

TACOLNESTON PARISH COUNCIL

An Extraordinary Meeting of Tacolneston Parish Council was held at Tacolneston Village Hall on Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 7.00pm.

All councillors were summoned to attend. The press and public were welcome and were able to address the Council during the Public Participation section. However, the law does not permit members of the press and public to take part in debates.

In attendance: Councillors Lennie Pincher (LP Chair), Karen Darrell (KD), Bethan Gulliver (BG) and John Hooper (JH).

1. To consider approving any apologies for absence.

Apologies given by Councillor Bob McClellan were accepted. To receive any declarations of interest on any items to be discussed.

2. An introduction to the Extraordinary Meeting followed by Public Participation.

LP explained the purpose and the structure of the meeting.

Introduction from KD to give a background to the meeting.

KD attended the VCHAPs (Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan) meeting. She explained that it is the VCHAP which has proposed the buildings to be included in our local plan that we are discussing this evening. Hopefully people will have seen the public notices and the online information. The deadline for making a submission has been extended and is now Wednesday 8th of March at 5pm. This meeting was called as the next Parish Council Meeting on the 8th of March is after the deadline. Appeals can only be made under legal and procedural grounds due to regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

The first choice of site for development is Hill Farm, the land opposite Chopstick House, the second is land adjacent to The Fields.

JH explained that this is a consultation, so if the consultation is not handled correctly, we would have a legal right to challenge after the event.

KD explained that as a Parish Council to highlight these proposals to the village and to allow for public discussion.

LP stated that these proposals suggest parcels of land for development. KD also explained that the parish settlement boundaries have been changed. This is not easy to see the existing boundaries on the plans. JH explained the scale of proposed buildings on the land adjacent to The Fields is to be 24 and Hill Farm 14-20. He suggested this would be an increase in population of 17-18% based on UK average occupancy rates. KD said it is worth remembering that the original proposal for McKee Drive was for only six houses. However, over 30 were eventually built.



8/3/23

Parishioner 1 - has seen plans and notices pertaining to the land adjacent to The Fields she has asked what is now happening there. KD answered that no action seems to have been taken so far. Saffron Housing did bring along plans for affordable housing for Hill Farm to a council meeting and it was suggested that they held a public meeting to discuss this, but this did not take place.

Parishioner 2 - further discussed the issues around building on The Fields, mentioning particularly the issues raised by Anglia Water. Once the land earmarked for building was left fallow it started to cause issues including rats. JH picked up on the point of drainage and explained what could be done to alleviate this and the issues poor drainage might cause.

Parishioner 3 – explained that the current drainage in The Fields is poor. They asked that the Parish Council find ask the District Councillor for information on what is happening with this land.

Parishioner 4 – Explained that Easton's own of the land adjacent to The Fields. LP suggested that the further comments made on the development of Tacolneston Lakes were brought to the next full Parish Meeting. Parishioner 4 commented on the extent and stretch of the proposed buildings on the Hill Farm site.

Parishioner 5 – Pointed out that there may be confusion over the sites for building on the land adjacent to The Fields and pointed out the lack of clarity in the proposed drawings. The site at Hill Farm is a lot larger than needed at a hectare for a village of our size. This will bring about further drainage issues. Furthermore, the site will not be used only for affordable homes. KD confirmed that it is no longer the plan to only build affordable housing and agreed that the drawings included in the proposal are not clear and appear inaccurate. KD stated that inclusion of some affordable housing would be beneficial.

Parishioner 6 – Asked for clarification of the closing date. Following discussion LP stated that this has now been to the 8th of March. Comment was also made that a legal challenge could be made over the inaccuracy of the proposal's maps and drawings.

Parishioner 5 – On the planning documents there is a footpath running next to the Hill Farm site, this does not exist, so this is another challengeable inaccuracy.

Parishioner 6 – Stated that if the land is parcelled up and sold to two developers the need to provide for social housing may be remove.

Parishioner 7 – Commented that the current proposals on the Hill Farm site could allow for three-storey houses and / or other buildings that are not in keeping or consistent with the surrounding bungalows and would change the view and the contour of the land. They also felt that the lack of provision of sound, reliable information on the proposals may provide a case for a legal challenge.

Parishioner 5 – Noted that the Parish Council had not provided printed out copies of the proposals.

Parishioner 6 – Asked what the view of South Norfolk's District Council was on the proposals. LP explained that that they were the proponents of the plans.

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Parishioner 5 – Stated that originally South Norfolk suggested this site was too large.

Parishioner 4 – Explained that the land under discussion at Hill Farm is not as large as others have stated being less than a hectare. They also stated that the District and County Councillor is fully aware of the issues.

Parishioner 8 – stated that the District and County Councillor is open to discussion and easily contactable.

LP stated that the Public Consultation period was now closing.

3. To consider a response to the Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan Consultation.

JH – we should be thinking of principles not practicalities. New development is needed as it brings in new blood and can foster village cohesion. Explained past experiences. JH Stated that carefully planned housing could be beneficial for example, as demographics suggest that school numbers will be falling new housing may reverse this. Development could also be traffic calming if planned correctly.

BG – Agreed that carefully planned housing development is a good thing, but felt the proposals were rushed and plans poorly communicated and unsound. BG felt that practicalities; water, drainage, traffic etc. must be thought of at the point proposals are made otherwise they can be overlooked with resulting issues for example, the flooding due to development in Wymondham. There is currently a lack of school places locally at primary and secondary level and this is likely to get worse due to current building.

KD restated that we, can comment only on legality, lack of process and the soundness of plans.

LP, there should be housing, it should be mixed, size and social and targeted at local families. It should also be well planned and consider traffic, walking safely etc. LP also suggested asking for an extension to the deadline.

JH asked that we agree on the principle of increasing development first.

LP suggestion that the communications group draft the following to be circulated to the council for agreement and submitted before the 8th of March deadline.

‘Tacolneston Parish Council agree in principle to modest, well planned, development in the village. However, we have concerns on the soundness of the proposals and the appropriateness of the suggestions. Of particular concern is the proportion of social housing to be included in the development. We ask that developments should include a mix of building types, in keeping with existing housing, include social and market housing and be targeted at local families. We would like to be provided with accurate and informative plans and maps. These should accurate indications of the size of the proposed areas for development and showing proposed and existing settlement boundaries. Information on how issues of drainage and increased traffic might be managed is also required. We are also requesting an extension of the consultation period to allow for consideration of updated materials.’

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The council agreed unanimously with this.

LP opened up the meeting to public discussion, the Parishioners were in general agreement.

Further comment was made on the National Grid consultation which is ongoing Parishioner 8 commented on this and welcomed people to join the working group. LP asked everyone to come to the meeting on the 8th of March where this would be discussed further.

LP thanked everyone for coming and for the quality of discussion.

4. To confirm the date of the next Parish Council Meeting as 8th March 2023 at 7pm.

LP state that the next Parish Council meeting is on the 8th of March.

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