

# **ELMSWELL PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of full Council held on**

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm**

**at The Blackbourne, Blackbourne Road IP30 9UH**

**on-line via the Zoom internet video conferencing facility**

*as authorised by and in accordance with*

*The Local Authorities (Coronavirus)*

*(Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020*

- Present: Cllrs Barker, Edmonds, Hancock (part), Hawes, Mansel, Pallett (Chairman), Roots, Schofield, Shaw
- Attending: Suffolk County Council Ward Member Mrs Jane Storey (part)  
Parish Clerk Mr Peter Dow  
1 member of the public
- 21.01.01 **Noted:**  
1.1 An apology for absence was noted from Cllr Burch in light of his expressed view that on-line meetings are undemocratic and, therefore, that he was unwilling to attend.
- 21.01.02 **Resolved:**  
**That the draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020, as tabled, be agreed as a true record.**
- 21.01.03 **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.
- 21.03.04 **Proposal: Cllr Pallett;**  
**That Peter Hancock be co-opted forthwith to serve as an Elmswell Parish Councillor.**  
Seconded Cllr Barker  
**Proposal carried**
- 4.1 Mr Hancock signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was welcomed by the Chairman as a Member.
- 21.01.05 **Noted:**  
5.1 A written report from SCC Ward Member Cllr Jane Storey  
5.2 A written report from MSDC Ward Members Cllrs Geake & Mansel  
5.3 Cllr Storey agreed to pursue the matter of poor repairs to potholes and the consequent need for return visits and to look at the possibility of a comprehensive stretch of resurfacing on Ashfield Road where the poor running surface poses a danger to cyclists.  
5.4 The Chairman undertook to contact Mark Ash, SCC Director of Growth, Highways & Infrastructure and to copy in the Chief Executive Nicola Beach to suggest a review of the current arrangement with road repair contractors who seem to be doing such a poor job.  
5.5 The Chairman undertook to pursue with Jo Churchill MP the possibility that The Blackbourne might serve as a vaccination hub given the urgency of the situation and the possibility that the process might be delayed should the CCG decide to try to override Planning considerations and engineer an approach road and car park to the rear of Woolpit Health Centre.  
5.6 Cllr Storey confirmed that the parlous state of Kiln Lane has warranted a promised visit from Matthew Fox of SCC and that she continues with efforts to rationalise ownership / maintenance issues at the A1088 / Bunkers Hill junction.
- 21.01.06 **Noted:**  
That there was no further correspondence to this meeting unrelated to an Agenda item.
- 21.01.07 **Noted:**  
That the Meeting received the Clerk's report as per Appendix A.
- 21.01.08 **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 was not known.

21.01.09

**Noted:**

The following Planning results as notified by Mid Suffolk District Council;

- 9.1 DC/20/04972 Change of use of land for creation of 2 traveller pitches...  
1 Broadgrass Green GRANTED
- 9.2 DC/20/04375 Erection of 6 dwellings  
White House Barns GRANTED
- 9.3 DC/20/05090 Without compliance of conditions...  
Kiln Farm Cottage, Kiln Lane GRANTED
- 9.4 DC/20/05089 Change of use of land for highway access...  
26 Eastern Way GRANTED
- 9.5 DC/20/05540 Discharge of Conditions Application 4911/16 – Condition 18  
(Archaeological)  
Land adjacent to Wetherden Road APPROVED
- 9.6 DC/20/03027 Erection of 1no dwelling....  
Crest Nicolson Site, Land at Wetherden Road GRANTED

21.01.10

**Noted:**

Planning applications as notified by Mid Suffolk District Council;

- 10.1 DC/21/00024  
**Erection of two storey rear extension, erection of two storey side extension to form ground floor carport and first floor accommodation to existing dwelling, replacement windows**  
**11 Farm Meadow**  
Councillors agreed to support this application
- 10.2 DC/20/05686  
**Erection of 1No. detached dwelling with detached double garage**  
**Kiln Farm Guest House, Kiln Lane**  
Councillors objected to this application for the following reasons;  
This site is in the countryside, outside of the settlement boundary of the village. The proposal represents an unsustainable form of residential development for which there is no justification. The new household created would entirely rely on private vehicular transport for access to the amenities at either Elmswell or Woolpit, both in excess of a mile distant, via Kiln Lane, an already over-used single track road with no passing places which serves several domestic dwellings as well as a major Anglian Water facility and 3 industrial sites.  
Kiln Lane is currently demonstrating that it cannot take the increased traffic resulting from the industrial sites recently developed and in process of development on the old A45 adjacent. The pressure the lane has to absorb when frequent road closures at Church Hill divert traffic are evident in the parlous state of the carriageway.  
With regard to the strong policy imperatives aimed at protecting the character and appearance of the countryside, this proposal offers no justification for an exception to the constraints against development in the countryside and it would, if permitted, place further unacceptable strain on the highway, contrary to Local Plan policy T10.
- 10.3 DC/20/05714  
**Erection of first floor rear extension**  
**30 Wetherden Road**  
Councillors agreed to support this application
- 10.4 DC/20/05053  
**Erection of up to 9no. dwellings**  
**Land to the East of Oak Lane**  
Councillors objected to this application for the following reasons;  
The Settlement Boundary, as defined in the Local Plan, now has behind it the empowering factor of an accepted 5 year housing land supply, thus adding considerable strength to the argument presented when this proposal was first considered and rejected. The site is in the countryside outside of the Settlement Boundary within which new development will properly take place.  
With regard to the strong policy imperatives aimed at protecting the existing character and appearance of the countryside, this proposal offers no justification for exceptional treatment and does not present a case for special consideration under categories identified and defined in the Local Plan, the Core Strategy or the National Planning Policy Framework.  
Furthermore, the emerging Joint Local Plan has it, at LP24, that development should 'Respond and safeguard the existing character and context', and that, 'Development that fails to improve the quality and character of the area will not be supported.' This ad hoc, opportunistic off-Plan proposal clearly fails on both of these counts.

The further reduction in site area in this 3<sup>rd</sup> iteration of the Proposal creates an urban result entirely at odds with the rural setting and in jarring contrast to the existing dwellings on Oak Lane which are individual dwellings set on substantial plots off this quiet single-track cul de sac. Any comparison with the adjacent housing estate is erroneous; the context is the Oak Lane community of houses which have a specific identity and which identity would be dramatically eroded if this townscape proposal were to be permitted.

The admitted reduction in site area as a strategy to remove any requirement for the provision of Affordable Housing denies at a stroke any small benefit that the original 2 proposals offered to the village of Elmswell. With no justification other than the Applicant's own assessment of viability, 3 affordable units are no longer part of the housing mix. No viability assessment is put forward and no consultation with the Planning Authority has been undertaken. Without this small concession to the community infrastructure, the addition of 9 more dwellings to the 699 which have current Planning Permission and which being or are soon to be built-out offers only more pressure on an already-stretched infrastructure.

Councillors also vigorously support the objections as voiced by neighbours on grounds of highway safety and suitability with regard to the safe and free flow of traffic and safeguarding pedestrians. The suggested relaxation of the Design Manual requirement of a 90m visibility splay is unacceptable, particularly in light of the Elmswell Community Speed Watch figures which put the average traffic speed on Ashfield road passing the junction with Oak Lane at well in excess of the 30mph limit. Further, the re-orientation of the roadside footpaths proposed so as to enable even a truncated visibility splay layout poses a serious threat to pedestrians who will be forced to cross the busy Ashfield Road in order to make the journey to and from the village centre and North of Oak Lane. In summary, the proposed mitigation measures required to allow the considerable extra traffic loading which would result from this proposal run counter to the requirements of Local Plan policy T10.

In reaching these conclusions, Councillors had reference to Local Plan policies SB1 & H7, Core Strategy Policies CS1 & CS2, National Planning Policy Framework para.55 and to the emerging BMSDC Joint Local Plan.

- 21.01.11 **Resolved:**  
**That the Clerk makes known the Council's comments on the Planning Applications on this Agenda to the Chief Planning Officer at Mid Suffolk District Council.**
- 21.01.12 **Noted:**  
The following other Planning business;
- 12.1 Application Bennetts Farm, Ashfield Road
  - 12.2 Consultation invited on proposals for the Sunnica Energy Farm, North of Newmarket; details from the Clerk
  - 12.3 Acceptance by MSDC of Non-Material Amendment at Kykko, Warren Lane substituting double garage for proposed single unit
  - 12.4 Appeal notified ref 65 at the Bacon factory site
  - 12.5 Appeal notified ref Refusal under DC/19/02605120 for 120 dwellings at Haughley Park
  - 12.6 A late notification of an Application to modify s106 Obligation on Bacon Factory site in respect of the tenure of Affordable units ref Havebury Housing and that the technical de minimis nature of the proposal required no action.
  - 12.7 Notification of a Non Material Amendment to house types on the proposed development of 120 dwellings at White House Farm.
  - 12.8 The Clerk's undertaking to attend the virtual meeting of the Mid Suffolk Development Control Committee A scheduled for 20.01.2021 to further represent EPC's Objection to the Proposal ref. DC/18/02146 for up to 86 houses on land to the north and west of School Road.
- 21.01.13 **Resolved:**  
**That the Meeting notes and accepts the direction to Mid Suffolk District Council, being the Relevant Charging Authority, to pay £163,514 representing the total Elmswell precept requirement for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.**
- 21.01.14 **Noted:**  
The position regarding the Railway Tavern site, including the establishment of the Elmswell Community Land Trust and an appropriate Community Benefit Company was as outlined in the Clerk's Report at paragraph 2. The Clerk further confirmed that a virtual meeting was booked with the professional adviser from the Plunkett Foundation towards determining the next steps. The Chairman agreed in discussion that all options remain open whilst the village considers the 2 strands of community development, a Community Land Trust to develop affordable housing

and the refurbishment of the railway Tavern as a community pub, and which were supported in the community consultation regarding the land purchase in September 2019.

- 21.01.15 **Resolved:**  
**That the revised Tenancy Agreement for the Council's allotments, together with an uplift of 5%, rounded, on the rentals for the year to 31.12.2021 are noted and authorised.**
- Cllr Hancock declared a Pecuniary Interest in this item, took no part in the discussion and did not vote*
- 21.01.16 **Noted:**  
Cllr Shaw confirmed that the Elmswell Neighbourhood Plan in raw Pre-Submission Draft is with MSDC who have shared it with SCC who have raised some points which are being addressed.
- 21.01.17 **Noted:**  
The authorised payments made and income received as per Appendices B and C, and indicative financial overview as at 31.12.20.
- 21.01.18 **Resolved:**  
**That proposed payments, scheduled as Appendices D, be authorised.**
- 21.01.19 **Noted:**  
The Balances as per Appendices E and the Chairman's confirmation that the relevant bank statements and computer report verify the published figures.
- 21.01.20 **Noted:**  
There was no public comment or questions on matters relevant to Council business.
- 21.01.21 **Noted:**  
The following any other Council business from Councillors or the Clerk for information, to be noted, or for inclusion on a future agenda;
- 21.1 The Clerk confirmed that he had received no approach regarding a petition relating to play provision in the village.
- 21.2 The Chairman confirmed that he was working with Mark Ellis of Suffolk Macs towards being able to gain bluetooth access the traffic information from the Speed Indicator Devices
- 21.01.22 **Noted:**  
That the next meeting of Council is scheduled for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 beginning at 7.30 p.m. either on-line or at the Blackbourne as circumstances allow.
- 21.01.23 **Noted:**  
The meeting closed at 9.20pm