
Wentworth Parish Council

Minutes of meeting : 20th September 2017

Present	Cllr D Lee (Chair)	Cllr C Stone
	Cllr S Springthorpe	Cllr G Lowes
	Cllr E Atkin	Clerk - Mrs A Lowes
	DC S Cheetham	8 members of the public

1.	Apologies for absence. DC Hugo, DC Smith, CC L Dupré Mrs Scott, Mr & Mrs S Bottomley.
	The Chair opened the meeting for public comments on the following planning applications.

	<p>Planning. Cllr Springthorpe and Cllr Atkin declared an Interest in the Outline application at College Farm.</p> <p>17/01559/OUT Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the redevelopment of the farmyard, buildings and associated land for up to 6 self build plots. College Farm, Main Street, Wentworth.</p> <p>Parishoners raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside development envelope. • No detail of housing layout/location on site. • Bat habitat • Proposed bay 1 is adjacent to a line of mature trees - damage? • Proposed bay 2 - TPO line of trees and driveways for recently approved new homes. • Proposed passing bay no 3 - drainage ditch • Substation presently used as parking area. • No Parishoners have ever requested passing places along Main Street so we do not feel these are necessary. • Main Street has always been a narrow, single track, rural road. • Inaccuracies in Traffic Survey report. <p>7. The Chair requested a vote from the members of the public in attendance: For - 0 Against - 8</p> <p>17/01569/FUL Erection of a bank of 13 equestrian steel framed mirrors - 3 Church Farm Close</p> <p>The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important native, species rich hedge with planning conditions already attached. • Potential damage to hedge due to size and scale of mirrors • Supporting struts will have detrimental impact on hedge. • Ecological impact • Impact on neighbouring property - including light and outlook. • Inaccuracy at point 15 of Application form. • High voltage power line runs underground very close to proposed site. <p>The Chair requested a vote from the members of the public in attendance: For - 0 Against - 6</p> <p>Amendment of plans (move to a different place) - 2.</p> <p>The Chair closed the meeting to members of the public.</p> <p>The Councillors agreed to recommend Outright Refusal for both applications. The comments sent to the relevant planning officers are attached to the Minutes.</p>
	<p>6 Parishoners left the meeting.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

3.	<p>Matters arising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17/01370/OUT 5 dwellings and demolition of existing bungalow and garage. Application Refused. • 17/01322/FUL Detached 3 bed bungalow, north west of 27 Sutton Road, Witchford. Application Refused. • Councillors requested that the Clerk write to ECDC to confirm that planning permissions 13/00183/FUL Change of use from garage to dwelling and new access for existing dwelling and 13/00808/FUL Extension to side and alterations to existing bungalow have now passed the 3 year limit and have expired.
4.	<p>County Councillors report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Dupré was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.
5.	<p>District Councillors report. DC Cheetham reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Public Spaces Protection order has been placed on Angel Drove car park. • The new Local plan is close to completion and presentation to Full Council.
	<p>DC Cheetham left the meeting.</p>
6.	<p>Correspondence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A142 safety study has been circulated to all Councillors. • Highways Open Day - No one able to attend. • Parish Council Conference, 10th October - Cllr Springthorpe will attend. <p>Cllr Lowes and Cllr Stone declared an Interest in the following item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for donation from Rackham School. Councillors discussed the request and agreed to donate up to £500 depending on the S137 expenditure limit for the year.. Proposed by Cllr Springthorpe and seconded by Cllr Atkin. • (Post meeting note - S137 is £7.57 per elector.)
8.	<p>Playpark Maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllrs agreed a further 6 bags of bark should be ordered to ensure the correct level of fill under the equipment. Proposed by Cllr Springthorpe and seconded by Cllr Atkin. • It was agreed to leave the paths for this winter and let the grass grow through. Review in Spring 2018. • Cllrs requested that the Clerk get quotes for a picnic bench and/or a new piece of play equipment.
9.	<p>Accounts for payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wentworth Parochial Church Council (Hall Hire 22th September 2017) £15.00 • 1&1 website package £1.19 • Clerk salary to September 2017 £250 • Microsoft software annual license £tbc • SLCC Membership £38.00 • Rackham Primary school donation £500.00

10.	Items for the next meeting. • None raised.
	The Meeting closed at 9.25pm

Signed..... Dated.....

Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the redevelopment of the farmyard, buildings and associated land for up to 6 self build plots at College Farm, Main Street, Wentworth.

Reference: 17/01559/OUT
Case Officer: Andrew Phillips
Email: plservices@eastcambs.gov.uk

Does the Parish Council have any concerns about the application? Yes
Can these concerns be address by: Outright refusal

The proposed development is outside of the development envelope.

The settlement edge of the village is historically properties fronting Main Street. The proposal is for backfill development which is significantly different, and therefore contrary to Policy ENV1 which seeks to protect and conserve the settlement edge. The proposal would be visually intrusive within the rural landscape, especially when viewed across the fen or from the public pathways and bridleways surrounding the site.

Under Policy ENV1 proposals are required to protect, conserve and enhance the pattern of traditional and distinctive landscape features. Houses on Main Street traditionally face the road and the proposal for backfill development is significantly different to the rural street scene.

The impact of backfill development will have a significantly adverse impact on the properties at the end of Main Street, for example noise, additional traffic, and light pollution.

The East Cambs. Local Plan 2015 says that the estimated new dwellings for the village, between 2013 and 2031 will be 11. Since 2015 the Parish has already had 11 planning applications accepted, meaning that we have already met our fifteen year commitment within the first two years of the plan. This rapid growth is unsustainable, and we are very concerned that any further significant development will lead to unacceptable urbanisation, destroying the rural nature of the village.

The East Cambs. Local Plan 2015 also states: “...with new housing being built on suitable infill sites”; “...the development envelope has been drawn around Wentworth to define the built-up part of the village where development (infill) may be permitted”; “...development proposals will be expected to provide for frontage development only, to reflect the existing character of this part of the village”. The proposal is contrary to all of these statements, being backfill, outside of the development envelope, and not being frontage development.

The Ecological Scoping Survey notes that bats are not present on the site, however local residents have commented that numerous bats are seen in the vicinity. Residents have questioned whether the survey was carried out at the correct time of year to identify bats. The survey identifies that the woodland area abutting the site is ‘suitable for foraging and commuting habitat for bats roosting, elsewhere’ however the planning application Point 15 states that there are no trees or hedges on the site or adjacent - the Parish Council are very concerned that this important woodland habitat is not specifically referenced within the application.

Whilst accepting that the application is for outline planning, the lack of detail within the proposal means that we have no knowledge of (for example): where the houses would be located within the site; no knowledge of where the access road would terminate; no detail of how the passing places would be constructed without damaging the important (and in some cases protected) trees that run alongside the proposed sites.

Access:

Proposed passing bay no 1

Proposed bay is adjacent to a line of mature trees and it is unclear how the bay could be installed without damaging the roots or canopy of these trees.

Proposed passing bay no 2

The plan does not reference the approved planning permission for three new properties and the Parish Council believe the passing place will encroach on the agreed driveways for these developments.

The proposed bay is also very close to a line of trees which are subject to a TPO and it is unclear how the bay could be installed without damaging the roots or canopy.

Proposed passing bay no 3

The plan appears to suggest that the passing place will be built on top of a drainage ditch

‘Existing access to substation’

This is referenced as being used as a passing bay at present. The Parish Council disagree with this comment as it is not uncommon for the area to be used as parking.

No Parishioners have ever requested passing places along Main Street, so we do not feel these are necessary or appropriate for the village.

Main Street has always been a narrow, single track, rural road, and is an important feature of the village. Policy ENV1 states that proposals are required to protect, conserve and enhance distinctive traditional landscape features and the unspoilt nature and tranquillity of the area. The addition of passing places demonstrably changes the nature of Main Street, and may result in vehicles travelling at increased speed as a result of the visually wider road, impacting the tranquillity of the area and potentially introducing road safety issues.

In a Parish Council Meeting (dated 20th September 2017), the Parishioners present were unanimous that the only acceptable outcome is Outright Refusal.

Should the application be recommended for approval, the Parish Council would like to see the development contained within the brownfield part of the site only.

**Erection of a bank of 13 equestrian steel-framed mirrors at 3 Church Farm Close
Ref: 17/01569/FUL**

Parish Council recommends Outright refusal.

Case officer: Catherine Looper

Email: plservices@eastcambs.gov.uk

From the outset of development of Church Farm Close, the hedgerow against which the mirrors are proposed has been noted as an important native, species rich hedge and conditions were applied to planning permission 06/00206/FUL to ensure the ongoing management and protection of this important feature.

The Parish Council are very concerned that the proposal would see the erection of a 7 foot high solid barrier running 65 feet alongside the hedge and the potential this has to significantly damage the hedge.

The proposal also requires over 20 supporting struts, each to be secured into 9 inch diameter holes approx. 3-4 foot deep which the Parish Council believes will be installed within the hedgerow. This will clearly have a detrimental impact on the hedge.

The ecological impact of a solid barrier running approximately 65 feet in length, 7 feet high alongside the hedge will make it impossible for birds and other wildlife to access the hedge on the northern side.

The impact on the amenity of Number 4 Church Farm Close will be significant, especially in the winter months when the deciduous hedge loses its leaves. The natural light levels available to Number 4 Church Farm Close in winter will be significantly reduced as a result of the 7 foot high solid boundary.

In addition, whilst the Parish Council appreciate that the view from a property may change as a result of future planning, the implications for this proposal are that Number 4 Church Farm Close will have a view not dissimilar to a metal industrial unit - this is not in keeping with the rural setting of the properties and will cause a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the property.

Point 15 of the application form asks whether "Are there trees or hedges on the proposed development site or on land adjacent to the proposed development site, that could influence the development?; or that might be important as part of the local landscape character?". The applicant has answered "No" to both of these questions, despite the fact that the proposal will

directly impact an important native, species rich hedge, which is already subject to historic ongoing planning conditions.

A Parishioner also noted that there is a high voltage underground electricity cable running very close to the proposed development.