

ASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Assington Parish Council extra meeting, held on Zoom on,
Monday 8th February 2021, 7.30pm,

Present:– Chairman Simon Thorogood, Vice Chairman Andrew Hill, Cllr Bronwen Stacey, Cllr Rose Symonds, Cllr John Symons, Cllr Ian Jordan & Cllr Helen Wallace.

In Attendance: Babergh District Councillor Lee Parker, 3 members of the public and the temporary assistant Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. County Councillor James Finch, apology was accepted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. Cllr Hill declared a non-pecuniary interest item 4b & 4c, he works for a number of housing associations.

3. OPEN FORUM TO INCLUDE – MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, COUNTY COUNCILLOR JAMES FINCH & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR LEE PARKER.

The District Councillor advised that he has not prepared a report for the meeting but he is happy to help and to answer any questions.

Member of the public thanked the Parish Council for the circular which has been distributed to all households informing of the actions proposed by Yorley Barn. He is disappointed that the County Councillor has not attended the Parish Council meeting. Suffolk County Council Highways have given a soft approval to the nursery application and doubt if they had even done a site visit.

Cllr Jordan feels they gave unsatisfactory input to all the points which the Parish Council made and their behavior is unacceptable.

4. PLANNING – Update on applications

a. DC/21/00353 The Old School House, The Street, Assington, CO10 5LH - Erection of two storey side extension.

The Chairman advised that this application was discussed at the last Parish Council meeting, is the PC happy with the decision which had been reached? The Parish Council agreed they are all in favour to support the application. BDC to be advised.

The Chairman advised that the next 2 applications b & c, despite being listed separately, are linked. Does the Parish Council wish to consider them together? Cllr Symonds advised that the planning agent has said that the 2 applications should be considered together.

b. DC/21/00510 Land to the East of The Barn, Assington Barns, Assington, CO10 5LW

Outline planning application (all reserved matters, access to be considered) Town & County planning act 1990 – Erection of 4, two bed almshouse type units for older persons.

c. DC/21/00476 Land off Assington Barns, The Street, Assington, CO10 5LW

Outline planning application (all reserved matters, access to be considered) Town & County planning act 1990 – Erection of 18 dwellings (comprising of 10 three bedroom bungalows, 1 four bed bungalow, 7 one bed almshouse type units for older persons) (re-submission of DC/19/04391)

Cllr Hill informed that the 22 single storey dwellings are listed as bungalows. These include 4 almshouses which are listed as market properties and 7 almshouses list as social housing. However the applicant hasn't applied with the social housing side and the Local Neighbourhood Plan should be referred to. He suggests that the Parish Council objects to the application.

Cllr Jordan suggests that this is a last attempt to get planning permission as the previous applications have been denied. The word "Almshouses" is being used out of context. The Parish Council should object to the application.

Cllr Hill asked District Councillor Parker if the planning decision makers insist on the proper use of almshouses, which should be run by a charity. The District Councillor is unsure if Babergh can compound to insist that part of the development could be managed by a charity, but he is happy to make some investigations.

Cllr Symons agrees that the use of the word almshouses, is just a name given to make the application sound better. There is no longer a need in the village for small housing.

Cllr Wallace, expressed an interest as the proposed application would be at the bottom of her garden. She would advise that Assington has had its full share of housing and doesn't need that volume of housing. No up to date housing needs survey has been carried out. This development is not needed.

Cllr Symonds advised that the original application was for 19 homes this application is for 22 all be it smaller properties, however the site still raises all the same issues relating to highways and being outside the existing built up area boundary .

Since the previous housing needs survey was done, there are now a total of 12 new bungalows in the village, however they had all gone to new residents, except for 1. The Parish Council objected strongly to the 1st planning application and should do the same again, the village does not need this development. Use the same objection as before and tweak.

Cllr Stacey agrees with the views of the rest of the councillors. She is also concerned at the method of sewage to be used. The application states that the development will link the sewage into the main link in the village. There is no mains sewage in the village!

The Chairman agrees with all the above comments, the needs of the village has been supplied with enough bungalows. Other issues include major highways problems and traffic calming. The Parish Council should not support the applications and is unanimously in favor to oppose. Agreed by all.

Cllr Wallace suggested to the District Councillor that it would appear that a relaxation has been given to planning in the previous months! District Councillor Parker informed that this application will be heard by the planning committee at some point. He would suggest that the Parish Council make clear it points which have been raise above and use in its response. However he is unsure what weight the Parish Council might have with the lack of a Neighbourhood Plan and cannot rely on its emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Hill expects that by the time the application gets to the planning committee, the Neighbourhood Plan will have been through the examination stage. Therefore, will have more weight. The District Councillor will seek clarification from the planning officer and get back to the PC.

d. DC/21/00616 Discharge of Conditions Application DC/20/03362 Condition 4 (Access) Condition 6 (Construction Management Plan) and Condition 13 (Sewage Treatment Plant) – Land South of Access Road from C733 to The Church Assington, Suffolk.

The Chairman recommends that key points to be included in the objection from the Parish Council should be;

- Road safety issues, same as the previous application.
- Sewage, will this discharge into the brook or into a soak away? Important not to pollute the brook.
- Flooding, how does the land lie at the far end of the development. Dirty water may ferry along into the brook.
- Infringement onto a public right of way, the old road.

Cllr Hill advised that the old road is important to the Parish Council and want to keep it as a right of way. Do not want it to be stopped up?

Comments regarding applications **B & C**, to Babergh District Council by 17th February and for **D** by 25th February. The Chairman asked for a volunteer to draw up the necessary paperwork. Cllr Hill with the help of Cllr Jordan offers to adapt the previous objection and will send a draft to all hopefully by the end of the week. The Chairman thanked them both for taking on this job and understands that it takes up a lot of time, when they are dealing with other PC business also. The PC needs to look at how it will deal with this work in the future as it needs to be shared between the Councillors.

5. QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

a. Planning Sub-Committee. The Chairman would like the PC to consider creating a planning sub-committee. This would take away the need to call extra meetings of the Parish Council. Or is the PC happy to continue as we are, with Cllrs Symonds & Hill acting as planning representatives and reporting to Parish Council meetings.

Can this be given some serious thought and considered at the next meeting in March.

b. Progression of the Future Planning applications. The Chairman suggests that the Parish Council gives some consideration into paying outside help to progress the work related with any big applications in the future. Response to these applications takes a great deal of clerical time and would take away the weight from Councillors, who do not have the time needed. Or if more Councillors joined the Parish Council the work could be more equally shared between everyone. The assistant Clerk advised that extra Councillors can only be recruited in an election year.

Councillors to also give some thought at employing extra help, consider at the March meeting.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm

Signed (Chairman) Date