

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19 June 2023 at Tostock Village Hall beginning at 7.30pm.

(Note that these are DRAFT minutes until ratified by the Council on 24th July)

Present : Cllrs Storey (Chair), Baully, Blundell, Callow, Cobbold, Cross , Lebbon, and Kearsley

Apologies for absence: These were accepted for Cllr Malcolm. District Councillors D Bradbury and A Davies and County Councilor A Mellen had also sent their apologies

30 members of the public were in attendance.

Declarations of Interest: No pecuniary interests were declared.

Minute Clerk: Cllr Kearsley volunteered for this meeting.

Minutes

Chairman's opening remarks

Cllr. Storey proposed that discussions concentrate solely on the outline planning application DC/23/02229, Land Fronting Flatts Lane, Tostock, focusing on planning concerns.
Proposed Cllr Storey, Seconded Cllr Blundell, All Agreed

Points to be included in the Parish Council response would be separately agreed by a show of hands. In addition, members of the public were encouraged to convey their own individual comments via the District Council planning website. **Deadline for neighbour comments 3rd July.**

The matter was complicated by a dispute between the County Council and the applicants over land ownership. This is not a planning consideration. It is key that the meeting concentrates its attention on the planning application. A planning application can be submitted for a piece of land or property irrespective of who owns it.

The Parish Council would be instructed by the public in terms of the key issues to include in its response to the Planning Authority.

Development in a Hinterland Village

Tostock is defined as a hinterland village, which effectively should restrict development to main roads. The land referred to in the application is outside the settlement boundary outlined on the local plan and abuts the conservation area on two sides.

A Visually Important Space

The site constitutes a visually important open space with views across open countryside towards Elmswell. The proposed development could considerably impair that amenity.

Highways and Road Safety

From a Highways perspective, access is very restricted. The Lane is narrow (originally a cart track) unlit, in a state of disrepair with drainage channels blocked in a poor condition and with very limited capacity. It needs a narrow-bodied refuse vehicle to gain access to the properties and is not a through road. Space is needed to maneuver vehicles which are often large and difficult to turn. The additional vehicles

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24/7/2023

arising from such a development would worsen what is already a congested and inadequate roadway and constitute a problem for parking. In respect of parking issues- the suggestion was made that there was not enough space for the number of cars likely to be used. It would also create more difficulties for the numerous walkers who use the land as a footpath every day.

The Local Plan Requirements

In terms of the Local Plan, Mid Suffolk has in excess of the land required under Government guidelines thereby relieving pressure on such inappropriate sites in terms of development, particularly as the number of dwellings proposed is in excess of planning guidelines.

Ecological Issues

Villagers also queried the accuracy of the applicant's ecological report. They were advised to provide photographic evidence of any significant wildlife activity to the planning authority. Villagers advised the meeting that the site included habitats for great crested newts, common toads, barn owls and swifts for example.

Trees

Villagers talked about the trees on the site. Three of them have a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and there was concern that these would be harmed.

Exacerbation of Flooding

The drainage system down Flatts Lane is already under pressure and regularly floods. This flooding will become more frequent and intense as a result of this development.

Mains drainage

Concern was expressed at the increase the proposal would have on the mains drainage system – already under pressure.

Precedent

Several members of the public stated that they did not want this passed as it would set a precedent for further applications along Flatts Lane. The sensitivity of this location is evidenced by the fact that no planning application has been approved for NEW residential development along the frontage of Flatts Lane in the last 30+ years. The view expressed at the meeting was that given the nature of this site and the significance it has to the village means it would be unacceptable for this precedent to be overturned.

THE MEETING WAS CLOSED BY THE CHAIRMAN WITH THE FOLLOWING VOTES

ALL members of the Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the outline planning application. ALL members of the public attending the meeting voted to support the Parish Council decision, with one abstention.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.

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Anna Storey
24/7/2023