

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

PLANNING WORKING PARTY

Held remotely on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7.00pm



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: Councillor P Hanlon (Chairman)
Councillor A Brown (Vice Chairman)
Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor D Smith
Councillor L Smith

Apologies: Councillor B Davidson

In Attendance: Colin Poole, Clerk
Vicky Phillips, Deputy Clerk
Councillor R André
Councillor J Burns
Councillor J Crooks

There were 3 members of the public present.

Welcome:

Councillor P Hanlon welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the meeting was being recorded. **To note that this Working Party has no delegated authority and may only make recommendations to Full Council. Urgent actions may be taken under delegated authority given to the Clerk and Chair.**

P23 Election of New Chair

/088 It was proposed by Councillor T Brown and seconded by Councillor D Smith that Councillor P Hanlon be elected as the Chair of the Planning Working Party
All in favour
RESOLVED

P23 Election of Vice Chair

/089 It was proposed by Councillor L Smith and seconded by Councillor D Smith that Councillor A Brown be elected as Vice Chair of the Planning Working Party
All in favour
RESOLVED

P23 Co-Option to Committee

/090 It was agreed by the committee that this item be taken to Full Council

P23 Apologies for Absence

/091 The above apologies were noted.

P23 Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensation

/092 Councillor Brown declared an interest in P23/097 – Item 2 as Thurlow Estates are clients of his business

Councillor Brown declared an interest on P23/097 – item 5 as he is friends of the family

For both items Councillor Brown left the meeting.

P23 Minutes of the Meetings held

/093 Councillor D Smith proposed and Councillor Brown seconded that the minutes of the meeting held 18th April 2023 were approved as a true record by show of hands. All in favour.

RESOLVED

P23 Matters Arising from the Minutes

/094 None

P23 For members of the public to speak on Planning Matters other than applications before the Working Party

/095 None present.

P23 Planning Applications determined by the Clerk and Chair under Delegated Powers (List A attached)

/096 Applications determined by the Clerk and Chair are shown on List A attached to the Minutes, see Appendix (i)
List A - Item 1 was noted

P23 Planning Applications currently before West Suffolk District Council and received by publication of agenda (List B attached)

/097 Applications determined by the Committee are shown on List B attached to the Minutes, see Appendix (i)

Withersfield Parish Councillors Frank Eve, Sheila Horton (also Muck Off Acorn Campaign) and Indunil Wijenayaka attended the meeting and spoke on Item 1 and circulated their objections prior to the meeting (Appendix ii)

P23 Matters to Report

/098 Councillor D Smith reported that the Old Clements Lane property was up for sale
Councillor J Burns reported:

- that the ex-Vixen pub site was up for auction
- JB had been in conversation with Highways England this week as SCC Highways had refused their application for traffic lights to be put in whilst inspection works on Sturmer Arches took place.
- LilaConnect have stopped installation of broadband in Haverhill, JB is in contact with their communications engineer to find out why.

P23 Date of next Meeting

/099 The next meeting of the Planning Working Party will be 6th June 2023

P23 Closure

/100 The meeting was closed at 7.59pm

Signed
Chairman

Date.....

Appendix (i)

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
26.04.23 Expires 19.05.23	1	DC/23/0639/HH	Single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory) Mr & Mrs Darkins	1 Blackmore Close	NEUTRAL

List B – To be considered at the Working Party Meeting

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
	2	DC/23/0572/FUL	New agricultural access	Back White Horse Field, Horseheath Road, Withersfield	<i>Councillor Brown left during this item</i> OBJECT:
<p>Members of Withersfield Parish Council spoke on this application and referred to circulated email (appendix ii). There was discussion on the application and members came to the following objection following this discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough information to support the application and the need to change the existing access, which is suitable as it is for the current level of farm vehicles. There have been no issues with the access at the current level of use. There are five existing gates, all of which are capable of taking the current farming equipment. There is no information on how many vehicles will be using the access and where the vehicles will be coming from, either from Haverhill or through other parts of Withersfield. Will the track connect to other existing tracks? • Conditions should be placed that the access be used for agricultural traffic. • The access will be located on an ancient meadow, which is on the Living England’s Habitats Map. The Town Council also have concerns over hedges being removed. • The traffic survey was conducted in a week in November which is not representative of a high use period, including their own agricultural use. • The access is next to the local Public House, near Skippers Lane and a junction which would effectively make this area a crossroads. • The access will cross the existing pathway, potentially increasing conflict with the footpath rather than resolving any conflict. • The planning application includes putting in a 73 ft long pipe to turn the stream into a 1ft diameter culvert at the point of this crossing, which the Town Council are concerned would increase the flood risk. The explanation given by Suffolk County Councils Flood and Water Manager is that the ground is very flat and whilst that is below what Highways recommend as a minimum, which is 450mm, and for such a length of pipe the diameter should be 1.2m, the argument is that there isn’t enough height of stream bank to accommodate that, therefore the Town Council’s concern that if this is for farm vehicle access and a 1ft diameter pipe is adequate for the stream, why does it need culvert at all, which could be easily driven over by a tractor. 					

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town Council request further information from Thurlow Estates as to whether the access would be used for access in any future planning applications, including the proposed Anaerobic Digester. <p>The Town Council support Withersfield Parish Council's objections to this application.</p> <p>Proposed Councillor L Smith, seconded Councillor P Hanlon All in favour</p>					
27.04.23 Expires 20.05.23	3	DC/23/0660/TCA	One Lime (T1 on plan) crown reduction by three metres all round to form a rounded shape; one Ash (T2 on plan) fell; G1 (mixed species Yew/Conifer) – reduce back all the trees that overhang the footpath / road back to the boundary line Mr Ling	Vale House, Hamlet Road	NEUTRAL Proposed Councillor Luccarini, seconded Councillor L Smith All in favour
03.04.23 Expires 25.05.23	4	DC/23/0683/TPO	TPO 204 (1994) tree preservation order - one Oak (T1 on plan, within A1 on order) root severance for installation of root barrier IG Environmental Services	22 Lowry Close	NEUTRAL Proposed Councillor L Smith, seconded Councillor Brown All in favour
10.05.23 Expires 01.06.23	5	DC/23/0724/HH	Householder planning application - a. detached garage b. two single storey side extensions c. french doors to rear elevation following demolition of existing conservatory) d. demolition of existing garage Mr & Mrs Rudge	14 Bergamot Road	<i>Councillor Brown left during this item</i> NEUTRAL Proposed Councillor Luccarini, seconded Councillor D Smith All in favour
16.05.23 Expires 07.06.23	6	DC/23/0111/FUL	a. change of use of ground floor retail to a mixed use retail spaces for smaller units to be rented and b. change of use of upper levels into three residential units including extending the loft space at rear of building	2-3 The Chantry Centre, High Street	OBJECT:
<p>Members noted that the previous concerns over room sizes have been addressed, although room sizes are still small they do meet minimum space standards. However, the Town Council's previous objections still stand, particularly over access for deliveries. The Town Council request more information and clarification on how deliveries to the retail until will be taken. Given the High Street has restricted or no access to traffic, will deliveries be made to the</p>					

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
<p>rear access of the unit? There is no obvious access on the drawings other than an entrance via the lobby to the retail area. If this entrance is used this could cause disturbance and noise to the residents in the apartments.</p> <p>There is no parking provision for residential units, a condition should be put in place in any planning decision for a resident's parking permit scheme. Members noted that the plans available do not show fire escapes.</p> <p>Proposed Councillor Luccarini, seconded Councillor Brown All in favour</p>					

Withersfield Parish Council objection to planning application DC/23/0572/FUL:

The Parish Council objects to this application as we believe that it is not necessary for the purposes stated by the applicant.

1. We believe that a key test on the reasonableness of this application is whether the proposed development is necessary for the purposes of the agricultural activities currently undertaken on this site.

The applicant claims that this proposal is needed to support existing activity. This is clearly not the case for the following reasons:

- The current field access at Horseheath Road supports some 200 acres. The present gated entrance is typical of similar field accesses on the Estate – a horizontal hinged pole, chain and padlock. This particular access is, in fact, a double access able to accommodate the largest farm vehicles used by the estate.

In the event the proposed new access at Horseheath Road is permitted then a prior approval application will need to be submitted to link the new access to the existing track. Again this would require the key test that the track is 'reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture'.

- There is, and never has been any safety issues/accident records with the alleged pedestrian/vehicular interface. However the proposal would result in a cross over between footpath and farm track, and potential associated risks.

- These fields are also served by five other access points including from the A1307 which is able to take the largest of vehicles and on Queens Street. this access is shared with Anglian Water and is an access to the Sewerage Treatment Works for the village.

- The land in question is arable predominately cereal crops in monoculture.

- Assuming a yield of four tonnes to the acre the land might produce some 800 tons. This volume does not require any greater capacity of vehicles - either size or number than are currently accommodated by existing access points.

If as the evidence shows there is no need for the development to support current farming activities it can only be that this application is to support the proposal to develop a Biodigester plant at Spring Grove Farm.

This extremely contentious proposal will be determined by the County Council when an application is finally submitted and it is the Parish Council's view that this application. Should be seen as integral to that proposal and considered as part of that application.

The proposal is clearly designed to taken increased volumes and size of traffic and as such will have a hugely detrimental impact on village roads, notably Skippers Lane, Horseheath Road, Silver Street and Hollow Hill. These roads are already adversely impacted by volumes of HGV and large farm vehicle traffic and have no capacity to take increased size and volumes of traffic.

The access will create a significant hazard on Horseheath Road.

The access will also be located on and largely destroy an ancient meadow on Horseheath Road. The plan indicates a large concreted area which may well end up becoming a farm vehicle holding area which will cause visual blight on the area. It is adjacent to our local public house which relies on clientele enjoying the pleasant rural setting.

This development will adversely impact on the pub and its business.

We believe there should be a full impact assessment on the potential detriment and damage to this beautiful historic meadow.

In summary this application has no merit for the purposes stated on the application. As such it should be rejected. If the applicant had hoped to provide access for a future industrial plant at Spring Grove Farm - the Acorn Biodigestor scheme, then this should be clearly stated and considered alongside that application