

**MINUTES OF THE ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2018, ICKLEFORD VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM**

Present: Parish Councillors M Maxwell (Chairman), R Blake (Vice-Chairman), M Barber, P Crowe, K Goldie, C Gooden and C Thurstance

Officer present: Mrs Danielle Weetman (Parish Clerk)

Also present for part of the meeting: District Cllr Harry Spencer-Smith, PCSO Burrows and 2 members of the public

124. Apologies for absence

124.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Ryan Harper.

125. Chairman's Notice

125.1 Cllr Maxwell read out the announcement on openness and transparency.

126. Declaration of Interests

126.1 No declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda were received.

126.2 No written requests for dispensation for declarable interests relating to items on the agenda were received.

126.3 No requests for dispensation were received.

127. Minutes of the previous meeting

127.1 The following amendments to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2018, indicated in bold text, were noted for accuracy:

Item 117.1: Moreover, the Parish Council believes that, **while some additional housing in Ickleford (above the 90 dwellings arising from the windfall sites) is merited**, the cumulative effect of these plus all four potential sites in the Local Plan is not sustainable, and therefore proposes requesting NHDC to remove the following sites from the Local Plan:

IC1 – Duncots Close

IC2 – Burford Grange

IC3 – the section North of Bridleway 15

This proposal is based on the following planning-based reasons (as determined by conflicts between the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework):

Green Belt - Sites IC1, IC2 and IC3

NPPF 83: Exceptional circumstances for altering Green Belt boundaries can only exist if all non-Green Belt options for development have been exhausted; this is not the case with the NHDC Local Plan.

NPPF 84: Due to sub-optimal site selection, NHDC has not channelled development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.

NPPF 87 and 88: Very special circumstances for altering Green Belt boundaries have not been proven.

Proportionate evidence base - Sites IC1, IC2 and IC3

NPPF 158: The 'call for sites' has ignored the economic characteristics of the District, and the poor quality of the Green Belt Review has ignored environmental characteristics of the District. This has led to the inappropriate inclusion of Green Belt sites. Therefore, the Local Plan has not used a proportionate evidence base for its decisions in this respect.

Environmental impacts - Sites IC1 and IC2

NPPF 100: The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has not addressed the sewerage issues in Ickleford, and NHDC has not developed a policy to manage this risk.

NPPF 113: NHDC acknowledges IC2 is adjacent to a wildlife site where protected species have been identified, but the Local Plan has not produced criteria-based policies for managing this.

- 127.2 Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Blake it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2018, including the amendments noted above, be approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record of the meeting.

128. Public Participation Session

- 128.1 There were 2 members of the public present at the meeting in relation to agenda item 131.1 (The NHDC Proposed Submission Local Plan). This agenda item was therefore discussed at this point of the meeting with the members of the public for expedience. The information relating to item 131.1 can be found under that item.

129. Police Report

- 129.1 PCSO Burrows reported that there had been 8 crimes since the last meeting compared with 3 crimes for the same period last year. An overview of these crimes was given.

Councillors were reassured that investigations into the higher than usual number of burglaries in the area, including Ickleford, were being investigated by the local Crime Unit. The usual patrols in Ickleford continue to be carried out. PCSO Burrows advised that the Police would like to arrange a crime prevention advice event in Ickleford for residents. Suitable venues in the village are currently being investigated and the Parish Council will be updated with further details in due course.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith noted his concern about the increasing number of incidents of graffiti in Hertfordshire. PCSO Burrows confirmed that this matter is the subject of an on-going investigation by Police.

PCSO Burrows left the meeting.

130. Reports from County and District Councillors

- 130.1 Report from County Councillor
None received.

- 130.2 Report from District Councillor

In addition to the matters discussed in item 131.1 (The NHDC Proposed Submission Local Plan), District Cllr Spencer-Smith highlighted recent reports in the media about the provision of new housing in the United Kingdom and the impact of this on the Green Belt.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith left the meeting.

131. On-going Projects

- 131.1 The NHDC Proposed Submission Local Plan

The members of the public present at the meeting were concerned that site LS1 had not been excluded from the Parish Council's submission for the Examination in Public (EiP). They noted that they had identified reasons why they believed this site could be excluded as follows:

- The development of LS1 would merge the site with Henlow, which is a similar situation to the location of site IC2 in relation to Hitchin, and is mentioned in the submission.
- Ramerick Manor is a Grade II* Listed heritage asset, however this is not mentioned in the submission, whereas it is noted that Ickleford School and its flint wall are Grade II Listed, and these are reasons for excluding some of the IC-prefix sites. The members of the public also noted that their barrister had advised that all the setting for Ramerick Manor, including the land, could be classed as Grade II* Listed based on the outcome of a specific legal case that took place in 2017. The Parish Council was asked whether this information could be mentioned at the forthcoming hearing for the EiP.
- Flooding is a concern at LS1 as well for the IC-prefixed sites, however flooding at LS1 is not referenced in the Parish Council's submission.

The Parish Council responded to these items as follows:

- The prevention of merging settlements is mentioned solely in relation to the Green Belt in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) hence why this was mentioned for IC2 and not LS1 (IC2 is located in the Green Belt, whereas LS1 is rural land beyond the Green Belt).
- The Grade II Listed Ickleford School and its flint wall were not used for requesting removal of any of the Ickleford sites. The Parish Council noted in its submission that this information was not included in the heritage assessment carried out for Ickleford, and drew attention to this matter as a reason for not relocating Ickleford School from its current location to the proposed location on site IC3. Furthermore, North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) had noted the inclusion of a development-free buffer zone to minimise harm to the adjacent listed building under site LS1 in the Plan. The Parish Council had interpreted this as NHDC's mitigation for the Ramerick Manor heritage asset.

In relation to the legal case that took place in 2017, the Parish Council asked for details of this case to be forwarded by the members of the public so that councillors could consider the matter further.

- The Plan identifies and notes that existing surface water flood risk issues should be addressed for LS1. The Parish Council had interpreted this as NHDC's mitigation for site LS1. With regard to sites IC1 and IC2, Anglian Water has confirmed there is insufficient capacity in the sewer that sites IC1 and IC2 would connect into to accommodate further residential development. This has not been addressed in the Plan, hence the inclusion of this information by the Parish Council.

It was noted that the Parish Council had published the draft submission for the EiP on its website, and with links via its Facebook page and the Village News email, in November 2017. This was to keep residents informed, and also offer the opportunity for feedback to be sent to the Parish Council with any items that residents may have wished to be considered for inclusion in the submission. However, the Parish Council does note in its submission that all four sites in Ickleford are prone to flooding.

The members of the public were concerned that review of the LS1 planning application by the NHDC Planning Control committee may have been delayed to await publication of the Inspector's report from the EiP. District Cllr Spencer-Smith advised that the current estimated timeframe for the remaining stages of the Proposed Submission Local Plan to be completed is the end of 2018, and the planning application for LS1 may be considered at the Planning Control committee prior to then.

Cllr Maxwell reported that all participants – including residents as well as Parish and Town Councils – had been given an opportunity to speak at the EiP.

As the minutes of the January Parish Council meeting were approved at this meeting and therefore not yet published in the public domain, Cllr Maxwell read out the planning-based reasons for the Parish Council requesting the removal of specific sites in Ickleford from the Plan. For reference, this information can be found in item 117.1 of the minutes for the January meeting.

1 member of the public left the meeting.

Cllr Maxwell reported that the Programme Officer had confirmed receipt of the Parish Council's submission for the forthcoming Ickleford and Lower Stondon session of the Examination in Public (EiP). Furthermore, it had been confirmed that the Clerk could substitute for Cllr Maxwell at this hearing session.

Councillors shared feedback received from residents about the Parish Council's submission since it had been published in the public domain, and noted that some residents had advised their intention to attend the Ickleford and Lower Stondon session on 27 February.

It was noted that the Inspector has invited representors who raised air quality in their response to the pre-submission consultation on the Local Plan, to send in a hearing statement on air

quality in relation to the Plan by Thursday 1 March. This follows on from the hearing session on air quality in the EiP. As the Parish Council had included this in the submission, a hearing statement can be submitted about this matter.

Cllr Maxwell gave an overview of the Green Belt session of the EiP, including the discussion between NHDC and Save our Green Belt (SOGB) and also how the overall contribution to Green Belt purposes was determined.

Following a proposal by Cllr Goldie that was seconded by Cllr Blake, it was **resolved**:

- That the terms of reference for the Parish Council's attendance at the Ickleford and Lower Stondon hearing of the EiP include matters that have already been noted in previous submissions by the Parish Council, and any new items relating to a matter mentioned in these submissions. For any new items relating to a matter mentioned in previous submissions, it was agreed that the evidence for referencing these must be robust and based on the NPPF. **Action: Cllk/All Cllrs**
- That the Clerk in conjunction with councillors prepare an appropriate submission on air quality in relation to the Plan and the hearing session on air quality as per the invitation from the Inspector. **Action: Cllk/All Cllrs**

These items will be reported on at the March meeting.

It was noted that the representation on behalf of the landowner for site IC3 referenced the possibility of an imminent planning application being submitted to NHDC for 190 residential dwellings on this site, rather than the 150 dwellings noted in the Plan. This representation also referenced an education zone to be set aside at IC3 for a new school should this be required; the school would be accessed via Chambers Lane. Councillors noted serious road safety concerns should access for a new school be located here given that the road is narrow in places. Furthermore, it was agreed that the projected increase in pupil numbers from the proposed housing included in the Plan did not warrant an additional one-form entry at Ickleford School.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to send letters to the NHDC Development and Conservation Manager and the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) to highlight the Parish Council's concern about the possibility of a planning application being submitted for site IC3 for 190 dwellings plus an education zone for a new school in Ickleford whilst the EiP is still in progress. **Action: MM**

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to produce a flyer to be distributed to all households in Ickleford to seek residents' opinion on the proposed relocation of Ickleford School as outlined in the landowner's representation for the forthcoming Ickleford and Lower Stondon session of the EiP at a maximum cost of £150.00. **Action: PC/CT**

1 member of public left the meeting.

131.2 Neighbourhood Planning

As the Parish Council's representative on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Cllr Blake gave an overview of the first meeting which was held recently. The cost of preparing and submitting a Plan for Ickleford is being investigated alongside external funding sources. A representative from the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group attended the meeting and has agreed to provide advice to the Ickleford Group. Whilst there are currently seven members of the Group, further volunteers from the village are being sought to support this important initiative.

132. **New Matters**

132.1 Central Bedfordshire Pre-Submission Local Plan

Cllrs Maxwell and Thurstance attended the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Local Plan consultation meeting held recently in Arlesey with District Cllr Spencer-Smith. An overview of this meeting was given.

Following a proposal from Cllr Gooden which was seconded by Cllr Goldie, it was **resolved** that the following response be submitted in response to the CBC Pre-Submission Local Plan:

Ickleford Parish Council **objects** to the following sites in the CBC Pre-submission Local Plan:

Policy SA3 (East of Arlesey): 2,000 dwellings

Policy SE4 (Former RAF Base, Henlow): 500 dwellings on southern section

HAS01 and 02 (Arlesey): 67 and 20 dwellings respectively

HAS23 (Henlow): 101 dwellings

HAS46 and 47 (Stondon) 244 and 33 dwellings respectively

Our objections are on:

- The cumulative impacts of these proposed dwelling numbers on traffic and environmental (pollution and air quality) issues on Ickleford. We do not believe that CBC has considered the cumulative effects of these matters in accordance with the NPPF.
- The additional dwellings proposed for these sites will generate increased traffic in the surrounding area, including Ickleford.
- The DEFRA website on UK ambient air quality shows the most recent NO₂ and NO_x data; Ickleford is a clear 'hot spot' for both of these pollutants. The effect of the CBC Local Plan will be to exacerbate the already-high pollution levels identified by DEFRA.
- If developments in Arlesey are progressed, we would request that it be a requirement of any planning permission that the relief road from Arlesey to the A507 be constructed before any building works for the houses, etc. This is to ensure that construction traffic is not routed through the present, narrow roads in Arlesey, Ickleford, Letchworth, Hitchin and Fairfield.

Action: MM/CIk

132.2 Ditch at Christmas Common

Cllr Thurstance raised concerns about the ditch at Christmas Common following on from the remedial work carried out recently by Ringway, particularly the current high level of water in the ditch which runs adjacent to Arlesey Road. Cllr Barber had been advised that any remedial work would be carried out in the next financial year as there are currently no funds available to carry out this work.

Councillors discussed this matter and noted that should the water not be cleared from this ditch in the near future, they were concerned it may back up onto Arlesey Road. Cllr Gooden advised that the nesting season for birds would be starting soon so work could not be carried out during this time.

It was agreed that Cllr Barber contact County Cllr Barnard to ascertain whether he can request this remedial work be carried out before the nesting season given the concerns noted above.

Action: MB

132.3 Request for an area of hard standing adjacent to the activation button for the awareness sign at Cadwell Bridge

Cllr Barber reported that a resident had requested some hard standing be located next to the activation button for the awareness sign at Cadwell Bridge as the area is currently muddy.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Barber contact the landowner to see if they can assist in providing hard standing in this area. **Action: MB**

132.4 Consultation by Hertfordshire County Council on Inspiring Libraries: The Next Phase 2018-2021

Councillors reviewed the information supplied for this consultation which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Following discussion, it was agreed that no response would be submitted from the Parish Council.

132.5 Common Land between Claymore Drive and Arlesey Road

A resident of Claymore Drive, which is a private road, raised concerns with the Parish Council about surface water drainage on the road. Cllr Thurstance met with the resident on-site to review this matter, and it was noted that some of the drains appear to be blocked which may be impeding drainage of surface water.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Barber investigate options for the drains in this unadopted road to be reviewed. **Action: MB**

132.6 Lack of consultation by NHDC with the Parish Council about a planning application at 35 Turnpike Lane

A planning application for 35 Turnpike Lane was submitted to NHDC in November 2017 on which the Parish Council was not consulted. As the Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications in Ickleford, the Clerk contacted NHDC to note concern and disappointment about this. Assurances were received that the lack of consultation was due to a technical hitch at NHDC following the implementation of a new online planning system, and measures would be put in place to ensure that the Parish Council is consulted on all planning applications in Ickleford going forward.

132.7 Ickleford Pre-School Easter Egg Hunt on Upper Green

Ickleford Pre-School has requested permission to hold an Easter Egg Hunt on Upper Green on Sunday 25 March to raise funds.

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to approve Ickleford Pre-School's request to hold an Easter Egg Hunt on Upper Green on Sunday 25 March. The Pre-School will be responsible for its own risk assessment and insurance, and will also ensure litter relating to the event is cleared from Upper Green. The Clerk will advise the Pre-School accordingly. **Action: Clk**

133. Planning Applications

To consider the following planning applications, including appropriate requests for infrastructure improvements:

133.1 17/02886/1HH at 2 Riverside Cottages, Arlesey Road, Ickleford, Hitchin, SG5 3TZ

Full Permission Householder: Two storey side extension with rear balcony and ancillary works (as per amended plans received 5 January 2018)

An amended planning application was forwarded to the Parish Council. As the response deadline was between meetings, the Clerk in conjunction with the planning advisors submitted the following comments:

- Ickleford Parish Council **objects** to this amended planning application as we consider that the addition of the proposed boarding screen is both unsightly and not in keeping with the building's character.
- In addition, the balcony overlooks the neighbour's garden and seating area causing privacy issues. We believe it would more appropriate for the balcony to be relocated to the South side of the new build as it would not overlook the neighbour's garden.
- If the balcony remains in the proposed location, we would like to suggest a permanent screen of obscured glass, which must be attached to the side of the balcony and not a separate structure hanging from the wall, as is indicated on the present application.

We would like to reiterate the following from our initial letter:

- It is imperative that the hours of operation and deliveries are adhered to throughout this build and that the privacy and noise levels, for local residents, are maintained at all times.
- During the construction, assurances must be given by the Applicant/Builder that the access route for walkers, horses and agricultural vehicles is kept clear from hazards and maintained to a good standard, at all times.

Following a proposal by Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Goldie, it was **resolved** to formally approve the Parish Council's response to this planning application as detailed above.

- 133.2 Planning applications received between 25 January and 1 February 2018
None received

134. Planning Decisions

- 134.1 17/02619/1TD at Telecomms Mast 100M North Of 33, Bedford Road, Ickleford
Telecommunications Determination: Installation of 15m high mock-effect telegraph pole accommodating one number antenna; installation of 2 number dish antennas of 3000mm diameter. Installation of 2 no. equipment cabinets and minor ancillary apparatus

NHDC advised 'Prior Approval not required' on 18 December 2017

The Parish Council had been consulted on this planning application, but not advised that prior approval from NHDC was not required. Councillors noted their disappointment at not being made aware of this.

- 134.2 17/01965/1LB at Abbis Cottage, Lower Green, Ickleford, Hitchin, SG5 3TW
Listed Building: Single storey porch extension following removal of existing porch, insertion of side first floor window, insertion of french doors to rear elevation, insertion of roof lights to south elevation, and internal and external alterations

NHDC granted Conditional Consent on 15 January 2018

- 134.3 17/04114/FPH at 19 St Katherines Close, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3XS
Full Permission Householder: Single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and replacement front porch

NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 17 January 2018

- 134.4 17/02628/1 at Ickleford Manor, Turnpike Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, SG5 3XE
Reserved Matters: Reserved Matters application for the approval of the external appearance of outline application 16/02012/1 granted 31/07/2017 for the development of 19 residential dwellings together with associated vehicular access and parking following demolition of existing commercial buildings/

NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 19 January 2018

- 134.5 Planning decisions received between 25 January and 1 February 2018
None

135. Finance

- 135.1 Quarter 3 financial summary and bank reconciliations

Cllr Crowe has reviewed the bank reconciliations for the third quarter and confirmed they were all satisfactory. A summary showing payments and receipts for the third quarter was circulated prior to the meeting with an overview of the main areas of expenditure for the financial year to date. This financial summary was noted.

- 135.2 Notification of receipts since the last meeting and payments made between meetings, including the SLCC/ALCC membership renewal

The Clerk noted receipts and payments made between meetings as detailed in Appendix A which was circulated prior to the meeting.

- 135.3 Approve payments for February 2018 and any payments made between meetings, including the SLCC/ALCC membership renewal

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance **approval** was given for the accounts as listed in Appendix A, including the payments made between meetings, to be paid. **Action: Cllr**

136. Any Other Business

Cllr Thurstance gave an overview of the Common Holders meeting held recently, noting that there are currently two grazers on the Common Land managed by the Common Holders. The registered charity 'Foundation for Common Land', which is based in Cumbria, was referenced at this meeting.

A resident has advised the Parish Council that the proposed diversion of Footpath 7a has been approved by HCC. The Parish Council should be formally advised about this diversion in due course by HCC.

Cllr Blake reported that a number of residents had shown interest in assisting with a litter picking exercise in Ickleford. This would be arranged as a village initiative rather than via the Parish Council.

Cllr Barber confirmed that pavement repairs had taken place on Witter Avenue and also on parts of Bedford Road. A second-hand bus shelter has been sourced by Hertfordshire Highways to replace the shelter on Bedford Road that was damaged by fire. Installation details will be confirmed in due course.

In addition, Sgt Oliphant has advised Cllr Barber that the request for street lights to be left on overnight on Snailswell Lane has been declined. The lights for the awareness signs at Cadwell Bridge are not working properly at the moment and Cllr Barber is in contact with Hertfordshire Highways for this matter to be resolved.

The Clerk advised that the remedial work at the play area has been booked in with the contractors following approval at the January meeting. The gate repair has been carried out and the net replaced on the climbing unit by the entrance to the play area. The remainder of the work will be completed once the weather has improved.

Cllrs Crowe and Maxwell noted their apologies for the Parish Council's meeting on 1 March.

137. Date for Next Meeting

137.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 1 March 2018** at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.48pm.

Signed by Chairman _____ **Date** _____

Print name of Chairman _____