

MINUTES OF THE SINGLE ITEM MEETING OF EASTON PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 27 MAY 2015 IN EASTON VILLAGE HALL.

Present

Linda Ford – Chairman (LF)

Peer Milliken – Vice chair (PM)

Jonathan Bailey (JB)

Margaret Hart (MH)

Clare Chisholm (CC)

Dennis Barrow (DB)

Members of the public – 82

Non – Attendance

Apologies for absence from Councillor Michael Jobling (MJ)

Parish Clerk John Whitcombe resigned that day before the meeting.

1. Linda Ford , Chairman, welcomed everyone and explained that the format of the meeting was to discuss the planning application for 907 houses in Easton which was to be heard by South Norfolk Planning Committee on Wednesday 3rd of June. She summarised the subject to be discussed as, who will speak , what needs to be covered and any further questions or details the residents wanted to include.

2. Declaration of Interest

PM, JB, CC and MH declared a public interest supporting a group against 907 houses.

PM is a member of various disability rights groups.

3. Suspend standing orders.

LF suspended standing orders so that members of the public could participate throughout the meeting.

4. Planning Application 2014/2611

Housing demand

a) LF and PM explained that in the opinion of the Parish Council housing demand in the area had already been met with Queens Hill , The Hampdens and Lodge Farm in Costessey to come.

Easton resident, Veronica Green, pointed out that recent planning reference 2014/2495 on the fringe of Wymondham had been refused and the grounds for refusal might have a bearing on 2014/2611.

Land owned by the Parish

b) LF confirmed that the previous Parish Council had put a stop on the sale of any parish owned land. This land, if sold, would form part of the new development. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to defer any decision concerning the sale of this land until village residents were fully consulted on the pros and cons of such a sale and a democratic decision taken. When asked there were no objections voiced from the public present.

Flooding

c) PM - After discussion with the Environmental Protection Officer Peter told the meeting that as the result of the development Easton would move from a low risk to a medium risk flood zone. Local resident, Sue Eaglesfield of Hall Road still gets flooded 8 years after the College Heights development and is no nearer getting anyone to accept responsibility or come up with any solution. Another local resident, Phyllis Singleton of Ringland Road, Lower Easton also reported flooding.

Education

d) LF informed the meeting that the school governors were in dialogue with the Education Authority, South Norfolk District Council and Norfolk County Council with reference to any proposed school extension .She asked residents to refer any questions or concerns they may have to the school.

Medical

e) LF-The Joint Core Strategy considers access to medical services. Despite residents experiencing up to a 3 week wait for an appointment at the Roundwell Medical Practice, (Roundwell) there has been no objection to the development by Roundwell themselves. In fact they said they have available capacity. Members of the audience expressed their concerns about this, however, the meeting was informed that appointments at the Beechcroft surgery were available much quicker.

Wildlife/ Environment

f) PM/MH - Easton has a variety of old and important hedges which must be protected. It also has a Grade 2 listed Wattle and Daube house in Lower Easton already threatened and undermined by traffic encroachment/vibrations which will only increase as the volume of traffic generated by the developments grows. The village church is a grade 1 listed building and Historic England has lodged objections to the amendments made to the outline planning proposal. Easton is rich in wildlife. Bat flight paths, slow worms, great crested newts, hares and owls need to be protected. Local resident Janice Stanford of Dereham road highlighted bat flight paths and Frank Howes of Buxton Close described the Great Crested Newts that visited his rear garden.

Road Infrastructure

g) PM & LF - Access across A47 – LF talked about the latest amendments to the road infrastructure, plans which were only received in Easton on that day. LF and Margaret Dewsbury had been to a meeting at Costessey where the amendments were discussed. These amendments to the proposed road layout and pathways are unclear.

PM spoke about the amended plan for a 3 metre wide path to cater for pedestrians and cyclists from Easton to the fringes of the Longwater junction and concerns that still existed over the exact nature of the type of pedestrian crossing at the Longwater end of the pathway. Concerns had also been raised as to how you ensure pedestrians, wheel chair and pushchair users etc. Will squeeze along a narrow path across the A47 bridge safely.

Further amendments were discussed which concerned a signalled crossing point over Dereham Road by Premier Inn and other traffic calming measures.

PM told the meeting that the Parish Council did not believe that St. Peters Path could be modified sufficiently to become a main cycle and pedestrian route through the village. Lots of discussion followed and it was obvious that this opinion was shared by the majority of the residents present.

He also reiterated that as there is a covenant on the Jubilee Playing Field to maintain it as a children's play area, permission would not be granted to allow a footpath to be built through to the proposed new development beyond.

Contaminated land

h) PM told the meeting that the Environmental Protection Officer(EPO) at South Norfolk Council is not confirming that the land used for foot and mouth burial is safe and after taking advice from experienced councillors at Costessey it became clear to the Parish Council that adopting the land for the heart of the village project could potentially lead in the future, should regulations change, to the village having to pay the bill for a very expensive clear up of the site, something we could not afford.

The audience participated in the discussion and were asked to give their opinion. Over 80 residents took part, as well as all councillors. The final outcome was that it was unanimously agreed that the land would not be adopted nor maintained by the council. It was made clear that an alternative site would be requested.

Food Hub 2014/1792

i) The Food Hub will not be considered as part of this planning application even though the implications for the village are linked, especially in Lower Easton.

Speaking Schedule for the Planning Meeting

The following will be allocated time slots at the meeting.

The Parish Council,

District Councillor Margaret Dewsbury.

The protest group Easton Against Development has requested a slot.

The public will be allowed to speak. Phyllis Singleton and Chris Winter expressed a desire to speak.

Margaret Dewsbury has contacted Richard Bacons office, it is believed he will send a letter of support if he cannot attend in person.

AOB

PM, LF and MH are meeting representatives of the consortium on 29th May at Easton College.