

FLORE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 20th JULY 2020 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: Mr Andy Anderson, Mrs Kathryn Baines, Mr Kevin Beasley, Mrs Hayley Davies.
Mr Geoff Fellows, Mr Brian Hammond, Mr Tom Higginson, Mrs Sue Kerrison
6 Members of the public present (5 for the whole meeting)
District Councillor Mr Johnnie Amos, left after the public forum

7.00 pm. Chairman of the Trustees for Flore Primary School came along to update the Councillors on the current situation
7.25 pm. Official Parish Council meeting commenced

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mrs Christine Littlewood

490.0 Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct, regarding business tabled for discussion. Nothing declared

491.0 Public Forum: for parishioners and reports by County and District Councillors

- Residents – The residents had primarily come along to listen to the Council's comments on planning application DA/2020/0479 (item 498.1). Some of these made comments on their personal concerns.
- District Cllr Amos – Also reiterated this thoughts and concerns regarding the application. He also mentioned he is working at trying to secure the S106 money for the High Street work.

492.0 To approve the minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15th June 2020.
Accepted that minutes were an accurate recoding of the meeting. BH/GF

493.0 Outstanding items (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

- Trees on Bovis Estate. Noted that Bovis will be planning some trees in the open space area to be gifted to the Council, likely planting time Sep/Oct.
- Update on works on the M1. Noted
- Update on High Street proposals. Cllr Higginson gave a brief update, following District Cllr Amos comments earlier. Still awaiting confirmation of the money and hoping for a commissioned report on any proposals. The Group was working on trying to get County Councillors engaged and working to push this forward.
- Flood Warden. Resident updated Council on the recent work undertaken at the Millennium Hall and other recent flood issues around the village.

494.0 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

494.1 Public Open Spaces in housing developments. Cllr Fellows would be attending a meeting with NCALC regarding this. Discussion took place on the Council's stance relating to service charges on householders in new developments. As it could not be ascertained exactly what was being raised prior to the meeting, Cllr Fellows will attend and report back to the Council.

494.2 Transfer of Defibrillators to the Council. Group who set up fund raising for two defibrillators to be installed in the village wish to close and hand over upkeep and maintenance of them to the Council. They would transfer the remaining money to the Council of £473.03.

Resolved: Councillors happy to take over upkeep and maintenance of the two defibrillators from the group. GF/AA

494.3 Confirmation that Mr Boans had resigned from the Council with effect 17th June 2020. Paperwork had been submitted to the District Council and permission has just been received to co-opt the vacancy. Information will be put in the newsletter for residents interested in filing the vacancy, to write to the Council by the 11th September, (to be discussed at meeting on the 21st September).

495.0 COUNCIL PROPERTY

495.1 Street Lighting: Cllrs Anderson and Beasley confirmed that Zeta has rectified the items on the snag list and Council were happy that all has now been completed.

Resolved: Council happy to pay the final 50% of the invoice @ £14,359.50 plus VAT. Clerk to drawdown the loan and invoice is to be paid when funds were in the Council's account. AA/KBa

Clerk

496.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 496.1 Finance update. It was reported that as at 30th June 2020 the Council had £29,340.52 in the bank account. There were no matters arising. Figures accepted by Council.
- 496.2 Internal Control. Cllr Kerrison informed the meeting that she had carried out the internal control check and there were no issues arising.

497.0 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Payments agreed and paid on 15 th June, (under General Power of Competence)		
Opus Energy	Street light electricity – June payment	311.06
July payments		
N Westhead	Bus Shelter cleaning	16.00
S Halkett	Salary	577.17
HMRC	PAYE– Employee Tax	144.20
Halkett	Office costs	17.00
M Freeman	Play area £186/Close C/yard £90 grass cutting	276.00
Groundwork & Building Svc	Drainage and flood work on Millennium Hall	1000.00
Zeta Lighting	Final payment of street lighting	17,231.40
TOTAL		19,261.77

498.0 PLANNING

- 498.1 **Application:** DA/2020/0479. Land to the east of Brington Road. Outline application for up to 70 dwellings (to include 28 affordable dwellings), associated site infrastructure and open space. (All matters reserved other than access). Clerk to ask for an extension on this application to the 31st July. Councillors made comment that the responses from residents, that they had seen, were excellent, quality and well thought out. *Note: Extension granted until 31st July.*
- Flore Parish Council strongly opposes this application for the principal reason that it does not accord with Planning Policy in both the Flore Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2016) or the adopted Daventry Settlements and Countryside Plan (Part 2) 2011-2029 (Adopted February 2020). There are also additional grounds for objection in addition to clear, and overarching, policy grounds.
- 1. The Flore Neighbourhood Development Plan.**
- The Flore Plan, which was made in 2016, is an integral part of the planning process. The Plan through Policy F2 – scale and type of new development - established a Development Area boundary for the village which, through a revision made in the Settlements and Countryside Plan, now includes the two latest housing developments, both completed within the last four years. This application is located outside of the development area and is therefore contrary to policy F2. Furthermore, the application is contrary to Policy F4 – Affordable housing and rural exception sites – as it comprises 70 dwellings with some affordable housing.
- The recent history of development within the village is also a material consideration as a consequence of cumulative impact. The village has recently had two major residential developments. Application DA/2014/0454 on land off Brockhall Road and DA/2013/0703, which is the recently completed Bovis Homes development. These two developments added 97 new houses to the village, which increased its size by nearly 20%, which is a considerable addition to any community. It was as a consequence of these two applications and the potential continued outward extension of the village that the Flore Plan actively sought to encourage new development within the Flore Development Area boundary. It is possible that there will be such a development on the site of the demolished garage which will raise the increase in size to 22%. The addition of a further 70 dwellings would bring the increase in six years to 36%. This cumulative effect has been relevant in recent appeal cases.
- This proposal is entirely outside the Area boundary and should therefore be rejected upon those grounds alone. We append reference to a recent High Court ruling which we believe may be relevant in this case.

Clerk

Council wins legal challenge against Planning Inspectorate

A decision by the Planning Inspectorate to grant outline permission on appeal for nine dwellings on Station Road in Fordham has been quashed by the High Court.

East Cambridgeshire District Council refused the application due to its location outside the development envelope. The applicant appealed.

The council said that should the decision go unchallenged, it would "seriously" undermine the Fordham Neighbourhood Plan and all neighbourhood plans in the district. Fordham's plans outline how and where development can take place. Also, the council was sure that there had been a miscalculation of its housing land supply by the inspector

Anna Bailey, leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council, said: "The decision made by the Planning Inspectorate seriously undermined the hard work of local people in Fordham to develop their neighbourhood plan which they undertook in order to control how and where development takes place.

"Speaking to the local member, councillor Julia Huffer, I know that for Fordham, it was devastating to have their neighbourhood plan effectively rendered useless by the decision of the inspector so soon after it was adopted.

"Left unchallenged, it would also have had the knock-on effect of undermining all neighbourhood plans in the district, rendering them ineffective at controlling where development takes place. We knew the inspectorate had got it wrong and we needed to make a stand. We will continue to support all communities across our district that wish to develop their own neighbourhood plan."

The council has been awarded all costs relating to the case, while a different inspector will consider the appeal

Laura Edgar, The Planner
14 July 2020

2. DDC Settlements and Countryside Local Plan 2 (Part 2) 2011-2029 (Adopted February 2020)

This is a key planning policy document that reinforces the made Flore Plan and its planning policies. It has also recently been adopted which gives the plan considerable weight.

Vision and Objectives

As a starting point it is important to consider the plans vision and objectives which all of its policies underpin and support. A key aspect of the Plans vision is for 'new development to be focused on the town of Daventry' and that 'our rural areas will support a network of vibrant communities. Villages will retain their local distinctiveness and character'.

Objective 9 (housing) of the Plan states 'Housing will be focused at the most sustainable location of Daventry with limited development in the rural areas to provide for local needs and support local services'.

Both the vision and objectives are compelling. The most sustainable areas to build within the District is the town of Daventry. It has the capacity and infrastructure to accommodate significant areas of housing development and any development in the rural areas prejudices the vision and objective of DDC to focus development in the town of Daventry.

Housing in Rural Areas.

The Flore Plan closely follows the development principles set out in the DDC Plan Chapter 5. This chapter places strict limitations on further development in rural areas on the basis that the overall spatial strategy for the District seeks to direct greater levels of growth to Daventry town. This end will be undermined for as long as developers can exploit green field sites on the perimeter of villages where construction is easier, sales easier to achieve and profits potentially higher.

Paragraph 5.1.03 makes the clear point that 'the requirement for the rural areas has been exceeded' as at 1st April 2019 with 10 years of the Plan remaining.

Secondary Service Villages.

Flore is designated a secondary service village in the Local Plan (Policy RA2). In reference to such villages the Plan states that "there is no justification for further allocations (of housing)" and "development should be within the confines of the village as defined on the inset map"- this application clearly is located outside of the inset map boundary.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan the village has lost several of the facilities which justified the designation, including the garage, the cafe, hairdressers, the farm shop and the restaurant. The pub is currently shuttered.

Other grounds for objection

Despite the clear and overwhelming policy justification that clearly means that this application should be

refused there are a number of detailed issues which we wish to bring to your attention.

i) Highway Issues: The proposed access to the development off the Brington Road. This is a narrow country road with no footpaths and relatively high vehicle use providing access to villages to the north from J16 of the M1. Its straightness encourages high speeds and it is inappropriate to introduce access to a substantial housing estate therefrom. The location of the access into the site itself is severely constrained by both the width of the Brington Road and its close, and visually compromised, proximity of the its junction with the High Street. This access is to be used during construction works for the delivery of all materials. This road and proposed junction is substandard and unsafe.

ii) Site Location: The proposed site is a field which, although close to the village boundary, is separated from any village property or street and will effectively be an isolated suburb. It will be difficult to achieve any community cohesion and is remote from community facilities. The site layout is a standard suburban type of landscape which fails to reference its village context. It takes away the existing copse of trees in the north-east corner, which the landscape appraisal acknowledges is 'significant', offers some screening from the motorway and instead uses the affordable housing as a barrier to traffic noise for the full market sale houses in the south of the site. It also appears to reduce the hedge line on the eastern boundary where the landscape appraisal points out there was considerable bird song, and which again may provide at present a little reduction of the very significant motorway and bypass noise to which this site is exposed.

iii) Drainage: There is an assumption that the surface water outfall will be to existing surface water drains running down Bliss Lane. The surface water drainage in general discharges to the river, is not adopted, with unknown ownership. Its condition is unknown and this proposal is a serious concern to the village flood warden. We have had well documented periods where the village hall has flooded as a consequence of run-off from the highway. The means of drainage, both surface and foul, have to be fully assessed at this stage. It is not appropriate to consider these issues at the reserved matter stage when the principal of the development has been approved. This is such an important issue to villagers and the parish council that this must be considered and assessed at this stage.

iii) Archaeology: Local knowledge of the site is that historically it used to be village tip and burial ground for those in the community who could not be buried within the churchyard hence its name of Bedlam Pit.

v) Ecology- The Parish Council fully support the views expressed by Paul Minton, a resident, who has objected to the proposal with detailed views

Conclusion

This application clearly fails to meet policy and therefore should be refused. Additional development in a village that has seen considerable expansion in recent years prejudices the aims of DDC to focus development in Daventry. In addition, there are a number of detailed issues that the Parish Council and villagers, who have written to you, wish to bring to your attention. Some of these, such as highways and drainage, are fundamentally important to assess at this stage and not as reserved matters. If the Council were to approve this application the precedent set would be catastrophic for the success of DDC's recently adopted Local Plan and the Flore Neighbourhood Plan and would result in serious harm to the character and form of the village which would have to be compensated for through significant s106 mitigation measures.

499.0 REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

- 499.1 Brodie Lodge. Play area is open, signage has been erected. Brodie Lodge pavilion is only open to Pre-School at present.
- 499.2 Millennium Hall. Decided not to open at present due to Government Guidelines regarding PPE and cleaning. To be reviewed in August.
- 499.3 Commonwealth Flags and Disaster Relief Fund: Most flagstaffs in good condition except one which is not working. Once restrictions ease, they will attempt to get it working
- 499.4 Charities: Flore Charity held meeting virtually. Chris Littlewood elected chairman for the year.

500.0 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a. Costain Galliford Closure of M1. 493
- b. NCALC Public Open Spaces in housing developments. 494.1
- c. Mr Boans Resignation from Council, received after June meeting. 494.3
- d. DDC Planning application. 498.1
- e. Residents Copy of submissions sent to DDC re 498.1

501.0 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AFTER AGENDA PUBLISHED

Planning Application: DA/2020/0552. 11 Chapel Lane. Removal of tree and works to two trees within a conservation area. – Councillors had no objections to this as the work did not impact on any adjoining properties.

Flood report – dealt with under 493.0

Developer – approach to meet up – Council not minded for a meeting at present.

Items for inclusion on next meeting's agenda.

Public Open Spaces in housing developments – if necessary, for any decisions to be made otherwise update would be dealt with by email.

Next planned full Council meeting: 21st September, 19th October, 16th November

The meeting was declared closed at 9.00 pm