

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Elm Parish Council held remotely on Thursday 25th November 2021 commencing at 6.30pm

[Meetings of the Parish Council may be recorded by the Clerk to aid with minute taking. Any such recording is destroyed once the minutes are agreed].

Present: Cllrs - Brand, Butcher, Cotterell, Exell, Feaviour, Ferguson (Chair), Griffiths, Milham, Welbourne, District Cllr Sutton, Mrs S England – Parish Clerk.

263.21 **Apologies** – The Clerk reported apologies for Cllrs Goodley & Hopkin; Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.

264 .21 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – None reported. The Chair welcomed Cllr Exell to his role as newly co-opted member on the Parish Council.

265.21 **To consider draft proposals to be submitted as part of a full planning application for land north of Gosmoor Lane, Elm. Resolve on an appropriate response.**

Members discussed the draft proposals for residential development at land north of Gosmoor Lane; the following concerns were raised;

- The outline planning application granted in 2017; now lapsed; was for 50 dwellings and included a car park at Elm School. New proposals included 63 dwellings without provision of a car park.
- Since 2017, there had been a significant increase in the number of dwellings in Elm, including residential sites at Grove Gardens and Peartree Way. Planning had also been granted for several individual properties and a further 18 along Friday Bridge Road at the junction with Wales Bank.
- Of prime concern was the fact that; due to the proposals providing affordable homes only; there was no additional requirement for a contribution to infrastructure, particularly for medical, educational & transport services.
- Gosmoor Lane was poorly lit and barely accommodated the width capacity for two vehicles to pass safely. It was regularly used by agricultural and heavy goods vehicles and the road surface between Barr Drove and the silos was collapsing.
- The proposals would significantly increase traffic; not only in Gosmoor Lane; but through the whole village, particularly at school drop-off/collection times when the existing situation could only be described as 'chaotic'. Accident statistics at the junction Gosmoor Lane/Friday Bridge Road junction already included two fatalities.
- The hazards caused by increased traffic movement were exacerbated by the fact that the main road linking Friday Bridge and Elm was classed as an emergency route, providing a diversion when accidents had taken place on the A47. During the period 1st to 31st August alone the diversion route had been activated 13 times due to road traffic accidents.
- Local transport in the village was limited to one bus hourly, making it extremely difficult for those without access to a motor vehicle to access employment.
- Elm School was already full, how could children from an additional 63 dwellings be accommodated? (Estimated at 40 pupils). There were already families in Elm who had siblings attending different primary schools, in some cases children were having to attend Terrington School in Norfolk, 11 miles away.
- Doctors' & dentists' surgeries were already hugely over-subscribed in the local area with some GP's, allegedly, dealing with up to 8,000 patients. East of England Ambulance Service was currently unable to cope with present demand.
- During periods of heavy rainfall, management of surface water drainage was an issue in the Gosmoor Lane area. Flooding events had occurred in, Oldfield Avenue, Roseberry Road, Birch Grove and Ingle Road.
- Council's overriding concern was that the character of Elm village had changed significantly in recent years and overdevelopment was one of the main contributing factors.

Council resolved for the Clerk to submit a response to the pre-consultation, based on the concerns detailed above. A further response to be compiled once the full application had been submitted to Fenland Planning Department taking into account the views of statutory consultees such as Cambs County Council. In order to draw public attention to the proposals it was further resolved for an article to be included in the Parish Magazine and on Council's Facebook page.

266.21 The meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date