

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5 MAY 2016 AT 7.30 P.M. IN ST MARY'S CHURCH.

**Present:** Mr Guyler (Chairman), Mr Melvin, Mr Hardiman, Mr Lomax, Mrs Cook, Mr Howard and 61 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mrs Parker and Mr Wheatley.

2. **To receive declarations of interest.** There were none.

### 3. Planning

**1636/16** Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access for the construction of up to 120 dwellings; the construction of a car park to be associated with Woolpit Health Centre, vehicular access to the site and individual accesses to five self-build plots and associated open space. Land South of Old Stowmarket Road.

The meeting adjourned at 7.35 p.m. to allow members of the public to comment on the application. 16 residents made comment on various concerns regarding the application including safety at the junction of Old Stowmarket Road, Heath Road, Church Street and Elmswell Road, increased traffic along Heath Road, the scale and density of the proposed development, any development would need to be phased, safety of cyclists and pedestrians and the need for designated cycle/footpaths and crossings, school and Health Centre capacity, only one access road to the development and the lack of access for emergency vehicles, the need for affordable homes in the village, car parking in the village, the need for SCC as the Highways Authority and MSDC as the Planning Authority to work together for a cohesive plan, the benefits of the additional car parking for the Health Centre, good mix of housing but affordable housing should be sited through the development not just in one area.

14 comments from members of the public had been received before the meeting with similar concerns.

The meeting reconvened at 8.09 p.m.

Mr Melvin advised that plans received are indicative and 3 years ago, when he was District Councillor for the Ward, talks had been instigated with the objective to supply extra parking for the Health Centre and it was clear then that some housing would be necessary to secure that. The development is larger than he anticipated but was largely well thought out with some self-build plots, bungalows and affordable housing. The effect on the centre of the village was as small as possible but he had concerns regarding the crossroads and some form of traffic control would be essential as it is a bus and lorry route. If approved these controls should be in place before construction starts. School transport could also make use of the car parking and therefore pedestrians would need legal access to walk through the Health Centre grounds. He felt that the development has community benefits particularly for the Health Centre and would be prepared to support the application subject to these points. Mr Guyler spoke of his concerns regarding the provision for cyclists and sustainable transport within the joint Babergh/Mid Suffolk Local Plan and although there is much comment about cycling within the Planning Design and Access Statement (PDAS) for the site, there is none in the proposal. There should be dedicated cyclepaths both within and outside the site. The traffic movements at peak times used by Pigeon in their PDAS are incorrect and low as they do not take into account vehicles using the car park to access the school and would object on these grounds.

Other Councillors agreed with the comments put forward by Mr Melvin and Mr Guyler and added that traffic from the development can access the A14 without driving through the centre of the village.

It was proposed, seconded and carried by a vote of 5 for and 1 against to support the application with the following caveats:

1. A mini roundabout is required at the junction of Heath Road, Old Stowmarket Road, Church Street and Elmswell Road. This should be constructed before any site works commence.

There are already substantial delays in accessing Heath Road/Elmswell Road from both Church Street and Old Stowmarket Road. Pigeon's assessment of vehicular usage at the junction at morning peak (8-9am) is 906 and evening peak (5-6pm) is 852. These numbers will cause congestion without traffic priority. In addition, the figures are incorrect and low as they do not take into account the additional vehicles created by school traffic using the new Health Centre car park.

2. Safe cycling and pedestrian crossing facilities need to be incorporated in the changes at the above junction.

3. One of the primary policies of the draft New Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan is DM21 which states that:

"All developments should benefit from/enhance accessibility for sustainable modes of transport, by giving priority to pedestrian, cycling and public transport access to ensure they are safe, convenient and attractive, and linked to existing networks. Proposals for development shall, where appropriate, incorporate satisfactory and appropriate provision for:

- (i) Pedestrians, including disabled persons and those with impaired mobility;
- (ii) Cyclists, including routes, secure car parking and changing facilities where appropriate;
- (iii) Public transport and means that reduce dependency on private vehicles;
- (iv) Linkages to networks as appropriate including the development of new pedestrian and cycle paths.

Much mention is made in the applicant's Design and Access Statement of provision for cyclists but there is actually none in the proposal. Pigeon's Planning Design and Access Statement 3.11 states 'There is no formal cycle provision made within the immediate vicinity of the application site, however, given its character and location, it is considered reasonable that the local roads could be used safely by cyclists.'

Cycle tracks (preferably dedicated) should be provided both outside and within the site. Heath Road is a designated lorry and bus route and is unsafe for cycling at the present time. It will be even more so with the additional vehicles the development will create.

4. Legal pedestrian and cycle access through the Health Centre grounds needs to be regularised.

5. The number of affordable homes included in the proposal is 42 and should be the minimum that are built within the scheme. They should also be integrated across the site more.

6. There is concern that there is only one access road into the development site. The developer should clarify emergency access via the Health Centre.

7. Councillors request that SCC Highways is asked to consider a 20 mph speed limit from the Heath Road/Old Stowmarket Road/Church Street/Elmswell Road crossroads along Heath Road to the south side of the school site.

4. **To approve accounts for payment.** There were none.

5. **Date of the next full Parish Council Meeting** – Monday 16 May 2016 at 7.30 pm. Noted.

The meeting Closed at 8.40 p.m

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