

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD
AT 19.30 HRS ON TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted): Cllrs E Houghton (Chair), J Day, J Rogers. S Wilson, C Bye, P Rash, M Smith. No parishioners were present

1. Apologies for absence and any declarations of interest.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Tory (personal), Cllr Hawes (personal), District Councillor Bovingdon and County and District Councillor Schuman.

Cllrs Rash and Rogers declared an interest in item 5.2.

2. Public Participation. The meeting will be adjourned for up to 10 minutes to allow members of the public and Councillors who have declared an interest to make a statement on matters to be discussed. The Chair advised speakers that by speaking their names and what they raise will be minuted and be in the public domain.

Cllrs Rogers and Rash requested to speak as members of the public.

J Rogers raised a concern regarding the planning application for number 6 Butts Lane as the proposed property would be built over a piped ditch and made the Council aware of the Conservation Officer's remarks that the design of the property was not in keeping with the surrounding area.

P Rash informed the Parish Council that the engineers report for 6 Butts Lane would cover the building over the piped ditch and that it would not be used for residential. He also stated that the building was not in the conservation area and that he had requested ECDC remove the Conservation Officers comments.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 9 November 2021

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and correct copy and were signed by the Chair.

4. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 9 November 2021

4.1 Debit card – A further application was required by Barclays Bank.

4.2 Cycle path – Work would recommence in Spring 2022.

4.3 Code of Conduct Training – Face to face training would take place on Tuesday 25 January 2022.

Councillor Smith arrived at 7.35pm

4.4 Grass cutting – The clerk had given notice to CGM Ltd and had sent an invite to tender to 5 companies.

4.5 Water Heater switches in the pavilion – These are ongoing

4.6 Resurfacing of the paths and Highways Meeting – The Chair had met with County Councillor Piers Coutts regarding the change to the downgrading of the A1123 and also discussed a number of issues the Parish had with Highways department.

Highways had confirmed that they would complete the items listed at the meeting on 28 October 2021. The bollards at the Butts Lane junction had been hit for the second time in two weeks. The Clerk had requested that the bollards were more reflective when they were replaced. [Clerk's note – a number of the items on Highway's list were completed on 15 December 2021]

4.7 Private CCTV covering an area of the Upware Open Space – This would be discussed at the January 2022 meeting due to the absence of Cllr Tory

4.8 Transfer of Land at Cross Green – The Chair had discussed the proposed transfer of land with Mr Carrick who confirmed that the land was being transferred to the Trustees of the Windmill. The Clerk and Chair signed the certificate of compliance.

4.9 The Queens Canopy – The Clark had advertised on Facebook.

4.10 Standardisation of Butts Lane Allotments – The Clerk had written to the holders of Butts Lane allotments with the change to the terms and conditions of the agreement and the increase in charges for the with allotments which were previously known as 'full' allotments. There had been no response from any of the allotment holders.

5. Planning Matters

5.1 Approval of the details for reserved matters of Plot 1 only of planning application 21/00584/OUT for proposed residential development for 3 dwellings. Plot 1 Site West Of 27 The Crescent Wicken CB7 5XN. 21/01350/RMA. The amendment involves the reduction in the proposed dormer window, re-location of the roof lights and widening of the proposed footpath across the front of the site

The Parish Council asked again for a footpath along the whole development.

Cllrs Rash and Rogers left the meeting at 7.50pm

5.2 Partial demolition of existing garage and outbuilding and construction of replacement outbuilding and garage. 6 Butts Lane, Wicken, Cambs, Cb7 5XU. Ref 21/01646/FUL

- Appearance of the property – although designed to reflect the new extension to the bungalow the modern design with its industrial style is felt to be visually out of keeping on the edge of the conservation area.
- Future use of the property. – The Council would like a condition added that further planning permission should be submitted if there was a change of use to residential in the future.
- The Parish Council has concerns that part of the new build is built over a piped ditch which carries water from the highway

Cllrs Rash and Rogers returned to the meeting at 8pm

5.3 Approval of reserves matters of Appearance, Landscaping and Layout of previously approved 18/01288/OUT for proposed residential development of seven dwellings, access, parking and associated site works. Land North of 20A Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 21/01599/RMA

The Parish Council do not support the request for phased development due to the disruption to local residents.

5.4 Construction of three dwellings, garages, access and associated works – Plots 1-3. Land adjacent to 14 Church Road, Wicken. Ref 21/01092/Ful. The amendment involves additional information received including:

- **Change to layout of plots and change in design of plot**

This application will be discussed by ECDC Planning Committee following the 'call in to committee' by the developer.

Policy WIC 2:

Housing allocation, land south of Church Road Approximately 0.2 hectares of land is allocated for residential development on land to the south of Church Road for up to 5 dwellings. Development proposals will be expected to:

- Be frontage development only, to reflect the existing character along Church Road.
- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy HOU 3, with priority given to people in local housing need.
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Wicken.
 - Have particular regard to the layout, scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise impact on the open countryside.
 - Provide appropriate evidence of the archaeological potential and significance of the site prior to the submission of a planning application; and East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Adopted April 2015 Part Two: Village/Town Visions 320
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

This application does not comply with two areas of this statement.

- **Be frontage development only, to reflect the existing character along Church Road.**

The bungalow on plot number 3 is situated behind the house on plot 2 and it therefore not frontage development. This gives the appearance of a cul-de-sac.

- **Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy HOU 3, with priority given to people in local housing need.**

The application does not provide an element of affordable housing and will not be affordable to residents of Wicken on the local average wage.

The application adversely affects the neighbouring property at number 14 Church Road causing loss of light. Please note that the new build bungalow at the rear on number 14 was granted permission during the period of speculative development when there was not a local plan in force.

Wicken Parish Council supports the planning application already approved for this site under reference 20/01393 and do not wish to see any deviation from this.

Should the application be passed the Parish Council would like a condition applied that all work should be completed at the same time rather than individually as this will cause too much disruption to neighbouring properties and users of the A1123.

5.5 Construction of three dwellings, garages, access and associated works – Plots 4-6. Land adjacent to 14 Church Road, Wicken. Ref 21/01126/Ful. The amendment involves additional information received including:

- **Change to layout of plots and change in design of plots**

This application will be discussed by ECDC Planning Committee following the 'call in to committee' by the developer.

Policy WIC 2:

Housing allocation, land south of Church Road Approximately 0.2 hectares of land is allocated for residential development on land to the south of Church Road for up to 5 dwellings. Development proposals will be expected to:

- Be frontage development only, to reflect the existing character along Church Road.
- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy HOU 3, with priority given to people in local housing need.
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Wicken.
 - Have particular regard to the layout, scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise impact on the open countryside.
 - Provide appropriate evidence of the archaeological potential and significance of the site prior to the submission of a planning application; and East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Adopted April 2015 Part Two: Village/Town Visions 320
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

This application for 3 large houses does not comply with the three areas of this statement.

- **Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy HOU 3, with priority given to people in local housing need.**

The application does not provide an element of affordable housing and will not be affordable to residents of Wicken on the local average wage.

- **Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Wicken.**

Wicken is in need of smaller properties preferably two-bedroom dwellings and bungalows.

- **Have particular regard to the layout, scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise impact on the open countryside.**

The style of the houses is not in keeping with the mix of housing stock in the village.

The majority of dwellings along the south of Church Road are bungalows. These large properties will have a direct impact on these neighbours.

The size of the dwellings will dominate the area and block the open vista towards Wicken Fen.

The houses are too large and will impact the visible entrance to the village.

Wicken Parish Council supports the planning application already approved for this site under reference 20/01393 and do not wish to see any deviation from this.

Should the application be passed the Parish Council would like a condition applied that all work should be completed at the same time rather than individually as this will cause too much disruption to neighbouring properties and uses of the A1123.

5.6 Erection of Solar PV Panels and associated infrastructure and landscaping. Informative: - Section 73 application to develop land without complying with Condition 2 (approved plans/documents) Reduction from 79 CCTV masts to 43 CCTV masts with 4 x 4m CCTV data masts at locations 8,23,45 and the main compound. North Angle Farm, Angle Common, Soham CB7 5HX. CCC/21/237/VAR

The Parish Council would like to ensure the privacy of local residents and those walking on the footpath and byway.

5.7 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

Approval

- Various tree works at 45 High Street, Wicken. Ref 21/01495/TRE
- Installation of photovoltaic arrays on east and west facing roof of outbuildings. Chestnut Cottage, 24 High Street, Wicken. Ref 21/01303/LBC and 21/01302/FUL

6. County and District Councillor Reports

There were no County of District Councillors in attendance.

7. New Life on the Old West request to extend the pond on the Recreation Ground.

A request had been received from NLOW to extend the current pond on the Recreation Ground by 2m square. The Parish Council decided that more information detailing where the extension would be sited were required. The Clerk would advise that permission was not granted at the moment and request a site meeting with NLOW in the Spring.

8. Upware Open Space

The IDB had still not provided a quote. The decision was made to install the fence before the ditch was dug.

9. Financial Matters

9.1 Bill payments

Rachel Earl	Clerk wages December 2021	£432.60
HMRC PAYE	PAYE December 2021	£108.20
British Gas	Electricity for the Pavilion	£25.53
SSE	Electricity for streetlights for November 2021	£108.91
Tarling Fencing*	Materials for the fence for Upware Open Space Cheque signed 22 November 2021	£1123.99
James Waters*	4 x 20 tonnes road planings for the cycle path Cheque signed 22/11/21	£1728.00
Balfour Beatty	Year 3 Quarter 1 maintenance contract	£138.00
Cambridgeshire Acre	Annual Membership	£57.00
Wave	Water bill 3/9/21-2/12/21 for the Recreation Ground	£22.94
Wave	Water bill 3/9/21-2/12/21 for Butts Lane allotments	£9.48
Wave	Water bill 3/9/21-2/12/21 for Cemetery	£12.47

* Invoice for material only. Due to the rise in building materials, it was agreed to pay for the wood in advance and then pay for labour when installed.

9.2 Monthly Finance update and Half Yearly Budget Report

The monthly finance report showed the Parish Council was in a stable position.

9.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 November 2021

The bank statements and reconciliation reports had been circulated to all Councillors. This was noted.

9.4 Consideration of Fees and Expenses and Burial Board fees

It was agreed to hold all of the fees and charges including the Burial Board fees for a further year. CCC would be reviewing rent at Michaelmas 2022 which could affect the rent for the allotments.

10. Quote for Replacements Streetlights

The Parish Council had received a quote of £823.34 per streetlight from Balfour Beatty to upgrade the following streetlights which had been agreed as part of the rolling programme as stated in the climate strategy:

PC1 Lode Lane, Wicken

PC4 Drury Lane, Wicken (currently not working and could not be mended)

PC3 Chapel Lane

The clerk had reported PC2 Upware Road as this light was not working. Balfour Beatty had advised that this also needed replacing and had quoted £823.34

Replacement of the 4 streetlights using CIL money was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

11. Draft Precept 2022/23

The draft precept was usually discussed at the December meeting with the precept being agreed at the January meeting. With COVID-19 cases rising the Clerk requested that the actual precept was agreed at this meeting in case the January meeting was cancelled.

The additional expense was included during discussions:

- Additional 4% for inflation
- Publicity costs for public engagements
- Increased costs with the grass cutting tender

The following projects were suggested for 2022/23:

- Wooden posts erected on the greens to protect from parking

It was proposed by Cllr Day to increase the precept by £1500 to £31,500. This was seconded by Cllr Rogers. All were in favour.

12. Review of Council Documents

12.1 Review of the Village Action Plan Including the Climate Strategy

Items 8 and 9 - Village solar farm (with the example of Reach) and community heat scheme (example of Swaffham prior). The action would be amended to 'monitor the success of the schemes in other villages'.

Item 10 – Investigating installation of an electric car charging point at the village hall– due to the problem with parking in front of the village hall it was agreed that the action should be changed to 'encourage the National Trust to consider a destination charger'.

13. Items for Information

The Parish Council would like to thank Stephen Joyce for his work on ensuring the byway from Wicken to Soham remained open whilst the solar park is being installed.

Cllr Day had visited the Butts Lane allotments following rainfall to investigate the problem with flooding. The area concerned was a low spot and with the soil type the water did not drain easily. Permission would need to be granted from CCC for any work to be completed.

Cllr Day would put planings in the potholes in the cemetery car park.

Cllr Bye announced her resignation from the Parish Council which would be accepted from 31 December 2021. The Parish Council thanked her for her contribution and in particular her work in successfully obtaining a grant for the play area and setting up the Terracycle scheme.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 21.20