

HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 6 March 2019, 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Mr R Baxendale (Chair) Cllr Mr D Bonny
 Cllr Ms M Curley Cllr Ms N Elborn
 Cllr Mr B Gilmour Cllr Mr S Hodgson
 Cllr Mr D Keane Cllr Ms E Leach
 Cllr Mr C Spearing

There were also two members of the public present.

ACTION

<p>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from C Cllr I Bates.</p>	
<p>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>3. PUBLIC COMMENT Concern was expressed by a resident of Mill Street about the increasing problems experienced by residents with parking in the village. It was felt that this problem is exacerbated by tourists and visitors to The National Trust property. It was noted the capacity of the NT carpark is inadequate to accommodate the demand, which aggravates the parking problems in Mill Street itself. Signage to the Mill car park is also not very obvious. This subject will be on the next agenda. Cllrs Keane and Baxendale will meet the custodian of Houghton Mill.</p>	DK & RB
<p>4. MINUTES RESOLVED: The minutes of the Houghton & Wyton Parish Council meeting of 9 January 2019 were approved. Proposed: Cllr Spearing, Seconded: Cllr Curley. All in favour</p>	
<p>5. MATTERS ARISING A meeting will be arranged with two young residents who have requested consideration be given to installing a skate park in the parish. Electric vehicle survey: about 100 surveys have been returned. These will be analysed. There is no update from HDC on the gate at the end of Ware Lane or the overgrown vegetation at Loxley Green. Revised job descriptions for the Clerk and Timebank co-ordinator are being drafted. A successful working group was held with HDC Planning officers to help them use the Neighbourhood Plan more effectively. Tree Survey: A pre-contract meeting will be arranged with Arbtech to ensure the area covered and work involved is correct before a contract is let.</p>	Clerk NE DK EL MC
<p>6. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS D Cllr D Keane reported that the District Council have approved an increase to their portion of the Council Tax of 2.6%. They have also finalised their budget.</p>	
<p>7. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT 7.1 To authorise payments due RESOLVED: All payments due be authorised. Proposed: Cllr Hodgson; Seconded: Cllr Spearing. All in favour 7.2. To consider renewal of LCPAS membership and CAPALC membership RESOLVED: LCPAS membership will not be automatically renewed; this is due to lack of service from them recently. Future membership is not ruled out. CAPLAC</p>	

membership will be taken out in 2019-20 (assuming fee is similar to 2018-19).
Proposed: Cllr Spearing; Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour

7.3. Financial Regulations Review / Financial Risk assessment

The reserves Policy and Risk Assessment will be deferred to the next meeting.
The Financial Regulations will be completed when access is available to the most up to date model regulations from CAPALC.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

8.1. Refurbishment, extension and conversion of The How and The Lodge, demolition of existing outbuildings, erection of two new buildings, improvements to existing access, associated car parking and landscaping and provision of 22 dwellings, including 7 affordable units The How
Houghton Road St Ives PE27 6RP Ref. No: 19/00278/FUL

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

- **Conservation and visibility.**

This development is located within the St.Ives conservation area and will have a negative impact on both it and the conservation area protection of the meadows to the south.

The land in question forms an important part of delivering a gap between Houghton and St.Ives and contained in the Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan anti-coalescence policy HWNP 3. Whilst we recognise that it is not an area within the plan boundary, it does abut and currently adds to the perception of greater separation, hence visibility and screening from a number of directions is a key consideration.

To this end:

- The extent of removal of trees is particularly concerning as it forms a visible buffer from the BBSRC field looking east and from the Thicket footpath and meadows looking north.
- 82 trees are being removed with a net reduction of 40 after planting. These will obviously take some time to mature.
- The southern 2 storey elevation is being extended westwards by about 40% and this will be more easily visible from the meadow below. A situation exacerbated by the steady thinning and decline in cover of the St.Ives Thicket wood which has suffering from disease and a lack of comprehensive management owing to insufficient resource.

Were the application to be approved, we ask that a meaningful sum of money be placed into a fund to resource improvement to the management and regeneration of the St.Ives Thicket.

- **Housing numbers.**

The emerging HDC local plan 2036 proposed submission was deemed 'sound' by the Inspector following statutory consultation in 2018 and is in the final stages of Main Modifications before adoption.

The approved Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) within the emerging Local Plan actually reduces identified housing need in and around the St.Ives Spatial Planning Area settlements, from 500 in the Core Strategy 2009 to 480, and through the Main Modifications of the Local Plan by a further 50 to a new total of 430. With an OAN of only 430 for the St.Ives Spatial Planning Area, the policies contained within the Core Strategy are more than adequate to deliver these, hence any 'tilted balance' argument should not apply.

Clerk

The How is an allocated site for 7 houses within the emerging Local Plan. Thus, with the OAN satisfied by both Core Strategy and emerging Local Plan, the argument of a need for a greater number than planned in this area is not valid.

- **Traffic and Pollution:**

CCC already acknowledges that the A1123 is already over capacity. Hence even a modest increase in the number of homes in this area will add significant issues of traffic and pollution to the area.

We would argue that an increase in traffic movements on this side of the town is also wrong in that it is the furthest away from access to A14 old and new, St.Ives employment area plus routes to Cambridge. All known to be the main routes for traffic and therefore taking it through the town.

Hence, were this application to be approved we ask that the extra housing numbers be taken away from the total number planned for the St.Ives SPA.

- **Building Scale:**

The proposed extended main building is out of scale and unsympathetic in design with the surrounding buildings, both The How and the adjacent development, lending itself to a more urban setting than the edge of town/countryside. The original historic building, designed by William White, was built as a small country house.

Once again, the bulk and mass of this design – particularly the main house/flats will increase the possibility of it being seen from further afield, including the meadow below, St Ives Bridge and The Causeway. This will be a serious detriment to the Conservation Area of Hemingford Meadow and St Ives

- **SUDS**

The project requires a substantial SUDS scheme to compensate for the relatively large footprint of the buildings and the size of the area covered by hardstanding. We are concerned about the way in which the SUDS scheme will be maintained in order to prevent deterioration of its effectiveness. In addition, it is unclear how the SUDS scheme will be allowed to discharge particularly considering the severe slope of the site as it descends towards the river. Given the challenges of the site and the importance of the SUDS scheme to the development, we believe a guarantee through planning conditions to ensure funding and the scheduling for the ongoing maintenance of any SUDS system must be introduced.

- **Gated community:**

Finally, should the planning application be approved then also of concern is the implication that this might become a gated community with private/exclusive ingress and egress, both at the exit onto the A1123, as well as to exclude public access into the area of improved meadow to the south. We feel that any moves to make it gated should be avoided.

Whether the application is approved in full, part or rejected and returns to the planned 7 homes as per the emerging Local Plan 2036, we do approve of the area for improved meadow being included.

Likewise, we approve of an Eco friendly approach and especially if that can embrace affordable housing for the area.

Proposed: Cllr Gilmour; Seconded: Cllr Elborn. All in favour

8.2. Proposed 2 additional suites for use as part of a B&B Eagle Mill Country Boutique Rooms Houghton Hill Houghton Huntingdon PE28 2BS Ref. No: 19/00279/FUL

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be

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APPROVED for the following reasons:

Two B&Bs in the parish have closed in recent years, reducing the quality tourist accommodation in the area.

The application meets the following policies and objectives of the Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan

- Policy HWNP9 – Provision of new tourist accommodation. This proposal will provide tourists with an addition accommodation options, something that the village needs.
- Policy HWNP8 – Tourism development Although not a tourist facility the development will support tourism.
- Policy HWNP15 – Provision for the needs of new or expanded businesses. The Eagle Mill development is a success and provides a quality accommodation for visitors to the village. Expansion of this business will not have a negative impact on any other business in the village.

The expansion of this business will provide employment for two part time employees or an equivalent of one full time employee.

The Policy states that new development along the A1123 should seek to retain existing trees, hedges and ditches wherever possible to protect the rural setting. The proposed development will result in the loss of eleven trees. If approved, we ask that a condition is applied to replace these trees on site.

- Policy HWNP17 - Design of new development The proposed development is a high-quality design and very modern with distinctive character. Being single storey and set back from the road the proposal does pay attention to the site's topography and height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation and materials.

The development meets

- Objective 5: Promoting growth in appropriate 'quiet tourism' in order that the beautiful countryside of the River Great Ouse and meadows may be shared with visitors.
- Objective 6: To expand existing rural visitor facilities and attractions and develop appropriate new opportunities.
- Objective 7: To provide accommodation for leisure activities to meet the needs of the local community and visitors.
- Objective 8: To support the retention of existing local services and businesses in the parish and actively encourage the development of small-scale businesses which benefit the community and visitors.
- Objective 16: To steer new development to areas of lower flood risk as far as possible.

Proposed: Cllr Spearing, Seconded: Cllr Hodgson. All in favour

8.3. Planning decisions

The Parish Council application for an extension to Houghton Cemetery has not been determined yet. Senior Planning Officers will be contacted.

9. GUIDED BUS STOP

9.1. A14 Community Fund grant

The final report to the fund is due on 30 April 2019. A survey will be compiled and

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<p>distributed to allow the questions in the report to be answered. This will also be made available via social media. Case studies of beneficiaries and photographs and comments from users are needed.</p> <p>9.2. Speed Limit Reduction on A1123</p> <p>With the opening of the Bus Stops it is felt this is the best time to act on this initiative. There are now several pedestrian crossing points and many junctions and entrances on this road within the Parish, all of which are potential danger points. It was agreed that a petition will be drawn up and all opportunities used to collect signatures.</p>	Clerk
<p>10. PROJECT PLANNING 2019/20</p> <p>Pavilion refurbishment: Initial feedback from the Sports Clubs on the suggested improvements and work is supportive. It has also been pointed out that the Playing Field surface is in need of attention.</p> <p>Path from Victoria Crescent to the Car Park: Three contractors have visited and quotes are awaited. Lighting for the path also needs to be considered.</p>	RB & SH DB & BG
<p>11. PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES</p> <p>11.1. Annual Parish Meeting</p> <p>This will be held on Wed 15 May, 7:30pm in the St Mary's Centre.</p> <p>11.2. Annual General Meeting</p> <p>This will be on Wed 1 May, 7:30pm, in the St Mary's Centre. There was a discussion on limiting the term of office for the Chair. It was suggested that this be limited to two years, unless it was in the interest of the Parish Council to extend to three years. This will involve a change to Standing Orders, and will be an agenda item at the AGM.</p> <p>11.3. Meeting Dates for 2019/20</p> <p>Ordinary Parish Council meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of every month, 7:30pm in the St Mary's Centre. Additional meetings to meet Planning Application deadlines will be arranged as needed.</p>	
<p>12. BIENNIAL REPORT</p> <p>Cllrs Baxendale, Bonny and Spearing will form the editorial team. Delivery is planned for July 2019. A survey on Parish Council Communications will be included.</p>	
<p>13. CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>A resident whose property abuts the Bowls Green contacted the Parish Council about work that has been done on the Green and affected his property. Cllr Gilmour visited him and liaised with the Bowls Club, who have agreed to carry out remedial work.</p> <p>A resident expressed concern about potential parking problems that may result from users of the new bus stops on the A1123. The situation will be monitored. Cllr Elborn suggested consideration be given to installing bicycle racks in the car park. It was also suggested that the if the brick bus shelter became redundant, this could be used as a bike shelter.</p> <p>The local British Horse Society group had submitted a Definitive Map Modification Order to CCC in 2017 to change the status of The Thicket footpath to a bridleway. CCC had made no progress with this application and following a direction from the Secretary of State, the BHS asked the Parish Council to write to CCC to ask them to determine the application within the 18-month time limit. CCC have confirmed that they will comply.</p> <p>The Great Ouse Valley Trust has invited the Parish Council to become a member.</p>	

<p>The trust is a charity that will act as an umbrella organisation to get interested groups and parties together to preserve and enhance the natural environment and respond to planning application which affect the Great Ouse valley. The ultimate objective is to have the area classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Clerk will add this to next month's payments for a decision. Campbell Buchanan has asked to meet representatives of the Parish Council to discuss a potential small development. The meeting will be held on 12 March.</p>	
<p>14. TO EXCLUDE PUBLIC AND PRESS FOR FOLLOWING ITEM RESOLVED: Under The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec. 1, Para. 2 the public and press are excluded from the following item due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.</p>	
<p>15. PARISH EMPLOYEE PAY AND SALARIES 2019/20 It was agreed that all employees should be on the NJC payscales with effect from April 2019. RESOLVED: The Pavilion housekeeper will be on scale point 7 Proposed: Cllr Leach; Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour. RESOLVED: The Litter Picker and Canine Hygiene Operative will be on scale point 2 Proposed: Cllr Gilmour; Seconded: Cllr Spearing. All in favour RESOLVED: The Timebank co-ordinator will be on scale point 17. Proposed: Cllr Leach; Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour. The clerk then left the meeting. RESOLVED: The Clerk will be on scale point 21. Proposed: Cllr Leach; Seconded: Cllr Gilmour All in favour</p>	
<p>16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS The Timebank has organised a Community Fair for Sat 16 March, 10-12 in the Memorial Hall. Many village groups, clubs and organisations will be represented. The Parish Council will also be represented. Cllr Hodgson attended a Future Mobility and Energy Conference facilitated by Curtin and Co at HDC. He felt there was an emphasis on the potential for jobs and expansion in Huntingdonshire, with no mention of the effect on the quality of life of current residents. There did appear to be a value placed on the Ouse Valley and green areas and there was no deliberate mention of another river crossing. There was mention of development along the A14 corridor. It was noted that the National Trust have planted hedging along the side of footpath 2, which passes over the floodbank within their caravan park. However, while this prevents pedestrian access from the path to the caravan park it does not prevent crossing, and consequent erosion, of the floodbank itself. Concern was expressed that the work at the compsite is changing the openness and character of the area and limiting access.</p>	
<p>17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting will be on Wednesday 3 April 2019, 7:30pm, St Mary's Centre, Chapel Lane, Houghton.</p>	

The meeting ended at 10:10pm

Signed:..... Date: