

## HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Monday 19 February 2024, 11:00am.

**Present:** Cllr P Boothman - Chair  
Cllr Gilmour  
Cllr A Skinner  
Cllr Baxendale  
Cllr R Guinea  
Cllr R Southworth

There were four members of the public.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Z Hunter, D Keane & J Rodgers.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment. Representatives of Hemingford Abbots Parish Council and residents were allowed to address the Council during the discussion of item 4.

### 4. PLANNING MATTERS

**4.1. Retention of pool building, basement car park, lift and enclosure, external courtyards, pond and associated hard and soft landscaping (revised siting), phased alterations to pool building (reduction in height), removal of staircase, removal of glazed balustrade to pond and alterations to fenestration of main facade of pool building.** Hemingford Park Hall Hemingford Park Common Lane Hemingford Abbots Huntingdon PE28 9AS Ref. No: 23/00040/NONDET

**4.2. Retention of pool building, basement car park, lift and enclosure, external courtyards, pond and associated hard and soft landscaping (revised siting), phased alterations to pool building (reduction in height), removal of staircase, removal of glazed balustrade to pond and alterations to fenestration of main facade of pool building.** Hemingford Park Hall Hemingford Park Common Lane Hemingford Abbots Huntingdon PE28 9AS Ref. No: 24/00003/NONDET

Residents of Hemingford Abbots explained the background to these appeals and their response to the relevant applications. The applications that these appeals relate to were not validated by HDC Planning Department and therefore have not been available to the public on their planning portal. Hemingford Abbots Parish Council has formally complained about the lack of enforcement on several reported planning breaches on this site.

**RESOLVED:** Houghton & Wyton Parish Council submits the following comments on these appeals:

- The Parish Council is disappointed at the lack of enforcement action taken on this site for development carried out contrary to both granted permissions and/or without submission of any planning applications.
- Hemingford Park is an important, historic and prestigious Grade II\* listed property. The setting of this building have been damaged by works within the curtilage of the building and within the building and grounds itself.
- The site is within the Hemingfords Conservation Area; any development to this Listed building or within its curtilage needs to be treated with care and within the legislation. Any inappropriate alterations and development already carried out need to be corrected/removed and original features reinstated before other applications can be considered.

- Impact on the environment; damage has already been caused to the important 'ridge and furrow' landscape within Hemingford Park. The road built across the park and ridge and furrow causes harm to the setting of the listed building.
- Householder development; The original application (23/01739/HHFUL) is beyond the `scope and size of a Householder (Section 96a) application. The facilities at the property appear to be outside the scope of approved planning and in excess of that required in a family household. This site and property are being actively advertised as an event venue and therefore commercial property (ref [Hemingford Hall & Spa Wedding Venues in Cambridgeshire | Guides for Brides, Insane 70 Acre Estate For Sale! | Property Tour - YouTube](#) (see time 11:10)).
- Change of Use; The application would result in a significant level of development in the countryside and yet fails to address the proposed use for the site. Development on this scale constitutes a level of building in the countryside which without the relevant policy justification or suitable conditions being set, could constitute planning harm. The application needs to be made and assessed via a full planning application and detailed explanation of its intended use.
- Amenity; Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, LP14c states "A proposal will therefore be required to ensure: ... that predicted adverse noise impacts, including internal and external levels, timing, duration and character, will be acceptable".

Without knowing the stated purpose for this latest development, but reading the marketing proposals associated with the site, we have good reason to believe that noise generated from the use of this property will not be acceptable. We refer to our comments submitted in relation to 21/01768/FUL which stated that experience to date makes us very concerned about the level of noise we may experience here in Houghton & Wyton.

Sound does not always travel in ways that are immediately obvious. Residents (e.g. those along Thicket Road and south of Huntingdon Road) and visitors (e.g. those using the camping and caravan park by the river, or living in the house boats along the river) often complained about the noise from the old A14. Anecdotal evidence from some of these residents suggests that at times, particularly at night along with the prevailing wind brings the sound wave from the old A14 down onto the south side of the village where it hits the back of the houses and appears to make it louder than in Hemingford Abbots itself. One resident reported that before the new A14 was built, they were unable to sleep with the windows open.

Likewise, private parties taking place in gardens in Hemingford Abbots, and even the Hemingford regatta further afield, when playing music are heard in waves of rising and falling sound - again especially at night when bird, traffic and other manmade sounds subside. The fact that sound can travel such long distances and even leapfrog areas nearby but return to ground further afield, means that the definition of neighbours must be looked at in its wider context. We already know that Houghton & Wyton village is affected from noise from Hemingford Abbots, and vice versa due to prevailing wind and topography, therefore we believe policy LP14 section C applies and that the predicted timing, duration and character of noise impacts (waves repeatedly coming closer and then seemingly disappearing) would be unacceptable. Living on a boat, in a caravan or under canvas would be even more intolerable.

LP14 Amenity requires that amenity is maintained for occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings. It states that a proposal will be required to ensure: C. The predicted noise impacts, including internal and external levels, timing, duration and character, will be acceptable. If we add to this the: - possibility of fireworks which are often used to celebrate such events, - difficulty in controlling a large number of visitors, keeping them inside with doors and windows closed, especially in hot weather, - the potential to exceed the forecasted number of events (unless limited) then this proposal would make the impact worse for all our residents.

- We are concerned that operating as a commercial development, this site will generate significant amounts of additional traffic in our neighbouring village and locally.
- Quiet tourism: Houghton & Wyton and the Hemingfords rely on quiet tourism to support their economy. Protection of the attractions, such as the Great Ouse Valley and The National Trust Houghton Mill and Waterclose Meadows campsite, from disturbance from noise pollution and increased traffic are important.
- We note that submitting this application using a Householder (Section 96a) rather than full planning application, there is no biodiversity study to highlight any impact and harm on the local rural area and surrounds of this dwelling.

**5. PLAY AREA EQUIPMENT, HOUGHTON PLAYING FIELD**

**RESOLVED:** Up to £20,000 be allocated for the replacement of two double swing sets and repairs to other equipment at the Play Area on Houghton & Wyton Playing Field. It is proposed that the swings will have wooden frames set in metal shoes and to be supplied and fitted by Online Playgrounds.

Proposed: Cllr Baxendale, Seconded: Cllr Guinea. All in favour

**6. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS, DELEGATED ACTION OR FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

A Non-Material Amendment planning application for changes to the roads and entrance to The Avenue Houghton Grange has been submitted. A meeting will be arranged to discuss this application.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Parish Council meeting will be **Monday 26 February 2024 at 11:30am.**

Signature ..... Date.....