

# COTTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall on  
June 10 , 2021 at 7.30pm

**PRESENT** Cllrs Peter Gibbs, Beryl Ellis, Sarah Wenban, David Williams, Sue Cox and Paul Howlett, and Rod Caird (Clerk), together with eight members of the public, were present. District Cllr Andrew Mellen and County Cllr Andrew Stringer were also in attendance.

**1/100621      Apologies and approvals of absence**

Trudy Winder had sent apologies and her absence was approved.

**2/100621      Declarations of Interest and dispensations requested**

None

**3/100621      To consider a planning application:**

**DC/21/02763 | Application for Outline Planning Permission (some matters reserved, access to be considered) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Erection of 12No. residential dwellings(including 2No affordable) and new vehicular access. | Land East Of Mill Road**

After discussion which included members of the public and the district and county councillors it was agreed to comment on the application in the following terms:

**No one spoke in favour of the application or indicated support for it. No messages of support had been received.**

**The Parish Council opposes the application for the following reasons:**

**In 2017, in response to the first Draft Local Plan, a consultation exercise was organized in Cotton Village Hall when all parishioners were invited to give their views on where in the village they felt housing development could be undertaken, and what type of houses should be built over the next 20 years, assuming a target of no more than about 20 houses.**

**The event was attended by 111 individuals making up nearly 25% of the resident population.**

**Participants were briefed on the process and then given three coloured discs to stick on maps of the whole village. They were also offered three plastic counters to be placed in boxes representing the various house styles which might be built. Also, Parish Councillors spoke with all**

people attending to discuss the various options and seek views on what people wanted, and also what they didn't want.

The outcome was a series of village maps, clearly showing those areas where development would be preferred and the types of housing it was felt will be needed over the next 20 years. Interestingly, there was support for the process and little evidence of reluctance to consider some phased housing development.

The site East of Mill Road did not receive support as a possible site for development. And flowing from that outcome, the draft Joint Local Plan shows the site as outside the new settlement boundary for the village. The Parish Council understands that the JLP is not yet law but also recognises that recent planning decisions have taken account of provisions in the plan as a recognised direction of travel. It is clearly the case that this application runs counter to the direction of travel in the JLP.

In addition, the site is not properly sustainable as a location for eleven houses. Cotton, as is well known, has no school, no shop and no other basic facilities other

than the Church and the pub (which is not 100% secure). Residents have to rely on private cars to reach the facilities in Bacton, which itself involves negotiating the very difficult rail bridge separating the two villages. There is no street lighting.

There are no available jobs in the village for this additional population.

The site is awkwardly placed for access to Mill Road very close to the bend past the Village Hall; there is no footway and there is inadequate parking indicated on the drawings for the number of vehicles likely to be used by eleven homes.

Cotton Parish Council supports reasonable development in the village on appropriate sites, which reflect the rural character of the parish. Cotton is a mix of housing and open spaces and the character created by that housing and space combination is a reasonable planning consideration which this proposed development would not confirm to. Building on the site would take out of use a valuable wildlife and flora area.

The fact that in the view of the developers only two of the homes can be deemed affordable, rather than the four normally required by that size of development, is a further concern.

Cotton has not said no to development; the right development which matches the character of the village is to be welcomed. But this development is simply an opportunistic attempt to profit from the period before the Joint Local Plan is fully implemented and should be rejected.

**4/100621 Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Council**

It was agreed to proceed with purchase of three benches from Realise Futures as previously discussed.

There was no objection to the following planning application, details of which had been received after publication of the Agenda:

**DC/21/03098 | Householder Planning Application – Installation of 2no. roof lights and new window, replacement of door. | Barns East Of Hempnalls Hall Willow Lane**

A future meeting will discuss provision of first aid training in the village and/or installation of a defibrillator