

## LEADENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the above Council held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall**

**Present:** Mrs K Willgoose, Mr G McLusky, Mr S Locking, Mr T Sisson, Ms M Nelstrop (chairman), District Councillor Mrs L Hagues and County and District Councillor Mrs M Overton

**1. Apologies:** none

**Declarations of Interest:** Ms M Nelstrop regarding Planning Application 19/1764/FUL  
Ms Nelstrop signed the Declarations of Interest book.

### **2. Consideration and signing of the Draft Notes of the previous meeting into Minutes**

Mr T Sisson proposed the be a true record of the meeting. Mrs K Willgoose seconded the proposal. There were no objections. Ms Nelstrop signed the Draft Notes into Minutes

### **3. Consideration of the Clerk's Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting**

a) Gullies and Drains on A17 bypass – still no works carried out as promised following the recent visit by LCC Highways Officers. Drains completely overgrown with debris (grass flourishing on top) Report again to Highways.

b) Parish Field

i) Check to be made as to whether any Covenants are attached before going ahead regarding sale.

c) Neighbourhood Plan – on a future agenda.

### **4. Consideration of Financial Matters**

#### **a) Bank Statements**

as of Feb 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| H.I a/c       | £3,600.18 |
| Community a/c | £680.10   |

#### **b) Payments in**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Western Power Distribution (Poles/Stays in Parish Field) | £40.17 |
|--|--------|

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| <b>c) Payments to be made</b> | NIL |
|-------------------------------|-----|

#### **d) Further financial considerations**

Quotes for 4 permanently sited flashing speed restriction signs to be sought.

### **5. Police Report**

Reference to On Line Reporting system.

### **6. County & District Councillor Reports**

County & District Councillor Mrs M Overton reported:

a) Based upon statistics (that 80% of the population in our 'policed area' live in urban areas) – it has been decided to reduce PCSO cover from 6 Officers to 2. Letter to be forwarded to Police & Crime Commissioner requesting a re-think concerning Neighbourhood Policing.

b) SPID (Speed Indicator Device) has been delivered to Bracebridge Heath and will be shared between Cliff Villages.

Boundary Commission – currently holding a consultation regarding the re-alignment of Ward Boundaries. To vote to retain Cliff Villages intact respond by March 16<sup>th</sup> on line.

Copy of Mrs Overton's full March Report is available on the parish website.

c) District Councillor Mrs L Hagues reported:

a) Mr Ian Carrington is now Deputy Leader of the Council @ NKDC

Full report from Mrs Hagues is available on the parish website

### **7. Matters of Correspondence**

a) S116 highways Act 1980

Proposed stopping up of part of the public Highway at Green Lane, Stragglethorpe

As Leadenham Parish Council have no objection to the proposal, The Certificate of Consent has been forwarded for signing and return to Legal Services Lincolnshire .

## **8. To consider Matters of Planning**

Planning Application: 19/1764/FUL North Hilltop Farmhouse The Heath Leadenham Lincoln

Ms M Nelstrop (chairman) left the meeting following her Declaration of Interest regarding this Application. Mr G McLusky took the Chair.

Mr McLusky declared this item to be addressed in 'closed session'.

**Note:** while complying with Regulations regarding the reporting on a 'closed session' in a Parish Council Meeting, details of all discussion will be noted separately from the discussions of all other agenda items. The outcome (final decision) of the item in closed session will be attached to the Minutes for the meeting and will be available on the parish website at the appropriate time and can be viewed on NKDC Planning On Line by Friday February 14<sup>th</sup>.

The final decision regarding this planning application is as follows:

### **Reference Planning Application 19/1764/FUL**

**Creation of an all-weather facility comprising of a polo arena, conversion of farm buildings into stables, new fencing, landscaping, lighting scheme, new car parking area | North Hilltop Farmhouse The Heath Leadenham Lincoln Lincolnshire LN5 0QF**

## **From Leadenham Parish Council**

**The Council object to this Application for reasons as follows:**

### **1. Introduction**

**a)** The Council has invested much time and research in assessing this application - undertaking a site visit, researching conditions laid down in the Local Plan and widely scoping opinion via Planning on Line comments and from a well attended Public Consultation held in Leadenham Village Hall. The final decision has been made based solely on these actions.

**b)** Our initial concern, on receipt of the Plans, was that they failed to address the fact that the proposed business would need to be integrated with a working farm on a daily basis, the full implications to both businesses and the risks that would involve on many levels. This factor was illustrated by 'support comments' on line which referred only to the positives of playing Polo. While having every right to do so, were they fully aware of the day to day activities of a fully operative agricultural business with the implications that presented and so comment on the 'full picture'?

**c)** The 'On Site Visit' – taking the Plans and applying them to the site as a whole, presented a clear and detailed picture of just how close these two businesses would be working and gives rise to the implications involved and raising questions on many levels. This clarity is not revealed by observing hard copy Plans only.

**Having undertaken this visit, the Council is adamant that any persons involved in the decision making process on this Application must visit the site prior to undertaking the 'final decision processes'**

### **2. Why this site for the proposed development?**

From concerns raised locally/on line and reference to Local Plan, we understand:

**a)** While scoping opinion, one of the most frequently asked questions asked was 'why is this development not taking place on the original, well established, easily accessible site on the southern end of the village, easily accessible to support systems (Teahouse, The George

Hotel, Farm Shop and Filling Station/Shop) – a positive for village businesses as stated in the Application.

Feedback from residents gave overwhelming preference for the development to be on the current site by The Manor on the south side of the village.

**b)** Many concerns were raised, stating that visitors to the site of this proposed development would take the 'easy, quick route' down into the village, using Quarry Lane to access any of these facilities – this being a single lane road, set on a steep hill, with a blind bend at the top and a hump back bridge at the bottom which is blind on the approach from both sides - well used as a 'rat run' by school run traffic, white van delivery men, large agricultural vehicles et al.

This raises concerns about traffic safety on Quarry Lane and of the railway bridge being structurally fit for this purpose.

There is no Traffic Survey to support the Application.

**c)** Was any Sequential Test carried out to provide evidence for the development to be on North Hill Farm? Were any other areas in the village considered or tested regarding their viability?

### **3. Access to the site**

From a site visit, reference to Local Plan (re Countryside Development and Accessibility) and local/on line concerns raised, we understand:

The area allocated on the Plans appears inadequate. While the numbers of vehicles (horse boxes and cars) using the area is identified, the size of the area is not.

Access route onto the whole site is to be shared by both businesses according to the proposal comprising:

**a)** Horse boxes and visitor/employee vehicles to the equestrian area car park sited beyond building 18 (Grain Store)

**b)** Large agricultural vehicles (tractors & trailers) bringing grain to the Grain Store (building 18) sited adjacent to the access road.

**c)** HGV articulated Lorries, using the same access to enter, requiring a large area in order to turn and manoeuvre to fill with grain before exiting the site via the same access route.

During harvest, deliveries to the Grain Store, we understand, can be as regular as 3 or 4 per hour, day and night depending upon the demands of the weather. Lorries removing grain from the store work throughout the year.

There does not appear to be an Access Survey in support of the application. Would such a Survey have identified these potential clashes of interest?

**d)** There is access to and from the site, from the (east side) onto the Pottergate Road, leading down Sleaford Hill to the traffic lights in the centre of the village.

A high number of concerns were raised that this would not be the 'preferred route' for entry and access to the proposed development:

**i)** given the foibles of 'Sat Nav systems'

**ii)** the accumulation of 'regular user knowledge' - that the 'quick and easy route' is down Quarry Lane and thus would become preferable - as stated in item 2b above.

Again, a Traffic and Access Survey may provide sound evidence.

### **4. Impact upon businesses**

From a site visit, reference to Local Plan (re Countryside Development) and local concerns raised, we understand the following potential problems:

**a)** Grain Store drying systems operate automatically according to need (24/7) with the drying fans switching on and off according to temperature and humidity. It cannot be manually operated to fit in with other needs on an ad hoc basis. If this were to be the case, the grain will fail to dry thoroughly, would be spoiled and not saleable.

- b)** The Dryer fans create dust and noise. These factors are not identified in the Application.
- i)** The dust and chaff created during the drying process is vented out directly onto building 19 (the proposed stabling area). Is the combination of noise and dust acceptable to equine health and safety?
- ii)** The implications of noise levels from the Grain Dryer upon the proposed equine business on a day to day basis has not been identified and addressed in the Application.
- iii)** Should the above factors be a problem for the proposed application on a day to day basis, is there a resolution? If so, what? If it is resolved that both businesses cannot coexist long term – what then?

## **5. Parking Area**

From Site visit, local concerns raised and reference to Local Plan (re Accessibility) we understand: Sufficient space for unloading and loading horses is not clear or sufficient space allowed for vehicles exiting the car parking area safely.

Should the allocated parking area be full, what are the contingency plans for over spill parking?

## **6. Buildings of Historic Value**

From Site Visit, reference to Local Plan regarding Historic Environments and local interest we understand:

A site visit reveals traditional farm buildings using local stone and traditional pan tile roofs, created to house animals and machinery, built in the mid 1800's, to a very high standard. The area includes a very deep well, pumps in all areas required; stone troughs served by lead pipes; efficient drainage systems. It was obviously well planned and intended to create a model of farm efficiency of its time.

- a)** The roofs on some buildings are in a poor state of repair, to the extent they are apparently not safe to use. We understand maintenance of buildings is and always has been the responsibility of the landlord, not the tenant.
- b)** It is considered by many local residents that these buildings could be of value as a heritage asset and should be assessed as such prior to any development proposal is judged.
- c)** The area proposed for stabling of horses (buildings 20 + 21) is specifically of possible historic interest. They remain in complete original state, both interior and exterior. They were originally intended to house cattle. To stable horses would require significant alteration and so these original features would be destroyed.
- d)** No Survey to consider heritage factors has been submitted.

## **7. Stabling Area regarding the fitness, well being and care of horses**

From Site visit, reference to guidance regarding equine health & safety we understand:

Building 20 + 21 are to be used for stabling. As quoted above, they were built in the mid 1800's for use for cattle. They remain in the original state retaining all features (rough stone floors, mangers, partitions, roof support beams, doorways, windows).

- a)** The recommended space for a single horse to be enclosed is 12' x 12'. The distance from the rear wall to the front wall of the building does not comply with this recommendation.
- b)** The low access height of doorways would appear to be unsafe for horses to enter easily and safely. To ensure safety the lintels would have to be raised considerably.
- c)** The interior roof support beams are very low and as such would constitute significant danger for a horse, particularly if panicked (throws head up into contact with the beam).

d) The original brick and stone flooring is totally unsuitable for the housing of horses unless concreted over, which in turn reduces the interior height of the space.

### **8. Manure and Vermin Management**

From Site visit, reference to Local Plan (Countryside Development) and local concerns raised, we understand:

It is well established amongst countryside dwellers that manure and rats live in close alliance. Farming (concerning both animals and grains) and Equine facilities are highly vulnerable to vermin and hold heavy responsibility in controlling all vermin for the good of their own sites and their neighbours. Records must be kept regarding control methods which can be checked by Environmental Health should the need arise.

a) Management of manure has been addressed in the application but no area or space has been identified on the Plans for a manure heap.

b) Vermin control has not been identified within the application. This Council, in responding to repeated complaints regarding excess number of rats in gardens from residents living adjacent to the manure heap area on Rectory Lane, when horses were stabled there, contacted the Environmental Health (NKDC) for support on several occasions.

The manure heap was not removed.

Checks and Controls in such issues are essential and should be addressed at this stage. Red Tractor Farm Assurance support, advise and certificate businesses regarding all aspects of vermin control.

c) Given both businesses are prone to vermin - if either fail to establish and comply with sound working practices regarding vermin control – does this not leave the other at great disadvantage and thus promote ill will?

### **9. Intended hedge planting**

From Site Visit and reference to Local Plan (Amenity), we understand:

1. The submitted Plan shows a hedge to be planted along the west side of the Arena (south of the farmhouse) which will in effect completely isolate the field beyond. No access at all shown on the Plans.

This 'isolated field', as we understand, is tied into a Stewardship Scheme, providing bird seed through the winter months. Access will always be required.

2. The field to the east of the farm yard, sited beyond the proposed grazing, will also become isolated according to the submitted Plans. New access could only be made off Quarry Lane (opposite the entrance to the Landfill site entrance) involving the removal of established hedgerow.

How does this action align with the Local Plan (Amenity issues) please?

### **10. Contamination issue**

There are older members of the Leadenham community who remember the area at the southern end of the Arena, designated as soak away for the Arena, being used as a Council Tip (1940's/1950's). Loaded Lorries entered off Sleaford Hill via the RUPP (through the old Ironstone Quarry - now the Parish Field) and dumped the refuse on that area.

Would a survey of that area be advisable in the interests of Health & Safety?

### **11. Floodlights**

From scoping public opinions, reference the Local Plan (Design/Amenity) and reference from a Councillor with experience in this area, we understand:

This issue has been one of the most contentious with comments reflecting concern regarding the possible effect upon wildlife; residents of the farm house only a few metres away, the placing of floodlights on the Cliff Edge – designated as an area of natural beauty.

We offer the following view:

a) 12m high poles are bound to be visible from the village being this tall. During the day they will be on show and at night, when lit... surely will emit some directly visible light which will be seen from lower down the hill. The lights may have internal controlled distribution but the laws of physics prevail etc. Also they are highly likely to bleed into other areas of the farm near or at the house which will be a great annoyance to the inhabitants and nocturnal wildlife.

b) We have no other photometric data to hand showing distribution apart from the plan they produced. We would ask whether or not the manufacturers fit some form of external louvre or barn door arrangements to reduce sideward glare.

c) The light may go down to the pitch and surroundings but it will also bounce back up from the surfaces and will cause some light pollution above the farm at night which may well be visible for miles.

d) Roughly speaking, 8 x 900w LED luminaires = 7.200w = 36amps which is more than a domestic building's supply. This is not taking into account any further lighting installed on access and car park areas, further electrical requirements, building lighting, sockets etc. This of course will raise the demand further.

e) There is a transformer sited on a pole near the house which we believe is 3 phase. We do not know what the supply rating is but any demand from the polo business should come from the electricity supplier's side via a meter.

## **12. Health & Safety issues**

From reference to the application, site visit and local/ on line concerns raised by local residents, we understand:

There is no reference within the application to Health & Safety issues that could arise for either business working in close proximity:

a). The one access/exit route to be used by vehicles of both parties and their allied vehicles.

b).The effect upon horses from noise, dust and chaff from the grain dryer.

c) Safety of visitors to the equine site being so closely associated with vehicles and machinery from the farm.

d) The effect upon the long term residents of the farm house – additional noise, activity, lighting and constant concerns regarding safety of their vehicles and property.

e) Should a Risk Assessment not have been undertaken and submitted?

## **13. Additional issues**

a) Car Park lighting not addressed

b) Access/exit road surface not addressed. This appears to be currently a soil based cart track with some gravel/shale over laid. Is this sufficient to withstand the extra vehicles usage, particularly given the increased rainfall predicted with climate change?

c) Toilet provision – one toilet is indicated on the Plans. Is this sufficient for the levels of visitors expected on occasions? Is this a Portaloo toilet or one connected to the onsite sewage system?

d) Electricity source and level of usage – not addressed. From where will electricity for the proposed development be sourced? Has the supply rating been assessed? Given the demand required for the farm, especially when the Dryers are fully operational, to be a 'shared source' with the Farm could cause problems if demand is too great. Both parties would be seriously affected in the event of electricity failure.

e) Water source. This has not been addressed. What source is to be used? Has any work/investigations/assessment been undertaken regarding water pressure on site, given there will be increased demand; this would seem to be essential.

#### **14. Effects of the proposed development on the residents of the farm house on site**

Given the proposed development is so close to the residential farm house – what of the effect upon the long term residents of the farm house concerning the additional noise, additional activity during daytime and evenings, flood lighting, loss of privacy and increased concerns regarding safety of their vehicles and property?

Does Amenity Value remain relevant regarding Local Plan Policy? If so, should this not be addressed within this application?

#### **In conclusion**

**Leadenham Parish Council concludes that, for all reasons given above, this site is totally unsuitable for the development of the Application (19/1764/FUL) and therefore object.**

#### **9. Matters for Urgent Discussion**

a) War Memorial – Mr Locking supplied photographs of the new War Memorial erected outside Caythorpe Church.

The question was posed: Which would be more respectful regarding the remembrance of Leadenham residents who gave their lives in two World Wars?

i) To attempt to revive the current well weather worn memorial or

ii) Create a new memorial to keep the memory alive and meaningful for future generations  
Further research to be undertaken.

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm. Next meeting Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Village Hal

SIGNED