



**Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 7th March 2023
7.30pm Committee Room, Millennium Hall, Egerton**

Present

Richard King (Chair) Peter Rawlinson (Vice Chair) Cllrs Tim Oliver, Jeff Hopkins, Lois Tilden, Pat Parr, Claire Foinette, Richard Wall, Sonia Young (Clerk)

Six members of the public were present.

1) Apologies

Cllr John Lawton; County Cllr Charlie Simkins

2) Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pat Parr: neighbour to site proposed for the Older People's Accommodation at Orchard Nurseries.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 7th February 2023

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of proceedings.

Proposed: Cllr Richard Wall **Seconded:** Cllr Lois Tilden. **All in agreement.** Chairman Richard King abstained as not present at the February meeting.

Chair Richard King proposed to move Item **8a)** forward on the agenda to allow the chairman of Lenham Parish Council John Britt and Chair of the Save our Heathlands (SOHL) campaign Kate Hammond to update Cllrs on the proposed development of the Lenham Garden Community (LGC - Heathlands) by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) and promoted by Homes England. Cllr Lois Tilden gave a brief introduction to explain that the Maidstone Borough draft Local Plan was being scrutinised by a Planning Inspector as part of the normal planning process and the public Hearings had reached the second stage. Egerton had made representations for the first Hearing in support of Lenham and in its own interests. The Heathlands proposal is one of the key policies in the draft Plan. Lenham Chair John Britt said that the Appeal inspector had found the overall Plan not sound but if MBC could provide further evidence to support the policies in its Plan, the expectation is that the Inspector will find the overall Plan sound.. The required evidence included confirmation by Network Rail of the feasibility of a new railway station to serve the proposed Heathlands site and closure of the existing station at Lenham (and possibly closure of Charing station), new schools, major highways improvements and the treatment of sewage to meet Natural England's concerns. John Britt said that that with the local elections on the horizon it was a challenge for Lenham and SOH to prepare further comments for the second Hearing stage particularly as MBC continued to submit its evidence late which left no time for proper consideration. No new documents had yet been submitted by MBC to allow any assessment by interested parties.

He confirmed that Lenham Parish Council had spent 36k on legal and specialist advice and that by contrast MBC had employed 4 KCs and had spent £1.75m of council tax-payers' money to date on the draft Plan, and draft and specifically on the development of Heathlands and the other garden community proposal at Lidsing. He felt that if the outcome were that the Inspector declared the draft Plan to be sound, the question of SOHL, Lenham PC and others lodging a Judicial Review against the Inspector's decision would need to be considered, mainly because there were other development alternatives in the draft Plan that appeared not to have been fully addressed and yet had been ruled out.

Kate Hammond added that this proposed development should be of great concern to Egerton residents as it was so close to the village and the ABC border, that it might likely fuel widespread development from the East to "join it up" along the A20 corridor.



EPC chair Richard King thanked them for attending their thorough update briefing and proposed that EPC formally agree that it would continue do all it could within its power to help LPC and SOH in their work and do what it felt was appropriate at further stages.

Proposed: Chair Richard King. **Seconded:** Vice chair Peter Rawlinson. **All in agreement.**

4) Matters Arising from 7th February 2023

a) Southern Water -damages to verges

The clerk has sent another complaint and kept the evidence. No reply to date.

b) The Summer Social

The event is confirmed and will take place on Saturday 1st July.

c) Planters on The Glebe

Two planters have been bought. Both will be planted and in situ when the spring flowering is over. One large hexagonal wooden planter needs assembly. Vice chair Peter Rawlinson volunteered to see if he might be able to put it together.

d) New noticeboard at The Forstal

CLlr Lois Tilden said the noticeboard would be put up during the forthcoming week – weather permitting – next to the Post box. She and CLlr Foinette had identified the exact spot and had spoken to neighbouring property owners to advise them.

5) Chairman to close the meeting for public discussion

Chairman closed the meeting for public discussion.

Meeting closed 20.18pm

Meeting re-opened 20. 58pm

6) Footpaths report No 155 (see Appendix i)

7) Highways report Number 42 (see Appendix ii)

8) Planning

Planning applications submitted to Ashford Borough Council this month for Egerton Parish Council to consider, details of which may be accessed online at: http://www.ashford.gov.uk/online_planning/

Individuals may also register with ABC to receive regular alerts of applications and decisions.

Case Reference:	PA/2023/0308
Location	Island Farm Oast, Crocken Hill Road, Egerton TN27 9BJ
Proposal	Installation of ground mounted photovoltaic solar array.
Deadline	20/03/232

The application is for an array of 20 solar panels set up as a double row of 10 panels, behind the roadside hedge and between the dwelling (Island Farm Oast) and an outbuilding. They will be mounted on aluminium posts, with a maximum height of 2.360m (7'9"). The hedge is about the same height. The panels will not be visible to other properties.

Given the importance attached to mitigating climate change by generating green energy instead of from fossil fuels, this should be welcomed.

However, given the close proximity to the road it is important that the hedge is retained at a height that exceeds the height of the panels so that the effect of the panels does not clutter or impact adversely on the rural setting.

Propose: Support

Proposed: Chair Richard King. **Seconded:** CLlr Richard Wall. **All in agreement.**

- **8a) Planning appeals – see earlier.**



- **8 b) 5G monopole installation Rock Hill Road**

An in-depth article was included in the February edition of Egerton Update which gave the full history and background on this issue. The timeline is attached at Annex

Subsequent to that, preliminary works had been started on 23rd February by Hutchison Networks, working at night by floodlight. Village residents and parents of pupils at the school had been alarmed by the works and the parents organised a meeting to voice their concerns and consider next steps. Chair Richard King, Vice Chair Peter Rawlinson and Cllr Lois Tilden attended the meeting. Cllr Tilden advised that all attempts by EPC to engage with Hutchison Networks to talk about alternative sites had received no response; furthermore when EPC had first considered the monopole application it concluded that it would object to this location but wished to enter into a dialogue with the applicant to identify and consider other locations. If a suitable site was on parish land, EPC would be prepared to offer that at no cost. It was recognised that there were technical constraints and that a site just as high up and preferably well screened by trees would be appropriate, but it needed to be close enough to the village centre for signals to reach residents. It would inevitably need to be quite close to houses but the "least worst" option needed to be explored. The complete absence of any engagement from the applicant had prevented formal identification of any possible alternative sites. Cllr Tilden had spoken to the Planning Officer at ABC about this and ABC had refused the application. The applicants appealed. Again, EPC made the same point in its representations against the Appeal about the need to choose an alternative option but this and other points were dismissed by the Planning Inspector who decided to allow the Appeal. Cllr Tilden advised that the development had not followed the Government's Code of Practice for siting a 5G monopole that stated 5G monopoles should not be sited where a school is nearby. Cllr Lois Tilden proposed issuing a letter to Damian Green MP based on material provided by her and the Clerk to the school Headmistress and Chair of the school Governors with correct history and chronological detail to include in a letter they intended to send to MP Damian Green, flagging their grave concerns about the siting of the monopole and to ask for the appeal approval to be reviewed. The parents also wished to send a letter for which Cllr Tilden had also provided accurate details. EPC resolved to send a letter as quickly as possible to MP Damian Green.

Proposed: Vice chair Peter Rawlinson. **Seconded:** Cllr Claire Foinette. All in agreement.

Action: Cllr Lois Tilden to draft a letter and the Clerk to send it via email as a priority.

9) Older People's Accommodation

There has been a site visit with the developer, planning officer, and trees officer.

10) Affordable Housing

Cllr Tilden has written again to English Rural Housing about the development of affordable housing on Sale Field and the need for the proposed housing to have its own sewage treatment system. She had drafted a letter to Southern Water to complain about frequent failures at the pumping station and treatment works, and to ask how it plans to resolve current issues and question its capacity ahead of any future housing development in the village. The Clerk has reported another issue to Southern Water that was raised by a resident living near to the pumping station and which needed urgent action. It was agreed by all councillors that this was necessary.

Action: Clerk to send the letter to Southern Water

11) Review and approval of EPC Standing Orders 2023-24

The EPC Policy was circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Propose: Approve

Proposed: Cllr Pat Parr **Seconded:** Cllr Claire Foinette. **All in agreement.**

Action: Clerk to send documents for upload to the EPC website.

12) Play area and skatepark – annual inspection report and next steps

The inspection showed that the swings require replacement. EPC agreed that the swings should be replaced. The replacement has not been budgeted. As such, Cllr Claire Foinette will write to Sport England to enquire about a possible grant, and research other grant bodies.

13) Cricket Steps

EPC agreed that the cricket steps were nearing the end of their useful life and would need to be replaced as ongoing repairs were not sufficient to maintain them long term.

Action: The Clerk to explore potential solutions and secure quotes.

14) Egerton Parish Assembly

The final plan and outline agenda for the evening was circulated to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting. Councillors were impressed with the Clerk's proposals and agreed they should be implemented, whilst also including an opportunity for questions to be raised by the public. The Clerk confirmed that the Chairman would tell residents in his introduction that they would be able to raise questions during the evening and submit issues that they would like the new council to focus on, by posting them onto a board put specially in place for this purpose.

15) 123 bus replacement survey

The results of the survey were circulated to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting. Two issues were identified in the research:

- Getting schoolchildren to Ashford – now mitigated by the new 10E school bus service.
- Bus services for all other residents to access essential central services.

A new issue has arisen since the survey: approx. 40 children across the three villages whose bus service to Homewood School in Tenterden has also just been withdrawn by KCC.

A meeting between the parishes of Egerton, Pluckley and Smarden has been diarised to discuss the outcomes of the survey and agree next steps. Vice-Chair Peter Rawlinson will attend.

Action: Chair Richard King will raise the issue of the Homewood school bus.

16) Correspondence

Note: All circulated by email in advance unless marked with a *

Kent Police – Victim Support launch Victim Voice. All. 08/02

KCC consultation on community services. All. 14/02/2023

NALC bulletin. All. 14/02/2023

Cllr Guy Washer – results of tri-village bus survey. All. 14/02/2023

KCC Armed Forces Awareness Training. All. 14/02

NALC newsletter. All. 16/02

KCC confirmation of Egerton highways Steward. JL/RK/PR. 16/02

Ashford volunteer centre – webinar to encourage young volunteers. All. 21/02

KALC Ashford area meeting minutes. All. 23/02

Correspondence from Mr J Elworthy re closure of 100 Club and Egerton Fete accounts. All. 28/02

ABD business rate evaluation. All. 28/02

Updated details on eligibility for the energy voucher scheme. All. 28/02

MBC call for sites - gypsy, traveller and travelling show people development plan. All. 28.02

ABC – new proposed event space and election photo ID needed. All.02.03

KALC event – EDI. All. 2/03

KALC civility and respect project. All. 02/03

ABC – strengthened focus on damp and mould in social housing. All. 07/03

Website

February minutes

April agenda
EPC Standing Orders 2023 -2024

17) Accounts

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
Thanks signage play area	Reimburse S Young	BACS	78.60
Web hosting -village site	Reimburse computer centre	BACS	151.30
123Reg EPC email	Reimburse S Young	BACS	387.54
March salary	S Young	BACS	1120.46
Tax	HMRC	BACS	33.97
Total			£1,771.87

Income			
K Flynn	Hire of outside event space	BACS	£75.00
Donation	Village planters	BACS	400.00
Southeastern power networks		cheques	4.60
Total			£479.60

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 28th February 2023 = £9,055.10 less un-presented cheques as follows

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Actual balance = £9,055.10 at 28th February 2023

Note above balance includes RESERVES as listed:

Grant K Mulholland/ ABC towards the printing of the Neighbourhood Plan: £1,000

Legacy Ernie Mexter: £5,000.

Accounts for Egerton update magazine

Expenditure			£
Lotus Design & Print	Feb Egerton Update printing and paper	BACS	858.00
Delivery	Alan Arthur	BACS	100.00
Total			£958.00

Income			
Advertising			1902.50
Total			£1,902.50

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 28th February 2023 £4,093.30 Less un-presented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance = £4,093.30 at 28th February 2023



Accounts for Village Projects

Expenditure		Cheque No	£

Income			
Interest		BACS	15.95
Total			£15.95

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 28th February 2023= £31, 313.89 Less un-presented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance = £31, 313.89 28th February 2023

Village Projects fund

Pre-school move		11,478.65
Esme Slater woodland		10,000.00
Village Hall		9,835.24

Proposed to accept: Cllr Jeff Hopkins. **Seconded:** Cllr Lois Tilden. **All in agreement.**

17a) Details and costs of the proposed new auditor for EPC's annual accounts were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Proposal: to accept the quote from Martin Thomas & Co of Sittingbourne, Kent, and appoint this company to audit EPC annual account. It was noted The Clerk will need to travel to the offices of Martin Thomas & Co for the purposes of the annual audit of accounts.

Proposed: Cllr Claire Foinette. **Seconded:** Cllr Richard Ward. **All in agreement.**

18) Additional items

- **Egerton Parish Council elections**

The Clerk confirmed that the papers and announcement of the election were expected imminently and that she has attended the webinar run by ABC about the process. Notices to warn all Egerton residents that they will need ID to vote, have been placed on noticeboards.

- **The George**

Chair Richard King confirmed that The George remained an Asset of Community Value and mentioned if in the long term the pub went up for sale whether Egerton might, follow the example of Bethersden where a community group had formed to buy one of its public houses in the village – also called The George. In that event he said grant funding might be made available to put towards any purchase by the Egerton community.

Action: Vice Chair Peter Rawlinson offered to try and speak to the current owner about his future plans.

Meeting closed at 22.43pm

Next meeting Tuesday 4th April 2023.

Appendix (i)

Report no. 155 of the Egerton footpaths representative for March 2023

6 Outstanding Items remain from the February 2023 report.

1 Closed Item

4 New Items (1 completed)

The outstanding issues below are listed with the KCC Reference, the date reported, the footpath number, the location, the difficulty experienced and the status of action.

1. **PROW 210959063.** 10/09/21. AW75 at Heronsdale, Wanden Lane. Egerton resident complaint of overgrowth (brambles) and fence panel leaning towards the footpath. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.
2. **PROW211126930.** 09/11/21. Part of AW87 to the west of the church behind the Glebeland houses where the path is quite narrow. Badgers have again been active and collapsed the side of the path about halfway along. Status: Still Work Scheduled but it is accessible with matting in place until a more permanent solution is found. Status: Still in Progress.
3. **PROW211117086.** 21/11/21. AW64 Footpath opposite Egerton House on Greensand Way in a small wooded area towards the byway up to Coach Road. Two planks missing/broken on the bridge over a small stream. Status: Still Work Added to Forward Maintenance Plan.
4. **PROW220641396.** 22/06/22. AW81. Stone Hill to Green Hill. At the Parish Assembly two separate reports were made regarding the boundary stile between the Stone Hill properties to the large field out to Green Hill. The stile there is too high for ladies to manage. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.
5. **PROW220718308.** 21/07/22. AW88. Elm Close to Stone Hill. Official KCC fingerpost at the top of the steps leading down to the hall pointing across to direct walkers to the footpath which leads out to Stone Hill is missing. Status: Still Work Scheduled.
6. **PROW221045684.** 27/10/22. AW106. The Cottage on The Street by the telephone box out towards Egerton House etc. The new owners of The Cottage have sent a dozen photos where various of the trees on the footpath are leaning towards their property or beginning to grow over The Cottage. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.

NEW ISSUES:

1. **KCC DIVERSION CONSULTATION.** 07/02/23. AW25 (part). Proposed minor diversion at Kia-Ora, off The Street. Consultation form completed positively and returned to KCC by Parish Council on 14th February 2023.

2. **PROW230285561.** 07/02/23. AW67. Egerton House Road, next to Willowdene, the 'finger' of the fingerpost at the entrance to this footpath has fallen off the post. Allocated – Awaiting Inspection.
3. **PROW230288567.** 07/02/23. AW97. Near Frasers on Barhams Mill Road the fingerpost is leaning into, and being held up by, the hedge. Allocated – Awaiting Inspection.
4. **AW95 Bedlam Lane.** 13/02/23. AW95 (part). Request by residents near to this footpath to add waymarkers to two stiles on this footpath to emphasise correct line of the right of way. The residents were amenable to completing this task given the necessary markers and nails. Issue completed satisfactorily. Residents thanked. Job Closed.

Appendix (ii)

Report no. 42 of the Egerton Highways Representative – Mar 2023

Summary

Closed Items	5
Open Items	10
New Items	2

Closed Issues

Reference	Description & Status
655998	Egerton House Road/Link Hill Lane Blocked Drain/Gully
Logged	21/09/2022
Status	Enquiry investigated and customer updated
693046	Iden Lane – Multiple Potholes
Logged	Jan 2023
Status	Works completed
60004278	Wanden Lane – Fly tipping – Obstruction
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works completed
692691	Coldharbour Lane – Multiple Potholes
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works completed



Egerton Parish Council

42003507	Stone Hill Road – Multiple Potholes
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works completed

Outstanding Issues

Reference	Description & Status
589193	Stonebridge Green Road - Blocked drain/gully
Logged	2 nd August 2021
Status	Enquiry attended - more work required
60002069	Green Hill Lane – Potholes
Logged	24/05/2022
Status	Works being programmed
No reference	Pembles Cross/Barham Mill Road – Road repair
Logged	Unknown
Status	Order raised
646549	Egerton House Road near The Coppice – Dip/Depression
Logged	20/07/2022
Status	Works being programmed
655201	Chapel Lane Forstal Blocked Drain/Gully
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works being programmed
675180	Stonebridge Green - Blocked Drain/Gully
Logged	Jan 2023
Status	Works being programmed
687790	Iden Lane – Mud on the Road
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Work being programmed
688586	Rock Hill Road/The Street/New Road – Pothole
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works being programmed
689720	Rock Hill Road – Blocked drain/gully
Logged	15/09/2022

Status	Works being programmed
688627	Crocken Hill Road – Multiple Potholes
Logged	15/09/2022
Status	Works being programmed

New Issues

Reference	Description & Status
60004345	Stone Hill Road – Pothole
Logged	Feb 2023
Status	Works being programmed
60004358	Green Hill Lane- Ditch Problems Drainage & Flooding
Logged	Feb 2023
Status	Enquiry under investigation

Appendix (iii)

TIMELINE – APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR A 5G MONOPOLE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

- **30/08/2021** Planning application (formally a Prior Notification) submitted to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) by WHP Networks for C K Hutchison Networks (UK) Limited to install a 5G monopole and cabinets on the grass verge a few metres outside of Egerton Church of England Primary School and the Egerton Conservation Area.
- **13/09/21** Application validated by ABC ref 21/01644/AS.
- **16/09/212** consultation period began.
- Egerton Parish Council (EPC) submitted objections on 6/10/21 and 18/10/21 to Ashford Borough Council. EPC requested that the applicants should meet councillors in the village and together identify a more mutually appropriate location.
- **21/10/21** Egerton school submitted objections to Ashford Borough Council.
- **By 25/10/2021** Many objections were submitted to ABC by local residents.
- **29/10/2021** ABC agreed with EPC and others and refused the applicants Prior Approval.
- **02/08/2022** WHP Networks on behalf of Hutchison Networks lodged an Appeal against ABC's decision to the Secretary of State for LUHC. ABC Ref. APP/63459 **Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Ref APP/E2205/W/22/3295303.**



- **10/08/22** ABC contacted consultees and objectors to notify them of the Appeal and opportunity to make further comment, but some did not receive this and the school was closed as this was during the summer holiday. EPC received this and began to prepare a further objection.
- **11/08/22** ABC completed a questionnaire for the Planning Inspector
- **31/08/2022** ABC submitted to the Inspector its reasons for objections in a statement against the Appeal.
- **07/09/2022** EPC further lodged their objections reinforcing previously stated reasons including citing Guideline 19 of the Egerton Parish Design Statement (an official planning document): *"All telecommunications equipment should be sited unobtrusively"*.
- Appellants made their statement in which they stated they had consulted the School and other bodies before making the original application in September 2021.
- **6/12/2022** A Planning Inspector was appointed to assess the Appeal.
- **Date unknown** - Site visit by the Inspector, no information was given to anyone about this about this as it was not a hearing, only to be considered by the written representations.
- **15/12/22** The Planning Inspector considered the objections and appeared to recognise there was some validity in them but allowed the Appeal.
- **16/12/2022** ABC received the decision and published this on their website. EPC picked this up and discussed it at their meeting on 10 January, concluding that despite the outrageous outcome there was insufficient time to raise thousands of pounds to engage a barrister and lodge a Judicial Review at the High Court.
- **February 2022** Article published by EPC in Egerton Update delivered throughout the parish.
- **23/2/2023** without notice or any consultation, construction works commenced in the location outside the School by Hutchison Networks