directly outside the Church. We also believe that the proposed access gate at the point indicated contravenes highways safety design criteria, as the road by the proposed gate is close to the sharp bend to the east of the Church and the road also becomes a private road before the sharp bend.