

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 15th July 2024 at 7.30 pm at
Winfarthing Village Hall, Hall Road, Winfarthing IP22 2EJ

Councillors Present: Cllr Eric Cole (Chair), Cllr Lynne Rogers, Cllr Peter Frost, Cllr David Rix, Cllr Jim Collins, Cllr Richard Steel

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk), District Cllr James Easter, Landowner representative's Matthew and Karen LeGrys (Applicants), Gary Ward (Architect)

Members of the Public: 21

1. To receive and consider apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Jono Smith

2. To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest

None received.

3. To discuss the proposed development off Hall Road

Cllr Cole welcomed everyone and explained that the site of the proposed development was one of two sites in the village that had been identified for development under the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan. As a result, the site would be developed at some point in the future. Cllr Cole also explained that the presentation was informative only and that the parish council could not formally consider the proposals until it had received an official planning application from South Norfolk Council.

3.1 To receive a presentation of proposed development

Architect Mr Ward explained that a preplanning application for the development had been made adding that an informal consultation with South Norfolk Council planning department and Norfolk County Council Highways indicated that they were in general agreement with the proposals. Mr Ward acknowledged that they were still awaiting reports from surveys undertaken on the site.

Details of the development included:

- 20 dwellings of which 5 were for affordable rent and 2 were for affordable ownership and 1 was a Post Office/shop with flat above.
- A water management area to include a 660 cubic metre capacity attenuation pond for surface run off.
- A sewage treatment plant for each dwelling, discharging to existing ditches
- Adoptable road.
- Public open spaces, possibly to include area in front of existing Saffron Housing development. Public open space could also include provision of play area.
- Landscaping of site to meet requirements of Regulation 19
- Widening of Hall Road with provision for a footpath from Chapel Close to the Village Hall.
- Bus stop.

Signed Chair

3.2 To receive questions or comments from Councillors

- Cllr Cole asked for details of the sewage plan and whether applicants had engaged with Anglian Water. Cllr Cole also asked where the water from the attenuation pond would flow.

Mr Ward reported that they had not consulted with Anglian Water, but it would be part of the next stage of the planning application. He explained that dwellings would have individual treatment plants adding that initial reports suggested that existing ditches would have the capacity to manage the water from the pond. Cllr's and members of the public strongly objected to this advising that this was not the case and that residents in Chapel Close were already experiencing significant issues with flooding and sewage overflow.

- Cllr Rogers asked if the design and finish of the properties had been decided. Mr Ward reported that the final design would be part of the planning application.
- Cllr Steel commented on the size of the attenuation pond and asked where treated water from the individual treatment plants would flow adding that it must not flow down Hall Road or utilise the existing roadside ditches as they were blocked in front of several properties.
Mr Ward explained that the proposal allowed for the treated water to be pumped into the ditch on the eastern side of the site. Mr LeGrys added that there was scope to increase the size of the attenuation pond on the land behind the eastern boundary.
- Cllr Frost commented on how plans for shops or play areas were often overturned. If this happened would the allocated space be used for another dwelling?
Mr LeGrys advised that if the shop and play area was something the village wanted, he would do what he could to ensure this remained in place. He went on to explain that the area occupied by the shop and public open space could be part of a section 106 agreement, however under such an agreement, should he sell the site to a developer, plans could be amended.
Cllr Frost asked if the parish council would be expected to maintain the play area. Mr Ward explained that there were various models e.g. management scheme with the developer or parish council. Mr LeGrys advised that he may decide to retain ownership of the shop and areas of public open space and would therefore be responsible for associated maintenance.
- Cllr Rogers asked if the road would be adopted by Norfolk County Council Highways.
Mr Ward advised that Norfolk County Council had suggested it would be adopted. Cllr Rogers asked if there were plans to move the 30 mph speed limit beyond the entrance to the proposed site.
Mr Ward assumed that it would be changed but that Norfolk County Council had not mentioned it during their informal discussions.

Signed Chair

3.3 To receive questions or comments from members of the public

- Members of the public (MOP) residing in Chapel Close raised significant concerns over the management plans for water and sewage on the proposed site as they were already experiencing major issues with their existing systems. These included:

- Lack of capacity in existing system
- Raw sewage leaking into gardens and surrounding ditches
- Backflow of sewage into resident's bathrooms
- Flooding of gardens during high levels of rainfall
- Lack of emergency response from Saffron Housing to address issues

One MOP raised serious doubts that the proposed drainage and sewage plan would work and as a result would cause sewage to enter the attenuation pond.

- A MOP raised concerns over the lack of grass cutting on the public open space in Chapel Close, adding that neither the parish council nor Saffron Housing were claiming responsibility for this work. They also commented on how the residents were promised a play area on this ground which had not materialised.

Mr LeGrys explained that efforts were being made to confirm ownership of this land however as the title was never transferred, he felt it may still belong to his family. Mr LeGrys also explained that at the time neither the Parish Council nor Saffron Housing wanted the responsibility of a play area.

Cllr Cole explained that if the parish council took on responsibility for a play area that the maintenance costs would be added to the parish precept causing parishioners Council Tax to increase.

Cllr Cole asked District Cllr Easter to contact Saffron Housing to establish what should have happened with the public open space.

Cllr Rogers asked Mr Legrys if he would maintain the space should it transpire that his family owned the land. Mr LeGrys confirmed he would.

- A MOP reported that they would object strongly to the new development proposals should the sewage infrastructure for the site not be adequate. Mr Ward advised that an enquiry would be made to Anglian Water and confirmed that the infrastructure would be maintained or improved.

The MOP felt the shop and bus shelter were not a viable venture.

Mr Ward suggested the shop could be a community venture.

Cllr Rix asked if the shop did not go ahead, was there an option to build more affordable housing as this would bring more benefit to the village, the pub and the school.

Mr LeGrys reported that the South Norfolk planners did prefer dwellings to a shop, but he had felt the shop would be more beneficial.

- Cllr Steel asked if the island in the middle of the new development would be adopted by NCC Highways.

Mr LeGrys advised that this was undecided at this stage.

- A MOP asked how maintenance of the hedge forming the boundary between existing properties in Chapel Close and plots 3, 4 and 5 would be carried out.

Signed Chair

Mr LeGrys suggested that an alleyway could be included between the two boundaries.

- A MOP from Hall Road explained that the drain on the western side of Hall Road did not work properly as it been broken in the past by the contractors carrying out work to extend the path. It would therefore not be appropriate to direct any more water down Hall Road.

Another MOP from Hall Road explained that any water from Hall Road flowed into The Beck, however The Beck could not cope in heavy rainfall as it was not maintained adequately. Any additional water directed into The Beck would exacerbate this problem and cause more flooding in the village.

- A MOP from Chapel Close asked if all the issues raised could be resolved before the planning application was submitted.
Mr Ward confirmed that they would have to or delay submission of the plans.
Cllr Steel stated the proposed plans should not add to the existing flooding and drainage issues.
- Cllr Rix asked if the parish council would need to contribute to the cost of widening the road and installation of the footpath.
Mr Ward explained this would usually fall to NCC Highways.
- Cllr Rogers asked if the site would be developed by Mr LeGrys.
Mr LeGrys confirmed that if outline planning was approved the site would be sold to a developer. Mr LeGrys also commented that if a developer took on the project, plans could be changed at a later date.
- A MOP form Chapel Close asked if the property design would include solar panels and heat pumps.
Mr Ward explained that sustainability would be at the forefront of the planning application.
- A MOP from The Street questioned how long the parish council had to object to any proposals considering the announcement from the new government to increase house building.
This remained undetermined.
The MOP asked how soon the proposal would be submitted for planning.
Mr Ward confirmed they would submit as soon as possible.
- Cllr Cole drew the meeting to a close concluding that there was still more work to be undertaken to address the water drainage and sewage concerns.
- Cllr Steel thanked Mr LeGrys and Mr Ward for their presentation and input.

Meeting closed 21:11

Signed Chair