

# COTTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council Meeting held on February 11, 2019 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

## **PRESENT**

Cllrs Peter Gibbs, Sarah Wenban, David Williams, Marian Cocksedge, Chris Tester and Beryl Ellis, and Rod Caird (Clerk). Five members of the public, together with Cllr Andrew Stringer were also present.

### **1/160119 Apologies and approvals of absence**

Paul Howlett had sent his apologies and his absence was approved

### **2/160119 Declarations of Interest and dispensations requested**

Cllr Gibbs noted that a family member was involved in a theatrical event to be discussed under item 6.

### **3/160119 To receive comments from members of the public on matters on the Agenda**

A resident mentioned being disturbed by noisy bird-scarers.

### **4/160119 To consider a planning application:**

#### ***19/00338 Erection of two dwellings and creation of new vehicular access (resubmission of 18/03558) at Willow House, Mendlesham Road***

After discussion it was agreed to comment as follows:

It was unanimously agreed to oppose the application on the following grounds:

The site is outside the settlement boundary in the current Mid Suffolk Local Plan. Paragraph 2.1.10 of the Plan states that the Settlement Boundary objectives are among others **to prevent village cramming by excessive infilling; to prevent a pattern and scale of development which is not in keeping with its surroundings; to restrict unnecessary encroachment into the surrounding countryside.**

The Parish Council believes that the proposal for two large, executive-style houses on this site conflicts with all three of those objectives. The proposed structures are larger and taller than neighbouring properties, and as such will be out of keeping with the immediate area. The buildings will occupy an unreasonably large proportion of the plot.

It would be logical to project that two houses of that scale will bring with them up to eight motor vehicles which will add to local congestion, create access hazards to the road, and force visitors and delivery vehicles to park in an unsafe manner on the road.

In a public consultation in September 2017 during the drafting of Mid Suffolk's new Local Plan (yet to be adopted), Cotton residents voted overwhelmingly against the construction of this type of housing in the village, expressing a clear preference for

smaller, more affordable homes. The outcome of the detailed consultation on this in September 2017 was as follows:

**Housing style was offered in the following categories, (shown in brackets is the number of votes for each category):**

- **Executive Homes (5)**
- **Modern 'Grand Design' (1)**
- **Bungalows (62)**
- **Traditional Suffolk Design (64)**
- **Affordable/Social Housing (60)**
- **Well Built Three Bedroom Family Homes (16)**
- **Eco Homes (26)**

The proposed houses would also fail a sustainability test as in their position outside the settlement boundary they would be entirely dependent on private transport and are not within easy reach of basic amenities and facilities.

It is noted that the Parish Council was not opposed to the previous proposal for the site which became planning permission 18/03558. Proposed changes to the Cotton settlement boundary put forward in the new Mid Suffolk Local Plan (yet to be adopted but the subject of widespread public consultation and discussion in the village) could include the Willow House site, and the two houses originally planned would be much more in keeping with expressed housing needs as regards size, style and affordability.

No views have been expressed to the Parish Council by members of the public in support of the new proposal.

In summary the Parish Council believes 19/00338 is completely different to 18/03558 and should not be treated as a simple adjustment of a previously approved plan. As a new proposal, it falls short of a number of important criteria and should be rejected. If planning officers are minded to approve it, the Parish Council supports District Cllr Andrew Stringer's request that the application be called in for consideration by Development Control.

**5/160119 To consider further steps to deal with speeding on Station Road**

After discussion, and in the knowledge that the VAS has demonstrated unambiguously that there is a consistent speeding problem on Station Road, it was agreed to seek information about pedestrian numbers crossing the road towards J. Lawes. This would then form part of a case to be submitted to Highways via Cllr Stringer supporting an engineering solution to the problem, possibly including a pedestrian crossing at the site.

**6/160119 Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council**

It was agreed the Parish Council would underwrite, to a maximum of £100, an Easter children's production of the Velveteen Rabbit at the Village Hall. It was noted there is a proposal for a walk around the parish boundary in May, which

may require some financial support.

Payments were made to J. Lawes (£47.65 for grit) and Community Action Suffolk (£60 for web hosting).

It was noted that a pro-forma invoice from Office Furniture online for £672 for the new screen for the Village Hall can be paid as soon as grant funds are received from Cllr Stringer's budget.

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is due to be held on Wednesday March 20 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

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