

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the extra ordinary Parish Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 22nd January 2020 at 7.00pm in the Community Library, Thurston Community College, Thurston.

In the Chair: Cllr. Dashper

Present: Cllrs. Fawcett, Haley, Morris, Rainbow, Thurlbourne, Turner and West.

In Attendance: County Cllr. P Otton; District Cllr. S Mansel; Mr G Dixon (Thurston NDP Sub-Committee); Mr A Horton (Thurston NDP Sub-Committee); Mrs A O’Connell (Thurston NDP Sub-Committee); Mrs A Reeve (Thurston NDP Sub-Committee); Mrs V Waples, Clerk and 15 members of the public.

1. **OPENING** – The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.00pm and thanked all for attending. A statement was read out indicating that, in accordance with the changes in legislation, the public and councillors were permitted to film, record, photograph or use social media to report on the proceedings of the meeting. *A full transcript is available from the Clerk.*
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** –
 - a. No apologies of absence has been received.
 - b. Council noted that Cllr. Robinson had submitted his resignation in writing to the Chairman which had been accepted. The clerk advised that the vacancy would be advertised in accordance with legislation.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS INCLUDING GIFTS OF HOSPITALITY EXCEEDING £25** –
 - a. There were no declarations of pecuniary or local non-pecuniary interests for the Agenda under discussion. There were no gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 declared.
 - b. There were no declarations of lobbying for planning matters by those Councillors present.
 - c. The Clerk confirmed that there were no requests for dispensations for the agenda under discussion.
4. **PUBLIC FORUM** – to receive issues from members of the public present on the agenda as listed below:

CD explained the position of the Strategic Officers at MSDC; Officer’s Reports have been published for the Agenda for the Referrals Committee Meeting

 - Where do we stand with the Thurston NDP?
 - If these two applications are passed will the PC consider a legal challenge?
 - Are there any plans to reinstate the verges and roads and damaged caused by the developers?
 - Who pays for damage to vehicles sustained by poor roadways?
 - Why are there no monies spent upfront for the infrastructure?
 - Change in the political structure of the Committee – could residents lobby those on the current Referrals Committee to ensure the voice of the community is heard?
 - If approval not given, could the PC go for a call-in given that the situation is significantly changed since 2017 and both applications are contrary to the Thurston NDP?
 - Whilst MSDC did not have a 5-year land supply at the last meeting – it does now – why should these be acceptable? *The Chair confirmed that the report submitted by the Planning Officer states that this was not a reason for refusal of the application*
 - How many more houses can the village sustain? Noted that 818 already approved and 1468 is the number in the Draft Joint BMSDC Local Plan
 - Facilities will be completed overrun as they are not suitable for the current number of residents let alone those from developments already approved

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- Whilst PC is aware of the impact on highways; services; amenities and environment – MSDC needs to also take these into account?
- Surely planning is developer led – e.g. Beyton Road applicant is bribing BMSDC
- Highway improvements are tweaks only and are trivial with no major significant changes to the highway infrastructure
- Should a delegation go to the Leader / Chair of the Council – with these two further developments the village will have doubled in size with no real consideration of the impact – scale and impact are not properly understood by the Referrals Committee – this is an Officer driven process
- Basic underlying assumptions by the Officers are wrong – e.g. access to doctors via bus
- Where will people go for employment? Noted that the 2011 census is used as a baseline for future modelling to provide patterns for access to employment
- Who will ensure that the 35% of affordable housing is built and how is this worked out?
- Why is there little coverage in the local press? *The Chair confirmed that this was one of a number of options that would be covered by the meeting later on in the agenda.*
- It was confirmed that members of the Referrals Committee were only told last week that a Planning Referrals Meeting for next week had been scheduled - why was this special meeting called at such a late stage?
- Who determines when the meetings are to be called? *It was confirmed that it was Officers who would call the meetings but there was concern raised as to the limited time given to members to consider the material (reports) submitted especially as none were expecting this extra meeting to be called. It was noted that the pack released for the following week amounted to over 1000 pages.*

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED: full details of the applications listed below are available to view online by visiting: <http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/development-management/application-search-and-comment/search-for-applications/>

- a) DC/20/00018 – Application for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order MS52/A1 – removal of overhanging branches of 3 No Corsican Pine Trees @ 14 Blackbird Close
BM looked at it from Barton Road – application a bit vague but trees nearby had had similar work. Meeting agreed that it would request that this be referred to the appropriate planning officer and abide by their decision.
- b) Appeals against Enforcement Notices issued 23/08/2019 (APP/W3520/C/19/328783) @ land off Beyton Road, Thurston – council to consider whether it wishes to make further representations on this matter.
The meeting agreed that its original comments were still valid and noted that these had been passed over to the Planning Inspectorate by BMSDC Planning Officers. It was agreed that the Parish Council did not have any further representations to make.

6. COUNCIL TO CONSIDER FURTHER INFORMATION FORTHCOMING ON THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND TO DETERMINE THE MANNER IN WHICH A FURTHER RESPONSE IS TO BE GIVEN
- Council to note that both applications are due to go before Mid Suffolk's Referrals Committee on 29th January 2020

- a) DC/19/03486 - Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved - access to be considered) -
Erection of up to 210 dwellings, means of access, open space and associated infrastructure, including junction improvements (with all proposed development located within Mid Suffolk District, with the exception of proposed improvements to Fishwick Corner being within West Suffolk) - land South West Of Beyton Road Thurston Suffolk
The meeting debated the above application with reference to it being included as an agenda item at the Planning Referrals Committee Meeting on 29th January 2020.

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The following items were raised:

- Report from the Co-Chairs of the Thurston NDP – paper has identified inaccuracies:
 1. Modelling of the traffic flow is not accurate, and evidence is still required that the following have been taken into account
 - Traffic into Thurston in the rush hours from A143, through Thurston and out of village
 - Traffic out of Moreton Hall during the same time
 - Bridge on New Road – from diagram gives the impression of an improvement under the bridge with pictorial evidence of a parent and child, car and bus. Misleading evidence given from this drawing but nowhere is there reference to this in writing.
 - Traffic flows under the bridge based on two-way traffic
 2. Assumption that congestion issues at Fishwick Corner are down to visibility – should this be challenged?
 3. Safety issues of residents ignored – SCC Highways state that there is no need for a zebra crossing for young people getting across the roads – and yet why has this previously been the case e.g. Station Hill, Norton Road
 4. Safety played down by the planners – only way the passageway under the bridge will need to be reassessed is if there are a number of vulnerable users
 5. Issue of safe access for cyclists is not accounted for. Cyclists cannot use the footpath under the bridge and will therefore need to use the route for traffic which determines that they will be in the path of other motorised vehicle users.
 6. Planners state that car traffic improvements should allow development as improvements have made it safe for users of the highway network
 7. Thedwastre Bridge – only talk about solutions being available? Clientele using this route will be different as it will include vulnerable users – no solution being proposed.
 8. Railway Safety – issue over funding of a feasibility study once planning permission is granted – need a costed solution prior to the application being granted
 9. Reliance on the car – climate change impact
 10. Impact on air quality if junctions are already at capacity – solutions do not provide adequate relief from congestion
- Letter from SCC Highways Department dated 7th January 2020 – referred to within the report submitted by the Co-Chairs of the Thurston NDP – all agreed that there were still a number of issues that need challenging as factually incorrect. SCC Letter refers to the fact that the Travel Planning Officer raised a number of points: provision of bus-stops; multi-modal voucher and liaison with other Travel Plans for Thurston Applications – these have not been adequately addressed and this should be challenged.
- MSDC Policy and Infrastructure Response dated 13th January 2020 – who are recommending that both applications be accepted – concern was raised over the statements given in the report concerning the weight of the Thurston NDP.
 The Clerk advised that under the NPPF where there is a conflict between the policies of a NDP and a Development Plan then the conflict must be resolved by the decision maker favouring the policy which is contained within the latest document to become part of the development plan – which is the NDP. The draft Joint Local Plan is at an early stage and as it has no policies limited weight should be given to it. She confirmed that she would research the Ministerial Statement of 2016 along with the Briefing Paper to the House of Commons on Neighbourhood Planning and the rewording given to the weighting of NDP.

It was resolved that the response to be submitted a) as a late paper b) as direct lobbying to those on the referrals committee and c) at the Committee Meeting itself should be structured around these issues along with the emphasis of the weighting of Thurston NDP, as per the NPPF, aif.

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b) DC/19/02090 - Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved)- Erection of up to 210 dwellings and new vehicular access to include planting and landscaping, natural and semi-natural green space including community growing space(s), children's play area and sustainable drainage system (SuDS), to include 35% affordable dwellings - land to the east Of Ixworth Road

- Letter from SCC Highways Department dated 7th January 2020 – issues raised covered:
 - Travel Plan – July 2019 – challenged – how have the issues raised by SCC been accommodated / addressed
 - SCC reports states that there are, even with mitigation measures, junctions at capacity
 - No mitigation for Barton Road railway bridge route; Fishwick Corner; Pokeriage Corner;
 - If SCC Highways are stating that 210 dwellings from this site will have a severe impact on the highway network with increased queue lengths, delays and junction at or approaching theoretical capacity – why does the Planning Officer still recommend approval – especially for this application?
 - SCC recommended the application be refused until mitigations measures for the above junctions and improvements to the highway at the rail bridge are submitted to reduce the severe impact for this site – why has MSDC Planning Officer ignored SCC?
 - MSDC Policy and Infrastructure Response dated 13th January 2020 - agreed that comments raised under the Bloor application stood for this one
 - Report from the Co-Chairs of the Thurston NDP – agreed that the principal issues stood for this application as well
- Further comments were submitted as follows:
- Where are the raft of improvements as stated by the Planning Officer – Gladman only works because the ‘issues’ are being solved by the Bloor applications
 - SCC recommends refusal which the planning authority appear to have ignored – severe impact statement made over congestion; parent parking; access from the north of the village to TCC; additional school traffic
 - Why no mention of safety issues at the railway
 - Reliance on the car – climate change impact
 - Air quality – impact on the environment unacceptable - NPPF and the Climate Emergency declared by MSDC
 - Clerk provided information re Network Rail and the lack of a comment over rail safety was of concern

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Immediate action points for both applications:

- Clerk to submit a formal written response – as a Statutory Consultee can submit a further response – requirement for this to be based on facts – as a late paper
- Liaison with District Cllrs. to ensure all issues are covered
- Comment to be submitted to the Leader of the Council on the issues being raised by TPC
- EADT – lined up for a written statement by the end of the week.
- Paper for submission to local networks such as ITV; BBC Look East; EADT to be written by RF/JW/GD
- Cllr. Haley to approach Radio Suffolk to gauge interest
- Cllr. West to approach ITV Anglia to gauge interest
- Referrals Meeting – Cllrs. to meet the following Friday to agree the approach to be taken

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- Visual evidence – agreed that this should be continued and for it to be circulated to all Referral Committee Members
- Referrals Committee – Clerk to raise concerns with the Monitoring Officer as to the conduct of the Chief Planning Officer during the debate by members as per previous meetings and to request their presence to ensure the situation is monitored.
- Clerk to formally request that SCC Highways Department are also present at the Planning Referrals Committee Meeting to enable any questions raised are answered at the meeting.

7. TO NOTE PLANNING APPLICATION DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

- a) DC/19/05126 – Planning permission – erection of a 1 No detached self-build dwelling, garage/studio with attic accommodation and new vehicular access @ land West of Elgin Lodge
- b) DC/19/05392 - Prior approval – Agricultural to dwelling – for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to 2 No dwelling houses (Class C3) and for Associated Operational Development – Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q @ Harveys Garden Plants, Great Green
- c) DC/19/05465 – Refusal of outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for two detached dwellings with garages @ land East of Woodlands, Barrells Road
- d) DC/19/05531 – Refusal of outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for the erection of 1 No detached dwelling (self-build) @ land north of Poplar Farm Lane, Great Green

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS –

- a. Community Engagement Surgeries – 31st January 2020 between 2.00pm and 4.00pm
- b. PIISG Meeting scheduled for 31st January 2020 commencing at 10.30am in the Parish Council Office is now cancelled
- c. Parish Council Meeting scheduled 5th February 2020 commencing at 7.30pm.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING – there being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.11pm.

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Appendix A

Glossary of Common Abbreviations used

Aif	All in favour
AGAR	Annual Governance and Accountability Return
APM	Annual Parish Meeting
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BACS	Bankers Automated Clearing Services
BUAB	Built Up Area Boundary
BMSDC	Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
CC	Credit Card
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
Chq.	Cheque
Cllr.	Councillor
Cttee.	Committee
DC	District Council
DD	Direct Debit
FOI	Freedom of Information
FR	Financial Regulations
GPoC	General Power of Competence
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LAIS (from SALC)	Local Association's Information Services
LGBCE	Local Government Boundary Commission for England
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSDC	Mid Suffolk District Council
NHS	National Health Service
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NR	Network Rail
PC	Parish Council
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
Pdf	Portable Document Format
PIISG	Parish Infrastructure Investment Steering Group
Rec.	Recreation
RFO	Responsible Financial Officer
SARS	Suffolk Accident Rescue Service
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SID	Speed Indicator Device
SNT	SaferNeighbourhood Team
SO	Standing Order
SPS	Suffolk Preservation Society
TBC	To be confirmed
TCC	Thurston Community College
TNPSG	Thurston Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign

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