

**DALHAM PARISH COUNCIL****Minutes of the planning meeting 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 via Zoom (due to Coronavirus restrictions)**

**Councillors present: John Riddell (Chairman), Rachael Padman, Jackie Bolton, Claire McDonagh and David Fitch**

**Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk) and three members of the public**

**Open Forum**

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum

a) **Planning application DC/18/1425/FUL**

A resident met with the applicant to raise concerns about the proposed fence and parking for residents of the Almshouses. The applicant said the fence will finish at the NW corner of the Almshouses property not as shown in the application. He also confirmed that he was aware of the parking issues and would keep parking for residents either where they are now or the other side of the access. The residents would like this confirmed in writing.

A question was asked as to whether the trustees had considered lodging an adverse possession claim as the parking area has been used unhindered for 40 years.

The Chairman closed the Open Forum and started the Parish Council meeting.

**1. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Isobel Aylott and the reason for absence accepted.

**2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests****3. Planning**a) **DC/18/1425/FUL - The Woodyard, Stores Hill, Dalham - Entry Level exception site for 2no affordable dwellings and ancillary access arrangements (retrospective) - Amended plans submitted which show the removal of upper floor windows and the introduction of a 2m tall boundary fence.**

It was resolved that the following response would be submitted:

Dalham Parish Council objects to this application for the reasons set out in its previous responses.

There has been a minor amendment proposed by the applicant to resolve the issue of overlooking. Some of the windows which were overlooking neighbouring properties have been proposed for removal. The application still fails to address the concerns raised in previous responses from the Parish Council. The proposed change to the fencing as shown in the plans appears to block the access to number 18 Stores Hill and this will have an adverse impact on the Almshouses if it restricts their access.

Dalham Parish Council re-iterates its previous objection:

The Parish Council's position remains unchanged, namely that the current Enforcement Order on the site should be complied with.

The Parish Council's previous objections to the design of the properties remain:

- The design of the proposed developments is out of character with the local vernacular architecture, where over 30% of the properties are listed, and would cause harm to the unique visual amenities of Dalham's varied street scene and conservation area.
- The size is too large compared to the Almshouses nearby, the shape of the roof is of a modern style which is not reflected anywhere else in Dalham.
- The design and scale of the properties adversely impacts on the views into and out of the Conservation Area.

Dalham Parish Council believes the designation of the site for affordable housing is questionable as Dalham is not a sustainable settlement and lacks the essential services that first-time buyers of affordable housing could be expected to need. Even at a discounted rate of 20% of market value, the cost of the affordable housing will be beyond the reach of most first-time buyers.

Dalham Parish Council objects to this application on the basis of highways safety. The response from Highways states that an area be provided for on-site parking and manoeuvring of vehicles.

The proposed access joins the B1085 at the bottom of Stores Hill. At this point the road narrows to a single carriageway making access onto it even more precarious. This is a busy road with no footway and accessing it at this point will be unsafe, particularly as vehicles travel at speed as they enter the village.

The proposed access area has been used as a parking area by residents of the Almshouses for over 40 years without hindrance. Removing this parking area would force residents of the Almshouses to park on Stores Hill which Highways says would be detrimental to Highways safety to users of Stores Hill.

Should the application be approved nonetheless, the S106 agreement for the affordable housing should contain a provision for alternative satisfactory parking for the residents of the Almshouses in perpetuity and any other highways improvements needed to ensure the safety of the residents living in the area.

Dalham Parish Council asks that West Suffolk Council takes into account the objections raised by the Parish Council and residents. It would appear that these responses have either been given insufficient weight or have been completely ignored. A lengthy and costly enforcement process took place culminating in an Enforcement Notice for the properties to be demolished. Dalham Parish Council believes that it will undermine the planning system if West Suffolk Council simply ignores the Enforcement Notice served previously on the Applicant.

It was resolved that the Council would email a copy of their response to District Councillor Mike Chester and ask when the application by application is likely to be considered by Development Control.

- b) DC/20/0889/TCA - Trees in a Conservation Area Notification- (i) 1no. Horse Chestnut and 1 no. Pear tree (T4 and T5 on plan) fell (ii) 1no. Willow and 2 no. Sycamores (T2 and T3 on plan) pollard (iii) 1 no. Ash (T1 on plans) crown lift to 5 metre**

It was resolved that the clerk would request a short extension so that this application can be discussed at the next meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July as the notification arrived after the agenda had been published.

**4. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda**

The chairman asked for an item about how the Parish Council can work with and support volunteer groups in the village to be added to the next agenda.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.55pm.**

Signed ..... (Chairman) Dated .....