

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 7 February 2017 in The Village Hall, Mitford.

Present:

Councillors Mrs S Hudson, Mrs E Ridley, M Sharp (Chairman – presiding) and M Skillen

Also present:

3 Parishioners who left after item 2

SE Rickitt – Clerk

NB: "NCC" means "Northumberland County Council"

Part One – Public Session

1: Chairman's opening remarks.

All were welcomed to the meeting.

2: Public Participation.

The three parishioners expressed concerns about *Application 17/04562/OUT - Land At Spital Hill Lodge Mitford Morpeth - Outline application for erection of one no. dwellinghouse (C3 use)* including

- Intrusion of a two story dwelling – the Chairman stated he understood it was to be a bungalow but all Councillors agreed that a two-storey house would be too visible and therefore unacceptable
- Concerns over access – The Council agreed to ask NCC to have regard to these
- Doubts as to whether or not it was in-fill
- Comparison with other sites within the parish

Councillors discussed the issues with the parishioners and agreed the actions above. The Parishioners were urged to ensure their concerns were given to NCC and also to the County Councillor. **Action SER**

3: Apologies for absence.

Councillor Mrs A Young

NCC Councillor G Sanderson

PC A Teasdale

4: Declaration of any interests and the grant of any dispensations

Councillor	Item	Reason
Sharp	14.2	Cricket Club Chairman

5: Report from the Beat Manager

PC Teasdale had provided a written report as follows

I only have a quick update in that an insecure car was broken into at Spital Hill reported on 150118 and various items were stolen from within. In Morpeth town centre and outlying estates there has been a spate of thefts from insecure vehicles with cash, sat navs and small items taken. Please make sure that your car is locked when you park it up at all times.

There were also a couple of garages broken into – but again these hadn't been locked!

I am aware of the dog attack in Tranwell but this was reported for information only however if there are any further attacks they should be reported so appropriate action can be taken.

6: Report from the County Councillor

Councillor Sanderson had provided a written report as follows

There is an entry in the LTP for some work on St Leonards Lane.

The situation with potholes following the wet then frosty weather is terrible. We have over 8000 new ones reported over the past three weeks and the total currently is almost twice the usual January total.

I have asked the Leader for a special payment to help us address the issue and to try to do as many as we can with more permanent patches which should last longer than just "a shovel of tar"

As reported at your last meeting our winter services staff have done and continue to do a great job

Our parking studies work has continued with meetings with the four Town Councils and key stakeholders. I hope to have some recommendations by around April which will include hopefully some new parking spaces.

7: Morpeth Town Council's Proposed Boundary Review

7.1 The Chairman reported on the meeting that he and the Chairman of Hepscoth Parish Council had with two Town Councillors. There was no detailed reasoning presented for change, merely vague arguments about "fairness".

7.2 Following the meeting, a formal request for a meeting had been made by the Town Council. The Chairman and the Chairman of Hepscoth Parish Council had agreed the following response, which remained unanswered at the time of the meeting

To David Bawn, Chair F&GP, Morpeth Town Council 18 January 2018

Dear David

Parish Boundaries

We refer to recent email exchanges and the Town Clerk's email requesting a meeting.

Both Hepscoth and Mitford Parish Councils regret that you have seen fit to raise this issue, which will cause unnecessary use of scarce resources at this time not only for our respective councils but also for the County Council. Neither Hepscoth nor Mitford Parish Councils are aware of any reason for undertaking a community governance exercise at this time.

However both Hepscoth and Mitford Parish Councils would welcome a joint meeting with yourselves but think this should also include Pegswood and Hebron Parish Councils as they also bound Morpeth, and certainly Hebron appears to be included in your plans.

For such a meeting to be productive, we would like you to provide in advance

1. A clear statement of your reasons for seeking a review at this stage together with the outcomes which you are seeking;
2. The evidence on which Morpeth Town Council relies to support the above;
3. Your proposed terms of reference for any community governance review.

We can then consider that evidence and come to a view as to when would be the best time for such a meeting as either council may need to undertake research and/or gather evidence so that a meeting can be productive.

Neither of our Councils considers there is any urgency as we are advised that any amendments to the boundaries would be unlikely to take effect before the May 2021 parish and town council elections.

Yours Philip Ashmore, Chair Hepscoth Parish Council,

Mike Sharp, Chair Mitford Parish Council.

7.3 The Council endorsed this approach and confirmed its view that no alteration to the parish's boundary with the Town Council was necessary.

8: Minutes of the meetings held on 6 December 2017

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

9: Any matters arising from the minutes if not already on the agenda

9.1 - Item 9.1 – roadside gullies by Water Tower – Councillor Mrs Ridley reported that nothing appeared to have been done and the clerk was asked to chase this up. **Action SER**

9.2 - Item 10.2 – N1 Golf Centre – the clerk had circulated response from NCC refusing to release the draft master plan. The clerk was authorised to submit an appeal to the Information Commissioner and to ask NCC to refer the application to the Committee for decision. **Action SER**

9.3 - Item 16 – The dog waste bin – Councillor Skillen will remind the Warden of this outstanding item of work. **Action MSk**

9.4 - Councillor Mrs Ridley will again remind the Hall Committee of the need for an invoice for room hire, providing the invoice is in-line with the amount budgeted, authority was given for it to be paid by BACS in this financial year. **Action ER & SER**

9.5 - Item 12.2 – Councillor Skillen will seek an electronic copy of the arboriculturist's report for passing to Northern Powergrid as the other tree is very close to electricity supply cables. **Action MSk & SER**

9.6 - Item 13.1 Councillors were delighted to see that Light 24 MF was operational and asked that thanks be sent to NCC. **Action SER**

9.7 - Item 13.2 The clerk was asked to remind NCC of the need to repair the footpath at the top of Church Bank now that the warden had cleared the overhanging vegetation. **Action SER**

9.8 - Item 13.3 The clerk is still to investigate other possible traffic measures at the Church Bridge. **Action SER**

9.9 - Item 19 The Chairman reported that community flags would cost £135 each. The Council authorised the purchase of three, with Mitford Estates and Mitford Cricket Club being recharged. **Action MSh & SER**

10: Planning

10.1 The Council considered *Application 18/00250/OUT - Land At Tranwell Airfield C153 At Gubeon Plantations Tranwell Woods NE61 3YJ - Outline Planning Permission with All Matters Reserved for four detached dwellings with associated garages, parking and garden areas* noting its similarity to the subsequently withdrawn application and that it abuts the parish boundary and now with a small part in Stannington Parish.

10.2 The Council were reminded of their joint objection to that application (submitted with Whalton Parish Council) – set out below

This is a joint objection from Whalton and Mitford Parish Councils. The site is within Whalton but very close to the boundary with Mitford, whose boundaries include Tranwell Woods. The objection is on the following grounds:

1. The site is within the Green Belt and the application does not come within any of the exceptions in NPPF Paragraph 89.

2. In particular three large houses of the type proposed would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development which is hard-standing. The definition of "Previously developed land" in the NPPF specifically excludes land where "the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time"
3. The application is not within the national policy for the release of Green Belt brownfield land, not only as these are clearly not starter homes but also because the site is predominantly hard-standing and thus new two-storey houses, plus probable sloping roofs, would substantially harm the openness of the Green Belt (see Housing White Paper Paragraph 4.18.c)
4. The application site is only just outside the area covered by the recently adopted Morpeth Local Plan (MNP). The site is within Morpeth's hinterland and there is no shortage of housing sites within the MNP area, indeed the most recent figures show an excess of that required for a five-year supply.
5. The application site appears to be part of the aircraft parking areas for the WWII airfield. Both Councils fear that if this site is given consent, further applications for housing on the aircraft parking areas and runway will follow, leading to a massive extension to the village of Tranwell Woods. In particular the application refers to the cessation of the existing car boot sales (Planning Statement Paragraph 6.14). This leads the Councils to consider that an application for the development of that part of the former airfield is probable.
6. There would inevitably be pressure to allow development within the Gubeon Plantation, a protected woodland.
7. The area's use as a WWII airfield was clearly selected because of its high, flat and open nature. Development would therefore clearly affect the openness of the Green Belt as being highly visible.
8. The Parish Councils also noted that the application site was not in the latest SHLAA. Site 3105 is close-by but was assessed as unsuitable for the following reasons which are endorsed by the two Councils

Former airfield adjacent to Tranwell Woods residential area. Mostly grassed with areas of hard standing and building remains. Development would significantly increase the size of Tranwell Woods residential area. Minor county roads to site. Speed limit and adoptable standards required. Transport assessment required. Restricted sewerage capacity. Great crested newts likely to be present. Site is unsuitable for development as located within designated Green Belt within emerging policy.

9. The two Councils request that this is referred to a Planning Committee.

10.3 The Council confirmed these grounds were equally, if not more, appropriate for the current application. Councillors also wanted attention drawn to the mis-statement regarding the parish council's position as neither they nor Whalton had been consulted on the current application before its submission. The Chairman has consulted the Chairman of Stannington Parish Council who is checking whether or not they were consulted.

10.4 The clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, was authorised to make amendments to the submission to account for the increase in housing and to see if a joint submission with Whalton Parish Council was again possible. **Action SER**

11: St Leonard's Lane / Spital Hill

11.1 The Chairman reported on the Feasibility Study prepared by NCC and the meeting he, with the clerk, had with NCC officers in December. The report's findings and recommendations were

3.0 POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Upgrade existing road narrows warning signs and supplementary plate onto grey or yellow backing boards with the addition of a bend or steep gradient warning sign – Estimated Cost £2,000 - £3,000 with additional warning sign included,
- Provide small black and white chevron signs at top of Spital Hill, 2no. for each direction of travel and intermittent edge of carriageway markings around the bend across the private access – Estimated Cost £3,050,
- Cut back vegetation to improve forward visibility through bend at top of Spital Hill and down the bank itself – Estimated Cost £1,100,
- Overlay existing 'SLOW' road markings and provide red strips top and bottom to give greater emphasis – Estimated Cost £2,200,
- Provide new village name plate sign and extend existing 30mph speed limit to incorporate Spital Hill together with 30mph roundel and repeater signs as necessary – Estimated Cost £7,000.

Should some of the above work be combined as one scheme then the overall cost would be reduced due to savings in traffic management, design and supervision costs.

It should be noted that the above figures are only very rough estimates. A firm price will need to be obtained from NCC Estimators and Public Utility information will also need to be requested which in turn, may or may not require the re-location of any proposed signs and is not included in any of the estimates above.

4.0 Conclusion

During the site visit, there was a limited number of vehicular traffic using St. Leonard's Lane/Spital Hill however, it is appreciated that this is not a true representation of daily traffic along this route as outlined by the results of the recent traffic survey.

Given the current status of St. Leonard's Lane (de-restricted), the width of the existing carriageway (4.0m to 4.5m), lack of illumination, access requirements by agricultural vehicles and existing road geometry it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to introduce any form of physical traffic calming measures along this route.

Consequently, it is recommended that:-

- the existing 30mph speed limit is reviewed to incorporate Spital Hill as part of the overall speed limit for the Mitford Village area provided it satisfies all relevant criteria. Statutory consultation will also be required for any change in the speed limit should this be the case. See Figure 3,
- based upon a favourable outcome of the consultation exercise above, provide a 'gateway' type sign which incorporates the village name plate sign and 30mph speed limit sign depending upon available verge width together with relevant repeater signs and 30mph road marking roundel,
- cut back all necessary vegetation to improve driver inter-visibility and sign conspicuity, • provide intermittent edge of carriageway road markings at Spital Hill bend together with black/white chevron signs,
- upgrade existing road narrows warning signs and supplementary plates onto grey or yellow backing boards and
- overlay 'SLOW' road markings with additional red strips top and bottom.

11.2 A traffic survey is to be carried out in the next few months.

11.3 The Council endorsed the Chairman's strong request that the works (as above) be carried out prior to the onset of the 2018/2019 winter.

12: Erosion at Fontside

See item 9.5 above

The clerk reported that he had hand-delivered letters to the properties backing onto the bank requesting that grass and other garden waste was not deposited on the bank. A letter to one other property was being posted. The Chairman reported that periodic visits have been made to the erosion site and that no further erosion is evident in the last 9 month period but neither have we experienced excessive river levels in that period.

13: Street Lighting and Highway Issues

See items 9.6, 9.7 and 9.8 above

14: Financial Matters

14.1 The Council noted the current accounts for 2017/2018, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes.

14.2 Four BACS payments were approved

- Office Noticeboards Online – Notice Board for Tranwell Village - £218.40
- HMRC – PAYE Q4 - £112.50
- Mitford Cricket Club – Grant towards cost of roadside nets - £250.00 (Councillor Sharp not participating in this decision)
- *See also item 9.9 above – purchase of community flags - £405.00*

14.3 The Council agreed to reimburse the clerk £417.29 by cheque being

- Admin and Travel Expenses for Calendar Year 2017 -£67.34
- Cost of Laptop (using part of the Transparency Grant) - £449.95

14.4 The Council also authorised the clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to purchase any software required for the website. **Action SER**

10.4 The Council reviewed the following

- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- The Risk Register
- The Asset Register

The only amendments required were to include the new noticeboard and the laptop on the asset register. (Copies are attached to the signed minutes)

15: The Website

There was nothing to report in the absence of Councillor Mrs Young beyond that in her email previously circulated to fellow Councillors.

16: The Village Warden

See item 9.3 above

17: The Village Hall

Councillors welcomed the new sign which is more visible.

18: Correspondence

The Clerk sought the Council's approval to make a submission to Ian Lavery MP regarding the possible unnecessary expenditure should a separate data protection officer be required. This was agreed. **Action SER**

19: Any Other Urgent Business

None

20. Time and date of next meeting

In the absence of urgent business arising, it was agreed to cancel the March meeting.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 4 April 2018.

Part Two Private Session

The Council resolved to pass a resolution under the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public as the remaining item involves consideration of the circumstances of individuals

21: Co-Option to the Vacancy

This item was adjourned to 7.00 pm Thursday 15 February 2018

Confirmed as a true record

and signed by the Chairman..... Date.....

DRAFT