

ELMSWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of full Council held on

Monday 20th January 2020 at 7.30pm

at The Blackbourne, Blackbourne Road IP30 9UH

- Present: Cllr Barker, Burch, Edmonds, Friend, Hawes, Mansel, Osbourne, Pallett (Chairman), Roots, Schofield, Shaw
- Attending: County Council Ward Member Mrs Jane Storey (part)
District Council Ward Member Helen Geake
Parish Clerk Peter Dow
2 members of the public
- 20.01.01 **Noted:**
That there were no apologies for absence to be noted or accepted from Councillors or other apologies.
- 20.01.02 **Resolved:**
That the draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th December, as tabled, be agreed as a true record
- 20.01.03 **Noted:**
That there were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in subsequent agenda items and no additions, deletions or alterations to the Council's Register of Interests.
- 20.01.04 **Noted:**
4.1 A written report from SCC Ward Member Cllr Jane Storey
4.2 A written report from MSDC Ward Members Cllrs Geake & Mansel
4.3 Confirmation from Cllr Storey that recent trials of the new 'Thermo' system for filling potholes more quickly and permanently have been successful and that the policy of dealing with adjacent potholes in a single visit is allowing for a better service. Kiln Lane, as a minor route, is unlikely to receive frequent attention, but the more such problems are reported via the on-line tool, the more likely it is that repairs will be made.
4.4 Confirmation from Cllr Storey that she shares reservations regarding the responses made by SCC Highways officers to Planning applications and that the appropriate route for expressing concerns is through the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Andrew Reid.
4.5 Cllr Mansel agreed to pursue the matter of the Thedwastre Close bungalows which have been empty for some years awaiting restoration works.
4.6 Cllr Mansel confirmed that the opposition groups at MSDC had tried to limit the recently announced Council house rent rises but that the current balance of political power on the Council emasculated them.
4.7 Cllr Geake confirmed that the recent £8.7m commercial property investment made by the BMSDC CIFCO arm was part of the £100m borrowed from the PWLB to fund such expenditures. Cllr Pallett is to meet with the BMSDC Chief Executive to discuss community concerns regarding the losses made thus far by the CIFCO operation and will seek financial projections which will indicate a timescale for the scheme to move into profit, or otherwise.
- 20.01.05 **Noted:**
The following when questions or comment from the public were invited on any matter on this agenda:
5.1 If potholes were repaired properly in the first instance, the disruptive subsequent visits would not be necessary.
- 20.01.06 **Noted:**
Correspondence from BMSDC regarding a forthcoming recommendation for a full Community Governance Review to be carried out across both Districts in 2020.
- 20.01.07 **Noted:**
The Clerk's report as per Appendix A.

20.01.08 **Noted:**
That when any Complaints Committee business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, none was forthcoming and that the date of the next Complaints Committee meeting was not known.

20.01.09 **Noted:**
Planning results as notified by Mid Suffolk District Council;

9.1 DC/17/02909 Erection of up to 9no. dwellings and creation of access
Land to the East of Oak Lane
GRANTED PC objected

9.2 Planning Appeal ref APP/W3520/W/19/3239171
Land adjacent to Dagwood Farm, Ashfield Road
APPEAL DISMISSED PC objected

9.3 DC/19/05246 Works to trees protected by Preservation Order...
Canley House, Church Road
GRANTED PC no comment

9.4 DC/19/05200 Erection of outbuilding
Willow Wood Farm, Grove Lane
REFUSED PC no comment

9.5 DC/19/05183 Erection of single storey rear extension...
Newbury House, Church Road
GRANTED PC supported

20.01.10 **Noted:**
Planning applications as notified by Mid Suffolk District Council for response, being:

- 10.1 DC/20/00076
**Erection of single storey garden room extension
The Cottage, Church Road**
Councillors agreed to support this application
- 10.2 DC/19/05703
**Use of land for the stationing of a static caravan
Ten Ten Farm, Kiln Lan**
Councillors objected to this application for the following reasons;
- 1 The Application seeks to establish residential use on an industrial site without restriction or constraint as to occupancy. Permission would not normally be granted on this site for permanent residential development. If permitted, the case for further mobile homes would be difficult to resist with the subsequent risk that these might be transmuted in the future to permanent dwellings. Regardless of the immediate circumstance of the Applicant, Permission would endure with the site and would open the door to further inappropriate development on the part of future owners. It runs counter to the Policy requirement for strict control over residential caravans in the countryside.
 - 2 A 6 berth mobile home in the countryside will necessitate journeys by private car. The site access is from Kiln Lane, a single-track country lane which serves many properties, including 3 industrial sites. There are no passing places and the constraints of hedge and ditch severely restrict opportunities for safe passage of opposing vehicles. The over-use of the lane and the subsequent damage to the running surface make for a hazardous situation, particularly for cyclists. The lane is over its safe capacity and no further traffic use should be invited.
 - 3 The industrial context of the proposed setting for a residential unit proposes an inappropriate site which may now, or in the future, be subject to or become affected by industrial activity and processes which significantly reduce amenity and safety.
In reaching their conclusion, Councillors had reference to Local Plan policies H11, E12, H17, RT19 & T10

DC/19/05810**Erection of 3no. dwellings including provision of vehicular access and associated landscaping****Land at Kiln Farm Cottage, Kiln Lane**

Councillors objected to this application for the following reasons;

This proposal is in the countryside outside of the settlement boundary of the village. It represents an unsustainable form of residential development for which there is no justification, as required by Local Plan Policies H7 & H10 and by Core Strategy Policies Cor1 & Cor2. Councillors have had reference to NPPF paragraph 11 and consider that there are no factors which mitigate in favour of allowing this as an extraordinary case in that the adverse effects of granting permission would outweigh any perceived benefits for the following reasons:

1 It is accepted by the Applicant, and common sense confirms, that the 3 households created under this Proposal would entirely rely on private vehicular transport for access to the amenities at either Elmswell or Woolpit, both in excess of a mile distant.

2 Kiln Lane is a single-track road with no passing places which serves several domestic dwellings as well as a major Anglian Water facility and 3 industrial sites. It is already subject to heavy use and constant degradation of both its verges and its running surface. There is no footway or pavement along any of its length. Any further traffic poses further hazard, contrary to Local Plan Policy T10.

3 Kiln Lane feeds on to Warren Lane for traffic East to Stowmarket or seeking the shortest route into Elmswell. Warren Lane itself is a single-track road with passing places. It must serve as the feeder road to the recently permitted development of up to 38 dwellings at its Northern end. There is no footway along its length until Warren Close at the village boundary. Any additional traffic in this context is clearly adding to the existing hazard for pedestrians and cyclists and for all traffic at the Church Road / Warren Lane / New Road staggered junction, a situation soon to be exacerbated by the traffic from this new estate of houses and by the additional load from 240 dwellings currently being built-out at Wetherden Road. When traffic is frequently diverted from A14 or otherwise through the village, as is proposed for some 3 months during the development of the Wetherden Road housing estate, Warren Lane and Kiln Lane are overwhelmed.

4 In seeking to assess any justification for the granting of this proposal within the constraints of NPPF, Councillors could not accept that the Paragraph 8 objectives of the Framework are met in that;

4.1 There is no economic imperative to add a further dwelling to the 652 which currently have the benefit of Planning Permission in Elmswell. Village infrastructure does not need further impetus or growth, rather it struggles to keep pace with the relentless pressures towards a 38% uplift in its housing stock within the short and medium term.

4.2 The social objectives seeking a sufficient number and range of homes towards a strong, vibrant and health community are well met within the growth already determined, as above, and the rider within the Policy aspiring to produce a safe built environment counts entirely against this Proposal for further stress, hazard and congestion on the village's roads.

4.3 Environmental objectives within the Framework are ill-served by a proposal requiring all travel to be by private vehicles rather than, 'minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change'.

5 Reliance upon the precedent established under DC/ 18/05363 presents a false premise. The addition of a third dwelling and the increase in height, footprint and occupancy from the original 2 bungalows to 3 No. effectively 2-storey houses each with 4 bedrooms represents a significant and unacceptable increase in density, occupancy and character which will invite further development on the remaining 'amenity' land adjacent.

In summary, and with reference, again, to Paragraph 11 of the Framework, the effects of this Proposal would be impose adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits on a community which has:

- A thoroughly adequate supply of homes
- A robust economy already at a sometimes uncomfortable maximum and looking to be stretched under development pressures

- 10.4 **DC/19/05924**
Erection of two storey rear extension. Application of render and replacement of roof tiles to dwelling and garage
Ten Ten, Kiln Lane
Councillors agreed to support this application

- 20.01.11 **Noted:**
The following when the Meeting considered other Planning business and determined action if appropriate.
11.1 **DC/19/05899** Agricultural for prior notification of agricultural or forestry development (proposed building) Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 Schedule 2, Part 6 – Erection of barn for storage of grain and farm machinery **Botany Bay Farm Grain Shed, Grove Lane** – Councillors had been made aware of the need for any response within 7 days of 23rd December and no objection had been suggested.
Meanwhile, it was noted that the Officer's determination is that prior Notification is not required.
- 20.01.12 **Noted:**
That progress on the Wesley development was as outlined in paragraph 6 of the Clerk's report.
- 20.01.13 **Noted:**
That progress towards the purchase of the Greene King site at School Road was as outlined in paragraph 5 of the Clerk's report.
- 20.01.14 **Resolved:**
That Council adopts the Equal Opportunities Policy tabled as Appendix F together with the Health & Safety Policy as circulated and identified as 'Issue 5'.
- 20.01.15 **Resolved:**
That Council adopts the Safeguarding Policy tabled as Appendix G.
- 20.01.16 **Resolved:**
That Messrs Greene & Greene, solicitors, be retained in the matter of completing the drawing up of a Contract for the freehold purchase by the Council of the Greene King site at School Road comprising some 0.5Ha and on which the Railway Tavern stands.
- 20.01.17 **Resolved:**
That, to facilitate the annual siting of an illuminated Christmas tree at Crown Mill, Council instructs Suffolk Highways to install a new feeder pillar, trenching and cabling from an existing light column to provide an appropriate electricity supply for a sum not to exceed £2,305.86 net of VAT.
- 20.01.18 **Proposal: Cllr Barker;**
That advice and approval be sought from SCC Highways officers towards the possibility of the planting of native bulbs on the A14 / A1088 roundabout.

Seconded: Cllr Mansel

Proposal carried
- 20.01.19 **Resolved:**
That, in line with the detailed proposals furnished by the ElmsWild Group and dated December 2019 for the development of their Scattered Orchard project, Council supports the Group's proposal that one of the selected sites should be at Crown Mill.
- 20.01.20 **Resolved:**
That Council receives a report as signed off by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Roots on their review of the Council's systems of internal control of the stewardship of the Council's finances, governance and resources, carried out on 8th January 2020 and notes any recommendations therein.

- 20.01.21 **Resolved:**
That Elmswell Parish Council directs Mid Suffolk District Council to pay £159,000.00 (one hundred and fifty-nine thousand pounds) as the Precept upon them as Charging Authority for the financial year 2020 / 2021.
- 20.01.22 **Noted:**
Authorised payments made and income received as per Appendices B and C, and indicative financial overview as at 31.12.19.
- 20.01.23 **Resolved:**
That proposed payments, scheduled as Appendix D, be authorised.
- 20.01.24 **Noted:**
The Balance as per Appendix E and the Chairman's confirmation that the relevant bank statements and computer report verify the published figure.
- 20.01.25 **Noted:**
That, when public comment or questions were invited on matters relevant to Council business, none were forthcoming.
- 20.01.26 **Noted:**
The following when other Council business from Councillors or the Clerk for information, to be noted, or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited;
26.1 There was discussion regarding the inclusion, or otherwise, of the proposed Relief Road concept in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that the relentless increase in development must inevitably exacerbate the traffic problems in the village rendering the concept the more desirable with each tranche of new housebuilding. The Council's professional design and engineering guidance exists to provide a sound basis for further exploration of a scheme. The constraints of the Neighbourhood Plan protocols mean that a Relief Road cannot be conditioned unless a structure is found through the Local Plan to render it deliverable. With no external underwriting support available, any road would have to be funded by developer contribution which, at the current costing of £12m, would mean the construction of some 2,000 houses. Meanwhile, the statutory Village Referendum stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process might stop the process short of formal inspection if the lack of a Relief Road impinges upon the support for the Plan as presented. With a review necessary within 2 years of the formal making of the Plan there is scope for advancing the imperative with regard to a Relief Road if, as the Neighbourhood Plan Group is suggesting, such a road is represented as a Community Aspiration.
No action was determined.
- 20.01.27 **Noted:**
That the next meeting of Council was scheduled for Monday 17th February 2020 beginning at 7.30 p.m. at the Blackbourne.
- 20.01.28 **Noted:**
That the meeting closed at 9.14pm.