

# **HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting, held Hockwold Village Hall on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March I 2023 commencing at **7.00p.m.**

## **Councillors of Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council**

**Present: Cllr Randall, Cllr Johns, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Oliver-White, Cllr Sismey, Cllr Williams**

**Parish Clerk Ms Hilary Cox**

**Thirteen members of the public**

## **15 minute open forum**

A Sismey – Mr Sismey stated he was not against a development but has concerns that the plans were too ambitious and contained too many inconsistencies. He questioned how to move forward if the issues remain, He was also concerned about the increased traffic, as it's a small lane. The lane is used by families, and this will make it dangerous.

L Fenn – Mr Fenn has no objection to a development but would like to see the many concerns and inconsistencies addressed before it is considered. Mr Fenn submitted a detailed letter of his concerns to the PC and it had been distributed previously.

E Baker – Ms Baker's main concern is where the development accesses Nursery Lane. It is a narrow stretch of the lane. Concerns over the increase in traffic on the lane as well as the issues with the gully overflowing and flooding during times of rain.

D Osbourne – Mr Osbourne would like a clause in the planning permission that states the hedges will be protected as they are full of wildlife and ensure the continued privacy of neighbours. He is also concerned over the wear and tear of the roads during construction. The village roads are already in poor condition, and the lorry and equipment traffic will make it worse.

A Pugh – Mrs Pugh voiced concerns over the local schools being able to cope with increased student need, as well as the local medical services. Both already oversubscribed. Mrs Pugh pointed out that there are protected species in this site. How will that be handled?

R Dyke – Mr Dyke Enquired about the plans for the art deco house on the site. Will it be demolished or protected?

**Members of Press and Public are invited to voice their comments and concerns in the Open Forum. However, the law does not permit members of the public and press to take part in the debates. Hilary R Cox, Parish Clerk & RFO**

**160. To receive and approve apologies for absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sullivan

**161. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation.** Declaration received from Cllr Randall, advising she would continue to chair the meeting but would take no part in the discussions or voting on Item 162b(i)

**Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.**

**162. Planning Matters**

**a. To receive results & updates of outstanding applications**

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i. 23/00196/O | Outline application with all matters reserved for proposed development of 4no. dwellings | 23 Mill Lane Hockwold cum Wilton Norfolk IP26 4LR **Withdrawn**

b. To receive new planning applications relevant to the village and make comment.

i. 22/02181/FM | The

renovation and conversion of existing redundant farmstead to create 23 No. dwellings comprising a mixture of two, three and four bedroom units, 8 to be formed from the conversion of 5 existing farm buildings, the remaining 15 to be new-builds properties. The development includes detached garages and parking spaces for dwellings and visitor parking to local authority standards. The proposal will be served by two vehicular access points, new and existing enhanced | Manor Farm 6 Nursery Lane Hockwold cum Wilton Norfolk IP26 4ND.

## **Material Planning Considerations:**

### **Local Planning Policy and Development Plan:**

1. There is currently no unmet housing development requirement within the village envelope, as laid out in both King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan - Site Allocations & Development Management Policies (SADMP) 29 September 2016 & Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Stage dated 2021. (inset G35.4), The Parish Council's local focus is on keeping agricultural lands and the rural landscape as such, as well as, protecting the green spaces within the parish. Any Development should be sensitive to the rural location, infrastructure capabilities and be in kind with the local environment.

### **Loss of Privacy:**

2. There are homes whose properties back on to the proposed site. This development will lead to a loss of privacy for several neighbouring homes. Neighbouring homes have requested that the hedge rows and trees remain if any development of this site is to go forward.

### **Highways Issues:** Traffic generation, Vehicular access, highways safety:

3. Nursery Lane is single lane with no pavement. This will make passing and pedestrian travel along the Lane markedly more difficult and dangerous.
4. Nursery Lane supports residential, agricultural and equestrian traffic. The volume of traffic this development would generate would have a negative impact.
  - a. Increased traffic of exiting vehicles would cause light disturbance to the houses directly across Nursery Lane from the access point.
  - b. Will cause traffic to back up if a vehicle was to enter Nursery Lane from Main Street at the same time a vehicle(s) were to be entering Nursery Lane from the access point.
  - c. Large agricultural equipment would not be able to safely back up to allow vehicles to pass, as there isn't enough room.
  - d. As stated previously, Nursery Lane is a narrow road. It is used by large agricultural machinery to access farmed land. Both sides of the Lane are not suitable for vehicles to pull over to allow passing.
  - e. Access in current designs are too narrow, and the lane cannot accommodate that many additional vehicles. The lane currently floods during rains, as well as, the ditch overflows and floods the lane.

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- f. The increased traffic load new housing would generate is unsustainable and dangerous. Nursery Lane is a popular route for leisure, horse riding, cycling and dog walking. The increased traffic load would disturb this, and it will become an unsafe or cumbersome route. As a rural location the parish council aim to encourage this type of activity and protect the areas our resident's access.
5. Pedestrian safety entering or leaving the proposed development is poorly thought out. It is unsafe and does not meet the needs of the rural environment or the size of the development.
6. The infrastructure in the village is poorly maintained with shoddy repair work evidenced on Main Street. The village roads cannot support increase levels of traffic.
7. Nursery Lane is 4.8m and this is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass while in motion.
8. There is currently no pavement on Nursery Lane. As stated previously the lane is narrow, with a ditch on the side of the access. No pavement is planned. This development would see residents walking out directly into a road. There is no access for wheelchair or pedestrians from in this portion of the plan. A person with a child in a pushchair cannot exit this site without walking directly in a road.
9. The access onto Main Street is 5m wide. This meets the requirement for a 'Home Zone' road designation, but does not accommodate pedestrians. There is no access for wheelchair or pedestrians in this portion of the plan.
10. There is no provision in the current proposal for any pedestrian exits to Main Street. The narrow access road onto Main Street does not show a footpath. The mouth of the access onto Main Street is fenced on both sides limiting pedestrians' visibility as they have to exit into oncoming traffic.
11. The pedestrian routes in the areas leading to Nursery Lane are unsafe. In the current plan, pedestrians would have to walk in the parking areas and driveways to exit on foot. There seems to be no safe pedestrian routes on the current plan.

## **Artificial Light, Noise and Fumes:**

12. This development will have a negative impact/effect on the neighbouring homes, specifically noise disturbance, air quality, odour (vehicle exhaust). The effects of any of the listed factors should be considered. The location of the exit on Nursery Lane would cause light disturbance to the houses directly across Nursery Lane as the vehicles exit. With a development this size, the number of vehicles exiting and entering would cause a substantial amount of noise disturbance, light disturbance and air quality/odour issues. Markedly higher for the immediate neighbouring properties.

## **Development of contaminated land**

13. The council has questions about the 'no dig zone' listed on the access road leading to Nursery Lane. There isn't sufficient information on this. Is it because of contamination? The information is not acceptable and of poor quality.

## **Loss of effect on trees and hedges:**

14. The council are concerned about the removal of long standing trees and hedges. The trees should be protected as well as the substantial hedges that border the land. Both for the natural aspect, wildlife preservation and privacy of the adjoining properties.

## **Capacity of physical infrastructure, drainage:**

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15. The current plan shows no information on the provision for connecting to the main sewer? There too many holes in the proposal.
16. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan - Site Allocations & Development Management Policies (SADMP) 29 September 2016, G.35.29 states *The Surface Water Network has been identified as being at capacity meaning a sustainable drainage system (SUDS) would be sought to serve new development.*
17. Deficiency in social facilities should be heavily weighted in the consideration of this proposal. The local primary school is at capacity with a waiting list. There is also the concern over local medical services. GP services are already stretched thin as this is a rural location.

## **Adverse Impact on nature conservation interested & biodiversity opportunities:**

18. 12.9.4 Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Stage dated 2021 states *Feltwell and Hockwold are within 1,500 metres of the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA). Stone Curlews are sensitive to human presence, and Nightjar and Woodlark for recreational impacts. These bird populations are qualifying features of this SPA and protected by law. The areas around the designated SPA in the vicinity of Feltwell and Hockwold are important to the Stone Curlew population within the SPA. Great care therefore needs to be taken to ensure that no harm results to this bird population from any development in the locality, and in law the onus is on the promoters of development to demonstrate no harm, rather than harm having to be proven to resist development.*
19. As stated previously, this location is a rural location. Artificial light can have an adverse effect on wildlife. *"It can be a source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes. Intrinsically dark landscapes are those entirely, or largely, uninterrupted by artificial light."* (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution#what-light-pollution-considerations-does-planning-need-to-address>)
20. Appropriate mitigation for the wildlife is non-existent. The overall plan is inconsistent. There are concerns on the plan for the bat population and the badger sett currently on the property.

## **Layout and Density of the plan**

21. The number of units on this plan is gratuitous for the size of the land involved. There is no thought in flow, both pedestrian and vehicular.
22. The distance of some of the parking will cause parking on the tiny lane.
23. The poor planning for waste removal is both confusing and inconsistent. With the lack of footpaths to Main Street it will leave residents to drag the bins on the access road leading to dangerous situations. Bins being left out will cause traffic back up and an unsightly visual.
24. The planned bollards marked all along the footpaths is not in kind with the rural environment or the conservation area it's in. This is not a design feature that is acceptable in a rural village location.

The overall proposal is not in keeping with the conservation area, and the historic buildings on site. The proposal does not preserve the character of this area. This plan is full of errors and inconsistencies. Many of the submissions are out of date. It has no forethought into the unique needs of the rural location, the pedestrian requirements (especially the need for accessible

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footpaths), waste management, resident safety (as stated in the comments from the Norfolk Constabulary concerns submitted), historic location (conservation area), parking layout that make sense (current plan will lead to congestion and parking on the tiny access roads.) The parish council did not find a balance in the plan for green spaces.

The viability study is confusing and outdated. There is no 106 agreement that could be found as of the date of the parish council meeting. The proposal states heating oil as the chosen heating option. This is not future focused. There is no suggestion of greener fuelling options.

The council also have questions/concerns on who will provide the street lighting and the subsequent electricity to run the street lighting? The Parish Council provide a substantial amount of the street lighting in the village and the electricity supply. The Parish Council runs on a small precept and cannot be expected to provide for new developments. There are real concerns about the maintenance or lack of that the village infrastructure currently receive. The increased traffic will lead to more wear and tear. This will only add to the poor state of the roads.

Proposed to object based on the concerns listed above. Proposed by Cllr Morgan. Seconded by Cllr Sismey. One abstention but agreed by all others present.

**163. Date of Next Meeting - The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 11th April at 7.30pm**

**Distribution:**

**One copy to each Councillor. Copies to Mr M Storey Norfolk County Councillor, & Cllr Ryves District Councillors, Squadron Leader Geary RAF Lakenheath and one copy for the web-site.**