

Hemblington Parish Council

Minutes of the Hemblington Parish Council Meeting held at Heathlands Community Centre on Monday 23rd February 2017 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Present – Anthony Howe (Chair), George Pickersgill, Andrew Burtenshaw, Bryan Slater, Paul Fox and Steven Ford (Clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by Anthony Howe.
2. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
Mr G. Pickersgill.
3. **TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION TO THE TRANSPARENCY FUND**
 - 3.1. It was **RESOLVED** to submit an application to the Transparency Fund for £950 grant from the fund to purchase a computer, printer and training to enable compliance with the Transparency Code.
4. **To consider council feedback on planning applications received from Broadland District Council: 20162186 - 4 No. Detached dwellings with Garaging, Lilac Farm, 46 Cuttons Corner**
- 5.

Hemblington Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to the proposed development which is outside the current settlement limits defined on the policies map. It is not within Blofield Heath, defined in the JCS 06 Policies for Places, Policy 15, as a 'service village' nor does it fall within the villages listed under Policy 16, and therefore we believe falls under Policy 17, as within an 'other village' (the rural village of Hemblington with Pedham) in the settlement hierarchy, not included in policies 15 or 16, and therefore an area where planning permission will only be considered for affordable housing in exceptional circumstances or as replacement for existing buildings, neither of which criteria are met by this application. This in itself, we believe, is a sufficient reason to reject this application. In effect this property currently marks the boundary between the Norwich area plan and open countryside; this is a boundary which the parish council, if it is a meaningful institution, is committed to preserving and looks to the support of the district council in retaining this boundary in the interests of the wider community. In particular, while it might be suggested that this development would form part of Cutton's Corner, an established residential area, it has for long been a priority of the Parish Council that development should not be permitted to the east side of that area, and that the rural character of Hemblington should be preserved.

Were this application deemed to warrant further consideration, we would further object on the following grounds:

Impact upon the character of the area:

The development would mean the loss of significant open green space and habitat for wildlife, fauna and flora. In particular it would mean the removal of a valuable country hedgerow and its varied natural habitats which the applicant's own ecological assessment defines as a 'species-rich hedgerow'. The soft edge of the lane provided by the hedgerow makes a positive contribution to the verdant rural character of the area. This would be totally eroded and replaced by a large area of bricked hard-standing in addition to the large buildings themselves, only slightly mitigated by new planting. This would be permanently and irretrievably harmful to the character of the area and the approach to the countryside. This would therefore be contrary to NP Policy ENV2 which requires boundaries to use natural hedgerows where adjacent to the countryside, Policy 1 of the JCS which seeks to protect and maintain environmental assets, and Policy ENV1 which seeks to protect biodiversity. Overall, this would therefore significantly undermine the rural setting of Hemblington and irredeemably harm its landscape.

In addition to the loss of rural amenity, the proposed development is also completely out of context in terms of scale, design and the vernacular style of neighbouring properties, most of them relatively modest bungalows, inhabited by elderly residents, while the proposed development completely overshadows and dominates over the adjacent Lilac Farm. The architectural 'style', with its selection of extravagant materials is far removed from that appropriate to a rural village environment which requires and deserves far more sympathetic architectural detailing and design. The courtyard layout is also unsuitable to a rural village environment and smacks more of a market town urban setting.

Highway Safety

The vision splays onto both roads may not be compliant with NCC Highways minimum requirements, the access from the site is onto a single car width road and clear vision would be essential for any development onto the road. The proposed entry to and from the site in Hemblington Hall Road, where the national speed limit of 60 mph applies, is at the narrowest part of the single-track road, heavily used by agricultural vehicles, but also much used by pedestrians (including unaccompanied school children and numerous dog-walkers), and cyclists: no footpaths to ensure their safety are included. We believe this constitutes an unacceptable risk to highway safety, contrary to Policy TS3 of the Development Management DPD.

Housing need

If development of the site were to be permitted it should not be for yet more large and expensive houses, but for smaller affordable houses to enable young or less affluent people living in the area to buy or rent housing locally. We do not believe that this development in any way addresses the specific needs of the population of the parish of Hemblington, which apart from its historic properties, has few if any dwellings of this disproportionate size and type.

Other considerations.

Finally, although this is only a minor consideration, it will be apparent to anyone who has visited this site that the parish council has recently created a flower bed with wooden seat against the perimeter hedgerow of this property and had designated this corner as the natural location of its village sign currently in preparation; this of course would be impossible were this application to go ahead, an aptly symbolic sign of the violation of the sense of community this application would embody.

In the light of the above factors, the Parish Council of Hemblington believe that the evidence clearly supports the view that (a) this is not a permitted development as it falls in a rural village setting and (b) the adverse public impacts of this development to the community outlined above significantly and demonstrably outweigh its private benefits.

FINANCE

6. It was **RESOLVED** to approve 2016/17 membership invoice for £106.02p from Norfolk ALC for payment and payment of £22.16p to MR P. Harvey for website domain name and webhosting. Clerk to issue cheques.
7. Future agenda items. *(Not for discussion)*
8. To confirm the date of the next Parish Council Meeting – 27 March 2017 .

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....