

- ✓ Letting you know
- ✓ Keeping you in the picture
- ✓ Asking your opinion on a possible community benefit scheme at



THE GREENE KING DEVELOPMENT SITE on SCHOOL ROAD

PLUS... how you can help Elmswell establish its own Community Land Trust to work towards genuine affordable homes for Elmswell people with **no right to buy** so that they stay with the village, for the village, forever!



Photograph courtesy of Lapwing Drone Photography

CAN WE SAVE IT FOR THE VILLAGE?

In 2012 worship at the Methodist chapel on School Road ceased. The Methodist Church decided to sell it in 2015. Elmswell Parish Council managed to have 2 Planning applications for housing on the site refused and to buy it on behalf of the village.

Plans were drawn up for the much needed refurbishment of the iconic chapel building and the demolition of the old Wesley Hall next door to make way for up-to-date facilities.



Hall users and Councillors gather to start the process of saving the site in April 2016

Meanwhile, Greene King decided to sell off the Railway Tavern pub next door to Wesley. It's on a big site and they had managed to secure Planning permission for 8 houses leaving the pub with much reduced parking and the narrowing of School Road as part of their access scheme.

This gave rise to the obvious question – shouldn't the village be looking at saving this site as well?

There are 3 clear benefits suggested:

- Instead of developer 'pattern-book' houses we could build genuinely affordable quality homes for Elmswell people which would never be sold off;
- Being right next to the Wesley we could share facilities such as parking and play areas;
- Elmswell could, possibly, come together in a community pub venture, as have so many other villages



Permission granted for housing under Mid Suffolk ref. DC/18/02259

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Problem:

Surely we've heard all this before... 'affordable' – who says what's affordable? And how many times have we been promised the proper percentage (35%) of "affordables" on big developments only to be told that the developer can't afford it and we end up with far fewer? Plus... what's the point of building them when, under the 1980 Right to Buy or Right to Acquire legislation they can be sold off? The nonsense of Council houses sold cheaply and then re-sold, at a tax-free profit, to be let at twice the Council rent seems to miss the point.

Solution:

Elmswell can take control of its own social housing by setting up a COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CLT).

This is 'community led housing'. It works when ordinary people get together to develop affordable homes and other community assets which they control and run, usually through a Housing Association or another management body. They decide the rules.

This is a growing movement with 300+ groups active in England & Wales, run by some 17,000 individuals, having built over 900 houses to date with many more in the pipeline.

A CLT is defined in law and must:

- ✓ Be not-for-profit; if any surplus is generated it must be used to benefit the host community
- ✓ All of the defined community members (in our case Elmswell residents) must have the chance to be members
- ✓ The members control the organisation through officers elected from the membership

How do we know it works?

A good example is down the road at Lavenham where their CLT was formed in 2014 through a partnership with Lavenham Parish Council and Babergh District Council

They aim to support their community to develop affordable housing and other community assets which will help sustain Lavenham now and into the future. Their CLT will effectively act as a steward for any assets developed which means that any income from schemes will be reinvested directly back into the community ensuring that the homes and facilities are provided for the long term.





These are early thoughts from Alan Wilkinson of KLH Architects who designed the Wesley building next door as to how the Greene King site could produce 11 affordable & sustainable new homes with shared parking & greenspace facilities between the Tavern and the Wesley.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Please Note: Illustrative Scheme Only

This schematic site plan shows:

- New affordable houses providing:
- A - 4 no. 2 bed, 4 person houses
 - B - 3 no. 3 bed 5 person houses
 - C - 4 no. 1 bed, 2 person flats

Shared surface paving design in the residential development with extensive landscaping to provide natural solar shading and encourage wildlife.

The residential scheme has potential for numerous sustainable design features including:

- Roof mounted solar panels
- Ground source heat pumps
- Highly insulated construction
- Grey water technology
- Passive solar design to south facing dwellings

Refurbished public house (Railway Tavern)

New childrens play area with links through to Wesley.

Increase in public parking spaces

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

Please note – all boundaries are, at this stage, indicative.

Client
Elmswell Parish Council

Project
Greene King Development Site,
School Road,
Elmswell, IP30 9EE

Site
Schematic Site Plan

Drawing Ref
4746-0102

Revision
P03

Date: - please enter date issued: 2/20
Scale: 1:1000
Author: [initials]
Checked: [initials]
Approved For: [initials]
Profession: [initials]



AT THE PUBLIC MEETING ON 26th SEPTEMBER AT BLACKBOURNE

WHAT ABOUT THE PUB?

The Railway Tavern has been one of our village pubs since the mid 1800's. Only the Tavern and the Fox remain from the several recorded Elmswell pubs and beer houses over the years.

As both are owned by the one brewery, the incentive to maintain them as rivals is not strong and the Tavern has not had the attention needed to keep up with changing trends and public expectations, although it retains a hard core of loyal customers.

There is, clearly, considerable potential to revive the Tavern's fortunes. Our 2 close neighbours at Thurston and Woolpit both have the benefit of 2 successful pubs allowing for a wide range of features on offer.

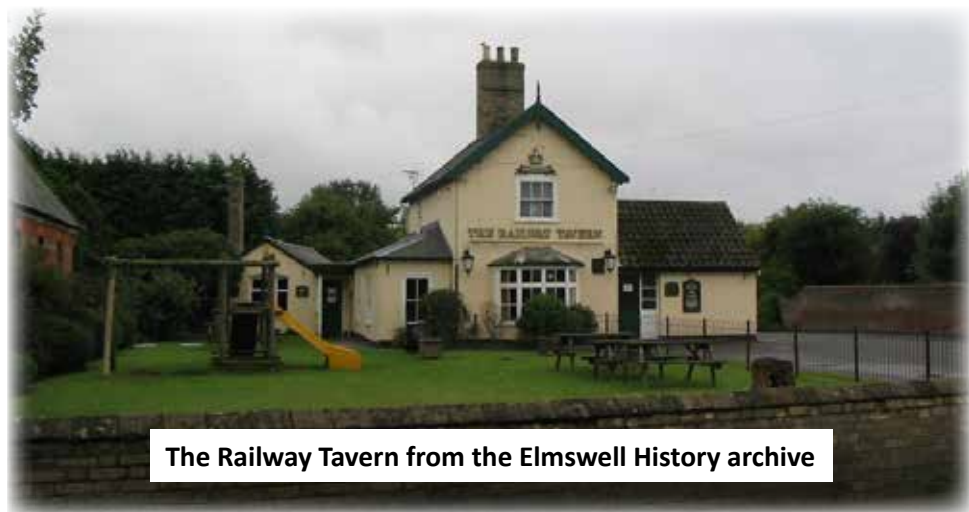
We have a population greater than either and that population is expanding very quickly.

There is some risk in considering developing a business within the very specialized and fickle retail licensed trade.

There are many examples of how this has been taken on by communities locally. The Case Is Altered at Bentley is community managed and owned through Bentley Community Pub Ltd. Somersham's celebrated Duke of Marlborough was Britain's 51st co-operatively owned, professionally run pub. The Fox Inn at Garboldisham, bought by the local community and re-opened in 2016, is run as a Community Interest Company. The 'Low House' at Laxfield, officially The King's Head, was saved from development by the community just last year and was the very first such venture, whilst The Punch Bowl Inn at Battisford, has been going strong under community ownership since 2011.

These various examples of community management and ownership structures are, all of them, successful in communities much smaller than Elmswell.

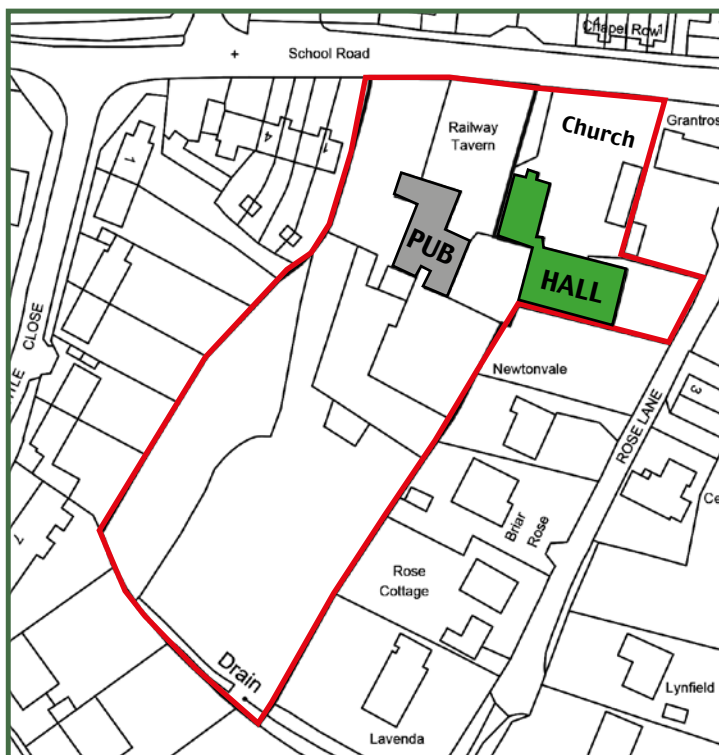
There is an opportunity to save a valuable community facility for now and for future generations – but, if a pub is not viable when the business plan is produced, the building remains for many other possible uses.



HOW WILL WESLEY BENEFIT?

When the Wesley project was taken on, it was clear that there would be 2 constraints that would might work against the success of the project – both related to the very tight nature of the site.

- Parking was the immediate and pressing issue. For the facility to pay its way, as with Blackbourne, it would look for income from outside of the village. When the space is not required for village groups and activities it can be let to outside organisations for meetings, training sessions etc at rents which help subsidise the community use so that there is not an inevitable burden on the Community Charge. These people tend to arrive by car. The current plan allows for 19 spaces, which restricts the size of groups. 'Sharing' space with the Greene King site would allow considerable flexibility and the space to accommodate larger groups at Wesley.
- Green space is important for many of the anticipated lettings, eg weddings, for barbecues and for the kiddies' play space essential for the Baby & Toddler Group as well as private parties. As the current Wesley proposal stands, this space is very limited. On the plan shown here, it is clear that the garden area between the pub and the hall is an ideal addition to the Wesley space...there could be access directly from the end of the chapel into a well protected garden.



PLUS...

The parking at this point on School Road is problematic. With the chip shop, the hairdresser and the takeaway all needing space which is often provided, unofficially, by the pub. Under the existing Permission, this flexibility would disappear as the pub would be left with very little space. A community scheme can take this into account towards avoiding what could be a serious pinch point, especially given the Fire Station next door where inappropriate parking could slow down access and potentially cost lives.

WHY DO YOU NEED TO BE TOLD ALL OF THIS?

For this scheme to move on the very first step is to secure the site for community use.

The Parish Council has engaged a professional Land Agent to negotiate a purchase price – and all of the indications that this sum will be a manageable.

Once the site is secured there is breathing space to take the various strands forward with many precedents to learn from, much advice available and financial assistance available. A grant has already been obtained to kick-start the CLT scheme.

The initial purchase would be made using the same funding route as has proved to be successful for the extension at Blackbourne, for the purchase of the Wesley and for the refurbishment / new-build there. The Government’s Public Works Loan Board provides funding for town & parish councils to undertake such projects for the public good. They are at a low fixed rate, guaranteed, on repayment terms of up to 50 years.

Working from the published Guide Price of £750,000, if the Parish Council borrowed this over 50 years, repayments would be £24,199.48 per year. Based on last year’s village population, the ‘average’ Band D Council Tax household would have to pay an extra £17.02 per year, 33p per week.

It is important to note that are working on a ‘guide price’ and that all this buys is a site. Funding would then have to be sought for the various strands of development, but many sources such as the Community Housing Fund, The Peabody Trust (community pubs), the Community Infrastructure Levy, and more, are available.

It is also important to be aware that the rate of housing growth in our village means that the annual income from Council Tax is rapidly rising, effectively sharing the financial burden more widely every time one of our projected 634 (minimum) new houses becomes occupied.

If the site is not secured for community use, it goes for commercial development.

**THE COUNCIL NEEDS COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO TAKE THIS FURTHER.
TO SHOW THAT SUPPORT, PLEASE EITHER:**

- ✓ FILL IN THE SLIP BELOW AND RETURN IT BY HAND, BY POST OR BY EMAIL
- ✓ WRITE OR EMAIL YOUR SUPPORT
- ✓ SIGN ONE OF THE STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT THAT WILL BE CIRCULATING AROUND THE VILLAGE OVER THE NEXT 2 WEEKS



I have read and understand a detailed explanation, including plans, of the Elmswell Parish Council’s proposal to purchase the Greene King site at School Road with a view to developing affordable community housing as well as saving the Railway Tavern as a community facility and providing extra parking and play space for the village’s facility next door at The Wesley.

I realise that the purchase will be funded by borrowing and that this will mean an increase in my Council Tax.

I SUPPORT BOTH THE PROPOSAL AND THE BORROWING.

Name(s) [more than 1 member of the household may sign]

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Address.....

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