

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 23 July, 2018 at the Elmsett Methodist Church Hall.

**PRESENT:** Mr A Newman, Mr Nick Bird, Mrs M Hinton, Mr G Hinton, Mr S Coram, Mr J Sones, Mr A Woodgate, County Councillor R Lindsay, the Clerk and 3 members of the public

07.18.01 **APOLOGIES:** District Councillor A, Ferguson

07.18.02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Alan Newman declared a non-pecuniary interest (near neighbour) to planning application at Mill Farm.

07.18.03 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 11 June were signed as an accurate record.

07.18.04 4.1 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Robert updated the meeting on county council matters.

4.2 **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Alan Ferguson sent his report which was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting.

07.18.05 **PRESENTATION By Community Housing Enabling Officer Babergh DC:** Elizabeth Ling from Babergh District Council informed the meeting of her role at Babergh with regard to rural housing. She said that there was money available to carry out a housing needs assessment. There was discussion at the meeting of how this might fit in with the neighbourhood plan. Subsequent to the parish council meeting a meeting has been arranged with Community Action Suffolk to follow this up.

07.18.06 **POLICE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS:** John Sones updated the meeting on the changes in the pipeline for the Police. The move will see a reduction in PCSOs and more officers moving into the safer Neighbourhood Teams and the introduction of Community Engagement Officers. He also congratulated PC Dave White who responded to the recent burglaries in Manor Road. He made himself available outside the shop for 1.5 hours talking to local residents. He also reminded the meeting that Elmsett was hosting the next Police Forum to be held on 15 August at the village hall.

07.18.07 **VILLAGE HALL UPDATE:** Chairperson of village hall updated the meeting on progress so far. A meeting has been arranged for Monday 10 September. They are also going to hold an open day on 29 September to get the views of residents. They also informed the meeting that they have arranged for Circus Petite to perform from 26-30 September.

- 07.18.08 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE:** The Chairman updated the meeting on progress. Work is in hand creating a draft plan which it is hoped will be subject to public consultation later in September. The chairman had met with a representative of AECOM who are consultants acting for the parish council preparing a site assessment report for all of the possible residential sites in Elmsett shown in the latest draft of Babergh District Council's local plan as a result of their past call for sites. In addition, a meeting has also been arranged with Babergh local planners to discuss the shape of the neighbourhood plan to ensure that it is in line with the local plan and to get initial officer comments.
- 07.18.09 **RECESS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Concern was raised regarding the state of the ditch in Ipswich Road because of a smelly discharge. It was agreed that the local resident would contact environmental health authority to deal with this.
- 07.18.10 **CORRESPONDENCE:** BDC – Consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement. No comments were forthcoming.
- 07.18.11 **FINANCE:** purchase of equipment for meadow in conjunction with the school – Members of the parish council agreed to wait until there was further information regarding the possibility of a new build for the village hall and to prioritise expenditure accordingly.  
Provision of appropriate benches/seating around the village. It was agreed to purchase one seat in the first instance, the siting of which to be dependent on whether permission is required from the highways authority. If this proves a success then consideration be given to purchase another. Cheques signed for SALC - £342.80 annual subscription, T Hitchcock £120.00 grasscutting 6 & 20 June. Elmsett Methodist Church £30.00 (NP) hire of hall. Elmsett Methodist Church - £75 – hire x 5, Elmsett & Aldham VHMC £22 – hire of hall 15/8 for the Police Forum.
- 07.18.12 **PLANNING: Below are the comments sent to Babergh District Council following discussion of all the applications during the meeting -**

**DC/17/05204 (Access and Layout to be considered) – Erection of up to 18 No dwellings. Erection of commercial nursery and creation of vehicular access – Land at Shrubland Nursery, Whatfield Road.**

We refer to and reiterate the recommendation of refusal that we submitted to you on the 21st February 2018. There is no reason for the Parish Council to change or detract from that recommendation but we would add additional reasons below in the light of the revision and developments regarding the District Councils' five year land supply. This objection should be taken alongside that of the 21st February 2018. We continue to recommend refusal of the application as it represents an

overdevelopment for the village where the infrastructure serving the existing community is substandard and overstretched and where there is no identified need for the development.

**Additional Detailed Comments** - There is a real complication in respect of this application and application B/16/00447 that abuts this site immediately to the north.

The existing permission for B/16/0047 shows a central private drive access from Whatfield Road for the seven dwellings and it also shows land ownership at the north east corner of the site at right angles to whatfield Road. At the time of considering that application we pointed out that the layout would leave a difficult access and substandard visibility for the existing Nursery site.

A revision to the access arrangements from Whatfield Road for the 7 dwellings was submitted to you on the 9th March 2018 under the same application number. That revision sought a central access to the seven units that would also give access to the land at the rear (the nursery site). It also pushed the seven units across the existing access track to the nursery at the eastern end of the site.

When planning application DC/17/05204 for 18 dwellings and a new Nursery site was first submitted it showed a central access to the site from Whatfield Road. The latest application consultation (same number) shows a revised scheme with amended access from Whatfield Road. This now claims land ownership over that parcel of land in the north east corner of application B/16/0047 previously show in their ownership. They can't both be correct so that needs to be resolved one way or the other.

In addition, the access road is now narrower than previously shown and with the sharp bends and substandard turning area it is not suitable for use as sole access to commercial property especially when the use of HGV's is needed and as there is no margin to the east side of the road to allow for overrunning. The visibility from the access to the west is now restricted and visibility to the centreline of Whatfield Road is unacceptable.

The parish council has received no rebuttal regarding our previous comments about the flawed Transport Statement. We also note that no new Design and Access statement has been submitted even though the applicant proposes major changes to both. No doubt you have requested revised copies.

We now turn to the subject of need. We say that need has patently not been demonstrated, amongst all the submitted documents you have received there is not one shred of evidence that points to the need to build houses in this Hinterland Village. In fact we can demonstrate there is no need, a simple investigation of houses for sale in Elmsett from the

internet revealed that there are currently 5 houses for sale, plus a barn conversion in Elmsett; ranging from a 2-bed at £125k to a 6 bed at £600k many of which have been for sale for the last 6 months. We also know of 3 others which were for sale and have now been taken off the market because of a lack of interest. If you widen the search radius by 1 mile you can add in another 7 properties for sale.

Another area of concern is ecology and we are concerned that the whole of the site has not been covered in the ecological study.

The last, and possibly the most important point we now make relates further to need and that is that Babergh District Council can now demonstrate a five year housing land supply meaning that you no longer need to approve this type of speculative development that is outside of policy and outside Elmsett's Built Up Area Boundary

**Conclusions** - We say that this proposed development should be refused because it is simply not sustainable, is not in scale with the settlement, it does not comply with any of the core strategy policies, it is too large for the capacity of our rural road network and transport infrastructure and it is outside Elmsett's Built Up Area Boundary. Although there are numerous documents supporting this application we could see none that identified the need for the development. The approval and subsequent occupation of 18 new dwellings will lead to road safety dangers on a daily basis over the life of the development. The parish council requests that prior to consideration in committee that there be an accompanied site inspection by all the planning committee that will, importantly, include a proper detail tour of the road network serving Elmsett.

**DC/18/03100** - Mill Farm, Hadleigh Road, Elmsett - Notification of Prior Approval Application under Part 3, Class Q (a) and (b) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Although the site is outside the built up area boundary for Elmsett these are existing agricultural buildings that have a use and therefore the parish council considered that their conversion to small residential units would not have a great impact on the countryside.

**DC/18/03218** Notification of works to trees protected under Tree Preservation Order BT236 - Reduce overhang by up to 2.5m and lift crown to 3m on Broadleaf trees - 2 Hazelwood, Elmsett. The members of the council had no objections to the work being carried out.

**DC/18/02316** - Residential Development comprising 42 No. dwellings, incorporating 35% affordable homes, creation of new vehicular access and public open space. Land on the south side of Whatfield Road.

Additional Comments – Following discussion during our recent council meeting we submit the following additional comments.

The council refers to and reiterates the recommendation of refusal that we submitted to you on the 20th June 2018. There is no reason for the Parish Council to change or detract from that recommendation but we would add additional reasons below in regard to need and in the light of developments regarding the District Councils' five year land supply. This objection should be taken alongside that of the 20th June 2018. We continue to recommend refusal of the application as it represents an overdevelopment for the village where the infrastructure serving the existing community is substandard and overstretched and where there is no identified need for the development.

#### Additional Detailed Comments

We would like to further address the subject of need. We say that the need to build more houses here has not been demonstrated. Amongst the submitted documents you have received there is no evidence that points to the need to build more houses in this Hinterland Village. In fact we can demonstrate that there is no need, a simple investigation of houses for sale in Elmsett from the internet revealed that there are currently 5 houses for sale, plus a barn conversion in Elmsett; ranging from a 2-bed at £125k to a 6 bed at £600k many of which have been for sale for the last 6 months. We also know of 3 others which were for sale and have now been taken off the market because of a lack of interest. If you widen the search radius by 1 mile you can add in another 7 properties for sale.

Lastly, and possibly most importantly is that Babergh District Council can now demonstrate a five year housing land supply meaning that you no longer need to approve this type of speculative development in the open countryside that is outside of policy and outside the Built Up Area Boundary of Elmsett

**Revised Conclusions** We say that this proposed development should be refused because it is simply not sustainable, is not in scale with the settlement, it does not comply with any of the core strategy policies, it is too large for the capacity of our rural road network and transport infrastructure and it is outside the Elmsett Built Up Area Boundary. Although there are numerous documents supporting this application we could see none that identified the need for the development. The approval and subsequent occupation of 42 new dwellings will lead to road safety dangers on a daily basis over the life of the development. The parish council requests that prior to consideration in committee that there be an accompanied site inspection by all the planning committee that will, importantly, include a proper detail tour of the road network serving Elmsett.

07.18.13

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:-** 17 September, 2018.

The meeting closed

Signed:- .....

Dated:-.....

Chairman