

**Minutes of Little Bealings Parish Council meeting held at Bealings Village Hall at 7.30pm  
on Tuesday 31 July 2012**

**Present:** Mrs F Rogers, Mr P Carr, Mr B Rufford, Mr D Wilson and Mrs M Wilson

**Also present:** Mr T Fryatt, Suffolk Coastal District Councillor, for part of the meeting, and four residents for all/part of the meeting

**In attendance:** Mrs C Ramsden, Clerk to the Council

During the period of public participation before the meeting the following matters were discussed:

**30 mph Speed Restriction for Holly Lane**

A resident asked if this could be achieved, bearing in mind that there was now an extra vehicular access on to Holly Lane, as a result of the development of The Orchard, and that the junction with Holly Close continued to be very difficult to negotiate. The Council was aware that previous attempts to achieve this speed limit had failed on the grounds Holly Lane was a single track lane with passing places and so did not meet the criteria for a 30 mph restriction. The resident offered to pursue the matter direct with SCC and would involve PC Richard Wright as appropriate.

**Closure of the Admirals' Head Public House**

Residents raised concerns about the closure of the pub as follows:

- The closure was bad news for the local community. The pub was considered to have potential to be a sociable and viable asset for the villages of Gt and Lt Bealings and Playford and should not be lost.
- Could the property become a private dwelling, removing any possibility of a shop/pub being reopened in the future?
- Other village pubs in the area thrive; there had been no survey or appeal to the local community to find out why there was a lack of business before the closure.
- The estimated cost of £70,000 to provide a new drainage system was thought to be extremely high and it was suggested that local builders should be asked to provide alternative costings.
- The car park was already becoming untidy and needed attention, with unattractive metal fencing, beer barrels and bollards on the boundary.

Councillor Tony Fryatt advised that the public house could not be converted into a private dwelling without planning permission for change of use. Planning policies Local Plan AP62 and LDF DM30 both suggested that an application for change of use would be refused. Information from SCDC to the Council supported this and explained that while the existing residential area could continue to be used as a private dwelling, the public house rooms could not. It would be necessary for a change of use application to be supported by evidence that the existing use is not, or cannot be made, financially viable or sold as a going concern, and that the local community has not come forward with a realistic proposal to assume operation of the business. It was noted that when planning permission had been granted previously, permitted development rights had been removed in respect of the erection of walls, fences and other means of enclosure.

Information from SCC (regarding its refusal to allow the pub to connect to Bealings School sewer to resolve the drainage issue) advised that it had been asked to consider this in 2009. It had concluded that the risk and financial implications of allowing a connection to the private pumped sewer main at the School, were too high as the pumping station could only deal with a certain amount of waste. SCC had contacted Anglian Water who had said it would be willing to consider an application for an extension to the public drain from the Parish Council for the owners to install and maintain a private pipeline.

It was noted that the publicans had intended to attend the Parish Council meeting, but had been

unable to do so. A request had been made under the Freedom of Information Act for the release of comments received by the Council from local residents as a result of the announcement of closure and such information would be sent, subject to the Council fulfilling its Data Protection Act obligations.

## Councillor Actions

### **1 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from Dr C Rowe. There were no declarations of interest.

### **2 Closure of the Admiral's Head Public House**

Following consideration of the amenity value and ambience of the pub, the drains issue, relevant planning considerations, the condition of the car park, comments made by local residents and the potential for a community run facility it was **RESOLVED**:

- to write to the publicans as follows:
  - to express great regret and disappointment at the closure of the Admiral's Head
  - to advise that there was potentially a willing community to take over the running of the public house
  - to draw the publicans' attention to relevant planning policies and that an application for a change of use to private dwelling was likely to be refused
  - to draw the publicans' attention to the potential for obtaining less expensive quotations to resolve the drainage problem
  - to draw the publicans' attention to the need for planning permission to erect fencing etc at the site and ask that the car park area be tidied up

It was also noted that permanent closure of the pub may affect the future status of the parish as a Local Service Centre.

### **3 Planning**

#### **East Anglian One Offshore Wind Farm Cabling**

The response of the applicant to the Council's conclusion that AOA should be the favoured route was noted. The applicant remained of the view that 'the least environmentally intrusive option' was the originally proposed cable route (POCC). It was noted that two alternative engineering options were now being suggested for laying the cable, to mitigate the impact on the community of the 'cut and cover' method of crossing Lodge Road. One involved horizontal direct drilling (HDD) under the road, and the other applied special engineering measures to the originally proposed 'cut and cover' method, which would limit the width of the trench to be dug from 55m to 15m.

Mrs Wilson reported on her visit to the open day held as part of Part 2 of the Phase 2 Consultation on the project, concerning the Onshore Cable Route and Construction. An environmental officer had referred to HDD as preferable as it also preserved hedgerows when the cable was laid.

It was also noted that:

Gt Bealings PC had raised the issue of compensation to that community for disturbance caused by the works but no response had been given

that a recent request by Gt Bealings and Playford PCs to the applicant to present information about the impact of the construction directly to residents of the three parishes had been refused. Instead the applicant had suggested a meeting with PC/community representatives to discuss which construction method was preferred.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- the applicant should be advised that:
  - the Council was of the view that the applicant's rejection of the AOA route was financially driven and that insufficient weighting had been given to the impact on the communities of Gt and Lt Bealings in rejecting that route
  - that the disruption caused by the POCC, bearing in mind the options of HDD or 'cut and cover' (however modified), was still considered to be unacceptable
  - that the Council therefore maintained its strong objection to the route and would be pursuing the matter direct with the Planning Inspectorate in due course.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

Councillor Fryatt reported that the examination of the SCDC LDF had been delayed as the Inspector had returned the Core Strategy and requested information on the basis on which the number of new houses needed in the district had been calculated.

It was noted that Gt Bealings was proceeding with the production of a Plan and was suggesting that there was potential for joint working between Working Groups. The Chairman, Eric Barnett, had offered to assist Lt Bealings with production of the Plan and had suggested a meeting to consider options.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- as at present the Council does not have sufficient interest from the community to be able to form a Working Group, further publicity should be given to the merits of producing a Neighbourhood Plan via the Benefice Magazine before meeting with Gt Bealings Working Group

## **4 Queen's Diamond Jubilee**

### **Tree Planting at Sinks Pit**

The terms of the draft Licence received from SCC were considered, insomuch as they limited planting by the Council "only into natural and unfilled ground located between Hall Road and the former municipal landfill site". The Licence further specified that, if this area was found to include an area of landfill then planting must avoid it. It was also noted that the

Licence stated that termination of the Licence would not cancel any outstanding obligation which either party owed the other.

The Remediation Statement received from SCDC and the views of Dr Rowe on the matter following his meeting with the officer at SCDC responsible for the monitoring of the site, as circulated previously to Councillors, were noted. The Council's Tree and Footpath Warden had advised that she was in favour of planting on the approx 12 metre strip of land identified, but believed that any other planting was unwise at present.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- in view of the current status of the site and the indefinite responsibility which would be acquired by the Council if planting was extended beyond that which was currently acceptable to SCC, no approach would be made to SCC to request that it consider any extension of the planting area proposed in the draft Licence.
- Further consideration would be given to the other terms of the Licence, especially in respect of insurance, at the next Council meeting.

#### **Grove Farm Woodland**

The owner of woodland adjacent to the empty Grove Farm buildings had responded to the Council's enquiry about the potential to create a Jubilee Woodland and a site meeting had been held, attended by Mr Carr and the Clerk. The woodland comprised 2.2 acres, with another 0.2 acres of access corridor, which included FP18. No promotion of the wood or public access was proposed, other than on foot, and the track to the farm buildings would not be used. The owner would be prepared to consider gifting the wood to the Council and undertaking some initial work to create paths in the woodland - and would like the Council to consider a housing scheme for the rest of the site.

The Council's Tree and Footpath Warden had advised that the woodland represented a good opportunity to protect the character of the area. However, the project would involve a lot of work: surveying, managing, providing access via FP18 and there were health and safety and insurance implications.

Advice had been sought from Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) about the amenity and environmental value of the wood and the implications for the Parish Council if it acquired it. SWT had advised that the area was 'wet woodland', mainly alder with some sweet chestnuts, and that it would be pleased to offer further advice on management, health and safety, community involvement and grant funding.

It was noted that planning permission currently existed for the use of the land for the construction of B1 industrial and commercial units but that the owner had previously said he would prefer a residential development of the site – as had the Parish Council. The owner now suggested a scheme of some smaller houses/bungalows which would be 'affordable'/suitable for 'downsizers', but which also included some 4 bedroom detached houses. It was noted that a previous application for the construction of 4 houses had been refused by SCDC and rejected on appeal, and that the site was outside of the village physical limits boundary. The Council was aware of possible flexibility offered by the National Planning Policy Framework.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- To advise the owner of the site that:
- although in the past the Council had resolved that, in principle, it would prefer a housing development to the creation of industrial/commercial units at this site, there was no known current need for any new housing in the village. Moreover, as this site was outside the physical limits boundary of the village, the Parish Council did not have any justification for supporting any housing development at this site. The Council remained firmly opposed to housing outside the village envelope.
- if despite the Council's lack of support for a housing development the owner was still prepared to gift the woodland to the parish, the Council would be pleased to give further consideration to the matter.

## **5 Parish Councillor Vacancy**

The Chairman reported the resignation of Miss Dee Williams from the Parish Council. The vacancy was currently being advertised and, unless an election was requested, SCDC would advise after 3 August 2012 that the Council should co-opt a new Councillor. There would be further consideration of this matter at the next meeting on 3 September.

## **6 Finance**

A cheque was signed as follows:

- Suffolk ACRE Services: Personal Accident Policy Premium £27.20

## **7 Correspondence**

None.

The next meeting of the Council will be on Monday 3 September 2012.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.00pm.