

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council Meeting held at Northumberland Crematorium, Bockenfield on Tuesday 8 August 2023.

Present: Cllrs S Allan, L Clarehugh, E Davidson, J Day, D Green and J Marshall
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin
19 Members of the Public

32 Apologies for Absence – County Councillor Sanderson

33 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda – Cllr Allan in Item 40 – Planning Applications
Pending 23/02325/FUL.

34 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person)

Residents attended the Parish Council meeting to raise the following issues re application **23/01921/FUL** - Bockenfield Aerodrome Ltd Eshott Airfield - To allow amended operating hours to 07:00-23:00, training and fuelling of military and emergency services aircraft, provision of temporary structures and retrospective café. Cllr Allan's answers are in italics.

1. Why has the MOD not submitted a business case supporting the statements the applicant is making that the MOD need to use Eshott when there are more suitable locations like the other side of Rothbury and Carlisle Airport? Are the MOD actually asking to come to Eshott? *The MOD can flying into wherever they want, whenever they want. Not exactly sure why they use Eshott Airfield at times but it could be due to cheaper fuel and landing fees.*
2. Extending the hours to 11pm is excessive. Does this apply to all aircraft or just for the military? *The application currently is very confusing as it quotes three different sets of hours and this needs further clarification.*
3. The overflying of West Thirston has not seemed so bad recently however in the last 2 days it has got much worse and planes are coming over properties extremely low. *Work has been done on the flight paths.*
4. Why are the airfield still being allowed to operate outside the current hours? *Any infringements should be raised with NCC and copy in the PC every time as these are being logged as part of the enforcement action.*
5. What exactly is NCC doing? *The PC has a good line of communication with NCC and NCC has the technical know for dealing with the issues and we have to put our trust in them.*
6. The application has not stated a trial period. *The PC will ask for a trial period in its submission to NCC.*
7. A request for a noise assessment by NCC should be made and that this should take place without the operators being informed. *This has been requested by NCC and residents in the past. Public Health Protection are aware that complaints have been received regarding aircraft noise, however, aircraft noise is exempt from action under the provisions of statutory nuisance, as such it falls to the planning permission to control noise. NCC has imposed a condition of no noise above 44dBs before 9am or after 7pm however aircraft are currently exempt from this.*
8. Why is there not an environmental impact assessment with the application? All other communities close to the noise have been mentioned in the documentation with the exception of Burgham Park and this is within the flight route especially for take offs and planes are less than 200m from houses and on some occasions still below the tree line. *The PC will ensure Burgham Park is included in their submission.*
9. None MOD helicopters are a big issue, they train for hours around the airfield unlike planes that take off and fly away. Does this new application give NCC the opportunity to ban all helicopters. They are noisy, intrusive and do not adhere to circuit patterns. *Need to ensure that this is requested when submitting your comments on the planning portal.*
10. An independent survey should be undertaken to ascertain what can and cannot be done on the airfield. Adjoining landowners have suffered crop damage from helicopters flying too close to land boundaries and they are using other peoples land. *NCC was asked to undertake one during the last application process but this did not happen.*
11. Conditions cannot be enforced whilst there is a live application. What is stopping the applicant from withdrawing the application when the summer is over and resubmitting next spring? *NCC will not be able to ignore the fact that an application has been submitted and will not ignore it if withdrawn.*

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12. What is happening in relation to the Management Plan? There has been no progress in the last 3 years. *A comprehensive Management Plan has been requested in the PC representation.*
13. There has been frenzied support from people following the applicants facebook post. People do not know what they are actually putting their names to.
14. A holding pattern was introduced over a residents house in Felton as he had complained about the airfield. The pilots skim trees in Felton village and fly down Main Street. They state they are a big employer – who do they directly employ and from where? They have utter contempt for the residents and the planning system and are just out to line their own pockets. *The must play by the same rules as everyone else and that is what the PC are asking for. The PC did offer an olive branch to the airfield operators but this was rejected by them.*
15. If planning is passed they can easily change the circuits and can fly over houses as all hours. There needs to be an exclusion zone to protect residents.
16. NCC should never have validated this application as there are no detailed plans so could easily be withdrawn and we are back to square one.
17. Is there any stance from NCC on this or are they being their usual unhelpful self
18. Beggars belief that this can be allowed but if withdrawn people will just get fed up of submitting objections and will wear people down. NCC should take into consideration any comments submitted now if the application is withdrawn and resubmitted.
19. What if the MOD were to give 4-6 weeks notice of any training so other businesses could make plans? MOD would not do this and also how can a crematorium or burial ground operate on that basis.
20. So many people are affected and the only people benefitting are the applicants
21. Applicant states they have 18 full time staff but Companies House documentation states there are 2 employees.
22. The majority of the supporters are from outside the area so have no or little knowledge of what the situation is for those living close by

In summary NCC planning is aware of the issues residents are experiencing. The PC and NCC have a good working relationship and NCC is listening to what people are saying. Make sure you put your comments into the planning portal. The deadline has been moved to 11 August however NCC will accept representation up to the point of a decision being made however this may mean that your comments will not be taken into account in the Planning Officers report.

The members of the public were given the opportunity to leave the meeting and they all did.

35 The minutes of the meeting 15 June 2023 were agreed as a true record.

36 Matters Arising therefrom:

1) Matters arising there from (excluding outstanding actions in relation to NCC)

- a) Dog Bin West Thirston – the new dog bin is in place and the old one has been removed and the Clerk has received an email of thanks from the nearest resident to the dog bin.
- b) Light issue in East Thirston – the light that has been on all day has now been repaired.
- c) Lighting on The Peth – vegetation has still not been cut back and a reminder via the FixMyStreet logging system has been given. Clerk
- d) Missing Weldon Bridge signage – have chased up Highways on this. Clerk
- e) Pot Holes in Wintrick – these have been filled in.
- f) Mile marker repairs – the Clerk has located this – just up from the Northumberland Arms, it requires painting and it was agreed to ask the resident who painted The Peth railings. Clerk
- g) Meeting at the Zoo - the Clerk has not received a response from the zoo on a proposed meeting date. Clerk
- h) Weed Spraying in village – this has now been undertaken. Clerk
- i) Land beside powergrid building – some basic tidying up has taken place. Clerk still to ascertain who owns the land. Clerk
- j) Local Transport Plan – The three requests for the parish have been submitted.
- k) Road from Wintrick to East Thirston – pot holes have been repaired.
- l) Road from Felton to Bockenfield – gully in tarmac – Highways has responded to state this has already been reported and is on the list of works.
- m) Inaccurate OS mapping – OS has confirmed that it agrees that the mapping for the airfield is incorrect and will amend this in its next revision. Based on this Skydemon was approached with

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the same details and they have now amended their maps. Also a NOTAM has also been published recently with the corrected information. It was agreed that this information should be put on the planning portal. Clerk

n) Repairs to New Bridge surface – a request has been logged with NCC. Clerk

2) Long-term Outstanding issues being addressed by NCC for information

a) Manhole cover at Wintrick (12/2021) - outstanding Clerk

b) Road from A1 to Longhorsley has raised iron works and the edges of asphalt badly broken away both of which can cause damage to cars (01/2022) - outstanding Clerk

c) Pathway improvements at riverside (03/2022) - outstanding Clerk

d) Path in West Thirston – water issue (08/2022) – no issues recently

e) Path in West Thirston – Cyclists (08/2022) - no issues recently

f) Road at Bywell Shooting Ground in need of repair (11/2022) - outstanding Clerk

37 Report by County Councillor Sanderson - None

38 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC - None

39 Potential Projects

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way – need to trim where picnic table has been installed. Cllr Davison offered to do this. Cllr Davison

b) Landscaping – Cllr Marshall to cut back hedging around speeding sign and request resident does the same at the other end of the village. Cllr Marshall

c) Short term / Medium term / Long term projects – Village gateways, bus shelters – ongoing. Clerk to speak to NCC about gateways into West Thirston.

40 Planning

To report on any planning decisions:

23/01436/FUL – Northumberland Zoo - Proposed building for housing 15% of the worlds' captive population of a critically endangered species – GRANTED

Planning applications pending:

20/04177/FUL - Land North East of Felmoor Caravan Park - Extension to existing holiday comprising 139 no. pitches for holiday lodges plus ancillary features including water feature, play area and vintage vehicle museum – objections based on Neighbourhood Plan

22/04112/FUL - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

22/04113/LBC - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

23/00547/REM - Land East Of Greycroft West Thirston - Reserved Matters application for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 9mo. residential dwellings on refused application 19/05017/OUT (appeal reference APP/P2935/W/20/3254874)

23/00601/S106A - Land East Of Greycroft West Thirston - Modification of S106 agreement dated 07-10-2020 on approved application 19/05017/OUT in order to change tenure of the 2 Affordable Homes from Rented Units to Discount Market Value Houses

23/02111/FUL - Land At The Shaws Farm Felton - Erection of an agricultural steel portal framed shed for storage of straw bales

23/02217/FUL - Burgham Park Golf Club Burgham Park - Relocation of existing greenkeeper's shed

23/01921/FUL - Bockenfield Aerodrome Ltd Eshott Airfield - To allow amended operating hours to 07:00-23:00, training and fuelling of military and emergency services aircraft, provision of temporary structures and retrospective café – email confirmation received for deadline for comments to be moved to 11 August

23/02325/FUL - Land East Of Wintrick Farm - Erection of a single new self build holiday let including hardstanding and landscaping.

23/02478/FELTPO - Benson House Bainbridge Lane – Tree Works

23/02477/FELTPO - Covert Lodge The Pipistrelles Eshott – Tree Works

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23/02657/VARYCO - Location Land West Of The Forge East Thirston - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application 15/01288/FUL in order to make minor amendments to the design of the dwelling.

23/02758/FUL – Thirston Cottage - Construct single storey extension to detached outbuilding for storage

Planning Issues:

- Bockenfield Caravan Park – blue lights illuminating entrance – still outstanding
- Eshott Airfield – viewing area and café – application submitted
- Eshott Airfield – Enforcement Notice – not being pursued whilst application pending
- Felmoor Park – Tree removal and building works without planning – Government guidance states that enforcement action is a discretionary power and should only be taken when the breach would affect amenity of an area and is a danger to the public. Based on this guidance NCC will therefore not be pursuing enforcement action.
- Felmoor Park – Entrance lighting and signage – still outstanding
- Felmoor Park – Not complying with planning approval for timber cabins – still outstanding
- East Thirston – None compliance to planning approval – a new application has been received as above to vary conditions.

41 Requested Agenda Items: None

42 Correspondence:

- NCC – Library Mobile Services Vehicles - Three new multipurpose vehicles have been acquired by the Council to be used as mobile libraries but also customer services and this scheme is being piloted this summer.
- Age UK Donation request - £25 donation agreed as per budget. Clerk
- Telephone conversation re Field of Hope – a request has been put in for help to put in some more trenches for free bulbs that have been acquired. The bulbs will be started off in pots so that once the daffs in the Field of Hope pop their heads up trenches can be dug that will not disturb existing bulbs. It was suggested that the bulbs be planted up towards the bus shelter and not disturb the existing area. Clerk to look into this further. Clerk
- Email reporting flytipping – a resident has receipts linked to some flytipping and NCC has not followed up on this and they requested the help of the PC. The Clerk has chased this up but NCC not pursuing. Clerk
- Email re potholes to Blackbrook Farm – These have been reported to NCC and are on the list. Clerk
- Email requesting kerbs from A1 to West Thirston be cleared and weedkilled – the kerbs have been weedkilled – really need for the gullies to be swept once the weeds have died off. Clerk
- Email re Wintrick Junction – there are issues again at the junction at Wintrick were people are parking and blocking the road – the Clerk has requested Give Way signs to be installed which might alert drivers to this junction as the white lines are not working. Clerk
- Email re storage containers at Eshott Airfield – containers have been brought onto the airfield without permission and there are containers on site already without the relevant permission. NCC are aware.
- Issues re helicopter location at Eshott Airfield – complaints have been received in relation to inappropriate location of helicopter when parked up on airfield. Helipad is not being used. NCC are aware of this.
- Thank you letter from Felton and Thirston Fair for donation
- Thank you letter from HospiceCare for donation

43 Finance

(a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £10,974.26 TPC funds and £4,929.97 FCJC Funds totaling £15,904.23. The balance was reconciled with the bank statement and agreed by the Councillors.

(b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB173	Glasdon – paid before this meeting	£512.52
IB174	L Hamlin Salary and Expenses	£622.30

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	35 hours at £17.58 (£615.30) Home working allowance of 7 weeks (£7.00)	
IB175	County Durham & Cleveland County Training Partnership New Councillor training from Cllr Day	£10.00
IB176	Age Concern	£25.00

(c) **Income** – None

44 Urgent Items - None

45 Items for next agenda – None

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm

Date of Next meeting: 21 September 2023