

BRANDESTON PARISH MEETING

The Minute of a Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday 30th August at 7.30pm in the main hall of the Village Hall.

Present: *(See attached list)* Also present Suffolk District Councillor Tony Fryatt, Cabinet member responsible for Planning and District Councillor Christopher Hudson the ward member for Framlingham He attended in the absence of Brandeston ward member Councillor Paul Rous.

2018/10 Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Will Elson welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

2018/11 Mary Moore had sent an apology for her absence to the Clerk.

2018/12 The chairman asked those present for their approval of the Minute of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 30th May 2018. The Meeting agreed that the Chairman should sign these as a true and accurate record.

2018/13 Presentation from Councillor Will Elson on the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – 1st Draft *(Available on the village website)*. This presentation included an apology that the Parish Council had not responded to the original document that preceded the 1st Draft. Villagers complained that they had not been informed of the matter but the chairman assured that although all Minutes and Agenda do appear on the village website, this has been a learning point and in future he will ensure that all PC agenda and minutes will be circulated via the email list. He had studied other parish council responses and had noted that of those who had or had not responded there appeared to have been little difference in the influence on the 1st Draft.

2018/14 The chairman introduced a discussion on the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan - First Draft followed. A question and answer session followed during which the following points were raised.

Q. ALISTAIR CHAPMAN To what extent of bearing has the SCDC had to the village plan which was undertaken some years back?

A. None as the village plan has now been superseded.

COUNCILLOR FRYATT asked to speak and responded that only Neighbourhood Plans are relevant. Even if the village had started a Neighbourhood Plan when the first consultation was published it would not be in time to react. A Neighbourhood Plan is not a reactive document; it cannot be used to object to planning neither does it prevent planning applications being submitted. A Neighbourhood Plan has to include sites for provision of housing to cater for future need.

Q. JANE MITCHEL This situation emphasises the need for parish councils to listen to villagers. The lack of reaction to the first document is unforgivable. This whole process started in 2016 and we are only now being involved. We could have produced a supplementary planning document or a Neighbourhood Plan. Have we lost our power to influence because the parish council failed to act?

A. COUNCILLOR FRYATT responded that this is the consultation and houses will not be forced onto villages. We asked for possible sites and from the 800 that were put forward by land owners it was narrowed down to around 30 sites. This site was selected because it was a suitable but we are not desperate to build. He said there is evidence that people are asking for first time houses and down-sizing houses for older people in the area and this consultation is to see if this village would like to take up the offer.

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON I have been through other village responses, had we responded last October we would possibly not have been successful in having that site taken out of the plan. We did

miss a chance, but we do not know if it would have made any difference. A Neighbourhood Plan takes 2 years to formulate and would not have been in time to influence this consultation. A Neighbourhood Plan would still have had to produce houses, it is a plan to put forward sites for development not to be reactive to planning applications.

HELEN FLETCHER Refuted this statement as we could have rejected this on the grounds of prematurity. It could have been the village's opportunity to seek out other sites in the village. A year ago, the village would have been better prepared and would be a year into having a Neighbourhood Plan. Being against this site for development does not mean we are opposed to having affordable housing in the village. She added that she felt let down by the Parish Council.

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON The matter was recorded in the Minute

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT A Neighbourhood Plan would be based on the 2013 Core Strategy and have an obligation to provide for future housing needs.

ROGER CUNLIFFE Development should lie within the village envelope except in exceptional circumstances.

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON The village envelope has been replaced with the new Settlement Boundary which carries more weight with planning. The Settlement Boundary has increased to accommodate this proposed development site.

STEVE WILLIAMS What is the possibility of the deadline being extended?

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON The first action of the Clerk was to ask for the consultation period to be extended because of this but was told this was not possible.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT Technically the consultation period is 8 weeks. Timetable has been set by Government. He acknowledged that it was holiday time when people were away.

ANNIE LAW Is this an exception site?

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON No I don't believe it is. Councillor Fryatt nodded agreement.

COUNCILLOR HUDSON Cllr Rous is an absent colleague for whom I apologise. He has received many letters asking a very serious question – what is an affordable house? This is very difficult to define. Planning is crucial and SCDC must consider provision of schools, health care, social services etc. The need is increasing and resources and provision are already inadequate. Transport from a rural village is an issue – even if you can find enough for an affordable house how can you afford a car to access services? The recent new homes built in Framlingham are not being sold. Why do we need to build more houses? He promised that he will not rest until we have a reasonable settlement that the village is happy with. He asserted that we cannot sell the houses in Framlingham.

PETER THURLOW When an audience doesn't get a message the sender of the message is at fault not the recipient. How does the Parish Council hope to draw together a village view from a 100 people in this hall? What is it that is in our power to decide tonight? How can the Parish Council get this response ready in two weeks?

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON committed to capturing the views of people here tonight, and those of people not present, our response will also be mindful of the pressures higher authorities are under. He also encouraged those present to send in their individual views to SCDC in addition to the Parish Council response.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT The Parish Council response will carry the most weight as it is the official consultee in this case. It will reflect the view of this Meeting which is a full and fair consultation process. He suggested that we take a vote tonight.

JULIAN FOX Is the 30-house proposal the maximum or could that become 60 in the future?

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT When SCDC actually receives an application from the landowner the 30-house cap will apply because this is the number in the Plan. This not consent to build, when SCDC actually receives a application for building the 30-house limit will apply.

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON The 30 houses are the set number for that area of land and is calculated by the planners for development at medium density. It is not a quota.

PHIL SUMMERS The document clearly sets out policies for density, design etc. of the site. A separate matter is how the landowner sets about designing the actual application and if they seek to depart from the SCDC Local Plan.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT If the Parish Council responds that 30 houses on the site is not what the village wants or needs a great deal of weight must be given to it by SCDC. This plan is just a suggestion, it is up to you as a village to decide what you want.

ANNIE LAW Conservation Appraisal is still valid. This says the landscape of the village gateway must be preserved.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT Yes. Otley has rejected the suggested sites and found alternatives for development. The Plan must protect the views in the Conservation Area. The refusal to damage these views would be a perfectly valid and should be included in your response.

ALISON MOLYNEUX What we can see from our house is the open Suffolk skyline. If this plan goes ahead this will be destroyed. The entrance to this beautiful village will become a line of modern houses and will destroy the atmosphere of the village.

DANIEL NORMAN How many houses have been built in the village in the last 20 years? Over 20? Has this ruined the village? He did not advocate 30 houses but the Parish Council must look to the future needs of the village. He continued by telling the Meeting that it must think about the youngsters; do we want a village of 5 bed houses. We need more affordable houses for carers, nurses etc. At present they cannot afford to live here. Our forefathers wanted the village to stay the same. Some even wanted the replacement village hall to be another little wooden hut. When the Parish Council makes its decision, it must look to the needs of the present and the future.

SCOTT BANGE We do need to look at housing in the village but we cannot possibly do justice to this important issue in 2 weeks. We would need to do it properly and there just isn't enough time.

STEVE WILLIAMS We're not saying we don't want any houses, we should be building sensibly. We should lodge our objection with the landowner because in the past we were led to believe that this was an area of the village that was open for people to walk their dogs and play games on it. We should consider that the landowners' statement is biased towards his desire to sell the land for development.

JANE MITCHEL No local developers provide affordable housing. Once the land gets in the hands of developers the landowner will lose control and they build what they want regardless.

PETER THURLOW At present the age profile of this village is 10% of adults in the village are under 40, 30% are 40-50 and the rest over 50. Ian Harvey has said he will work to provide the houses the

village wants and was not intending to sell to developers, but to do it himself with input from the village.

HELEN FLETCHER This is said to be not a planning application but the site notice does identify it to be a site for development and we do need to oppose it. Her family has 4 cars which are necessary for a family to function. Considerations have to be made about traffic access, overhead wires, biodiversity and narrowness of roads. We have to focus on the material objections. We are isolated from facilities and public transport is not available to enable people to get to work/services so this is not the best place to be building houses for the young or the old. The land borders a conservation area.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT There were some excellent points in your question, however this is not a planning application just a principle.

COUNCILLOR HUDSON The question of second homes. Can you imagine losing your heritage and then finding that some homes are left empty for most of the year. How is that a good thing? Once a site is lost a view or amenity is gone forever. You are the custodians of the landscape and village. The relevant nature of the locality is a major factor. There are other compelling cases for those who need affordable homes, including disabled enabled homes. But whether we should desecrate or pillage another part of Suffolk is another question. We need to look at brownfield sites and more relevant locations. It was vital to have a vote tonight.

ROGER CUNLIFFE There are a whole lot of reasons why this site should not be considered. We should reject the plan now because another will come along in 5 years. We should wait and see what happens as things are constantly changing.

ALISTAIR CHAPMAN On that point we should take into account the number of houses that other villages are having to take. Should SCDC put houses where facilities are not available? Developers will find best value and will pay as little as possible for land. The affordable houses in Mutton Lane were not bought by people in need but by a buy-to-let landlord. What about in-fill or linear development.

RACHEL SUMMERS Should we not be rejecting this out of hand but put forward an alternative. If we vote to reject the plan and every village around us does the same, where do stand? We have a national housing shortage, we need houses to live in/ disabled housing, if there are too many rejections what will happen?

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYAT SCDC We must provide up to 10,900 houses by 2036, we've already found 8,000 of these. If Ipswich can't provide its quota SCDC will have to provide more to make up the shortfall. The plan recognises we need to grow to develop our communities, but we will take notice of the Parish Council and are not desperate to build. We do not need your thirty houses. Building a community is what it is all about.

STEVE WILLIAMS should not imply that we are against everything; if we object we should do so on planning matters, not on emotion.

ANNIE LAW Should we have a Neighbourhood Plan? The general consensus agreed and she replied that it the village should consider doing one in the future

GRAHAM EDHOUSE Would a no vote remove that parcel of land and would the settlement boundary then remain where it is at present?

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON Easton is preparing a Neighbourhood plan and is looking outside its boundary sites and people are being asked to vote on which should be used.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT If the settlement boundary is not moved then the land outside it will be classified as countryside and will be treated as such in terms of applying for development.

PHIL SUMMERS Asked Councillor Fryatt if it is true that small developments will still be permitted outside the Settlement Boundary?

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT Land designated as 'countryside' can be built on but it would be much more difficult to obtain consent. A housing needs survey would be needed to use countryside land. It would be possible to have a cluster of houses near to an existing settlement.

PHIL SUMMERS Could there still be a small development? Could we reject the site tonight and still have a small number of houses i.e. 3-5 as a cluster development if appropriate.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT It will be difficult but yes if there is a proven need for houses and a cluster would need to be near an existing development.

PHIL SUMMERS So the potential for growth in the future would be limited if we reject this plan tonight and vote that the Settlement Boundary remains as it is at present and SCDC are short of their planned 3,000 houses would they force new development on us?

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT I can guarantee that this would not be the case.

COUNCILLOR WILL ELSON Proposed a vote – to reject proposal in its entirety

- Yes to support the proposal

He then proposed that a modified plan be voted on but the general consensus in the room was that they would prefer a simple yes/no vote.

The following proposal was put to the Meeting

“This meeting wants Brandeston Parish Council to respond to the SCDC Local Plan 1st Draft by rejecting the proposed site in its entirety and for the settlement boundary to remain in its existing place”

The chairman reminded the Meeting that only those who are electors were eligible to vote.

Result 75 in favour of rejecting the proposal and none against.

6 electors abstained

Councillor Elson reminded people that they can send further responses to the clerk at parish.clerk@brandeston.net

The Clerk promised that draft minutes from this Meeting would be available on the website by the end of day Monday 3rd September. The Parish Council response to the proposal will be agreed on the meeting of 11th September. The Chairman welcomed further responses to be emailed to the Clerk before the Meeting. Electors may speak in the public forum, a standing item on the agenda, but standing orders limit this to 15 mins with nobody speaking for more than 3 minutes each.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FRYATT We will look at all comments returned to us; these will then be presented to Cabinet, then the real decision will be made at full SCDC meeting c 18/12/2018. Comments may be made to your ward member who will take them to the full council meeting. The plan must be completed by May 2019 which is the date that it must be submitted to HM Government for approval.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.25pm