

South Muskham/Little Carlton Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 17th January 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Small Hall, South Muskham Village Hall

Membership: C Briggs-Price, K Brown, D Catanach (Chair), R Gill, P Jarvis & E Tilbury

Together with County Councillor Laughton, District Councillor Mrs Saddington and Karl Wilson from Severn Trent Water.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and extended his best wishes for the New Year.

91.23/24 **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor Shearing.

92.23/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

93.23/24 **To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd November 2023.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2023 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

94.23/24 **Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Clerk was asked to chase the Environment Agency for a response regarding the flood bank and works being undertaken.

95.23/24 **To welcome representatives from Severn Trent to discuss recent drainage issues**

The Chair suspended Standing Orders at 7.31pm for Karl Wilson, from Severn Trent, to discuss recent issues in the villages.

Mr Wilson explained that his area of responsibility was from North Scarle to Bingham, up to Mansfield and to the edge of Nottingham.

Mr Wilson first apologised for the level of service in responding to call outs. The reactive sewer work used to be undertaken by contractors but, due to the unsatisfactory level of service, it has been taken back in-house. 300 new sewage workers have been employed, some of which had been transferred across from the contractors. There had been unprecedented high levels of calls to Severn Trent which had resulted in call-outs that would normally be within 24 hours, pull out to 5 days.

The calls on 5th December identified that a tanker may be required in Little Carlton and, while it was difficult to predict how the pumping station would react, it was clear that it was starting to struggle.

The system in Little Carlton is a foul only system, with a 6" pipe, but it had become overloaded with ground and surface water. It runs from the pumping station down to the mini roundabout and into South Muskham and is a relatively small system.

The pump and sewers are designed to handle dry water flow and are not designed to handle rainwater.

Tankers were deployed around 12th December as it was clear that the system wasn't coping. They were on site from 7.30am to 10pm but noise complaints were received from residents. While Severn Trent tried to be considerate the pumps had to be deployed to protect properties.

The pumps at the pumping station have been checked and are working as they should. The sump will be cleaned to ensure that the levels are going down. A camera will also be deployed down the pipes and if any works are required they will be repaired from inside the pipe.

In terms of when residents should contact Severn Trent, that should be if water is bubbling and coming out of manholes as that will be sewer flooding. If residents have water off land or highways that is classed as surface water and is the responsibility of Via. Mr Wilson stressed that residents should never be asked to lift manhole covers.

Mr Wilson explained that part of his role was to look at incidents and ensure that they were verified and recorded correctly. It was acknowledged that there had been a breakdown in communication in the most recent flood event. However, the importance of reporting incidents was stressed as this would feed into any capital programme works required. Each report should generate a customer reference number that will be given to the householder and will enable problems to be tracked.

The contact number to report incidents to was confirmed as 0800 783 4444.

Regarding private roads, Mr Wilson confirmed that

The Clerk referred to ongoing problems in South Muskham. Mr Wilson advised he would investigate and arrange any works required and feedback to the Clerk to update residents.

Councillor Laughton referred to the role of OFWAT in regulating Severn Trent. Targets were set which Severn Trent had to adhere to with financial penalties imposed if they were not met.

The Chair thanked Mr Wilson for attending and for his thorough explanation of recent events.

Open Session

The Chair invited Councillor Mrs Saddington to present her report at 8.43pm. Councillor Mrs Saddington had nothing to report, other than to wish Members a Happy New Year.

The Chair invited Councillor Laughton to present his report. Councillor Laughton confirmed that the Great North Road Solar Park had been raised with senior officers at the County Council.

Cllr Laughton referred to the closure of Trent Lane during the recent Storm Henk event. While understanding the frustration of residents, Via will not deploy concrete blocks for road closures. The A617 between the Cattle Market Roundabout and Kelham had suffered significant damage and had been closed for longer than expected. Trent Lane alleviated traffic but it was acknowledged that entry onto the mini-roundabout could be a danger. Any HGVs ignoring the weight limit on Trent Lane could be reported to Trading Standards. Councillor Laughton would discuss the closure with officers at Via, who had also been asked to look at ways of speeding up the re-opening of the A617.

The Chair considered that, when a road closure was put in place, it should be put across the whole carriageway and not just part as appeared to have been the case in Storm Henk.

The Chair thanked both Councillors for their reports and reconvened the meeting at 9.02pm.

96.23/24 **Chair's Report**

Apart from Christmas and New Year activities, the focus has been quite rightly mainly on the threat of flooding and how our emergency plan coped with this. The Chair advised that there would be more discussion re the plan later on in the Agenda.

97.23/24 **Financial Issues**

97.1 To record Receipts

There were none to record.

97.2 Invoices for payment:

The following invoices were noted and approved:

- Clerk's Wages (November) - £318.60
- HMRC Payment (November) - £79.60
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- HMRC Payment (December) - £79.60
- Bank Charges - £16
- WaterPlus – £17.69
- Internal Audit Fee - £46.96
- Clerk's Backpay - £123.20
- HMRC Payment (Backpay) - £30.80
- South Muskham Village Hall – Room Hire (May to Nov) - £72
- EDF Energy - £11.35
- Chairman's Allowance - £40

97.3 **To consider a budget for the 2024-25 financial year and determine a Precept**

Members considered the budget circulated by the Clerk in advance of the meeting. After discussion, it was AGREED that £300 should be allocated in reserves for flooding to allow for the purchase of stock for the resilience store. New batteries for the lights would need to be purchased in October, together with a set of Allen keys.

After consideration, it was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jarvis, that the Precept be retained at the current level of £13,717 which would give a Band D rate of £67.71. This was unanimously AGREED.

98.23/24

Planning

98.1

Applications

23/02283/OUT – Land at Great North Road, South Muskham - Outline application for four dwellings with all matters reserved except access.

Members noted the application for development. The Chair outlined the following areas of concern:

The land is designated as a main open area for a reason, to prevent overdevelopment.

It is not for the applicant to determine the flood zone, this is for the Environment Agency to designate

Five years ago planning permission was refused for 13 dwellings on the site. It was refused on the basis that:

It is a main open area

Out of character

Unacceptably altering the legibility of the local landscape

Not in keeping with the settlement

In Flood Zone 2

Additional vehicular access onto the Great North Road, close to an existing roundabout and on a curve

No ecological report

The scheme did not provide necessary infrastructure improvements leading to increased pressure as a result of this proposal and no mechanism to secure them

Apart from the number of dwellings compared to the 2019 application, there is no difference in the current application compared to the one in 2019.

Permission had already been given for a field within 50m of this site thereby potentially doubling the number of new dwellings on the infrastructure of both settlement and locally

A large site entrance at this point on the Great North Road is dangerous

A proposal to provide a communal green space and biodiversity enhancements holds no weight and is seen as a ruse to try and gain permission. There is no information included on who would be responsible to manage and maintain this area.

What is the area leading to Main Street? Is this a tarmacked road? If so, where does it lead to or is it something included to allow further development when the communal green space has failed.

What is the purpose of the community open space being linked to the Village Hall? Is the Village Hall Committee involved with this development and, if so, have they consulted parishioners on such a divisive development?

It is the applicant's opinion that the Main Open Area designation is not sound or justified or consistent with National Policy. It is the District Council's opinion that matters as that opinion should take into account local considerations (residents, parish council) not be driven by the applicant.

Planning Policy context 4.7 covering Spatial Policy 3 Rural Areas:

There is no inclusion of Rural Affordable Housing

Rural Accessibility – there are poor public transport links leading to increased car movements.

Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure – this is not mentioned in the proposal so why include it?

The District Council's own Policy NA/MOA Newark Area – Main Open Areas states for South Muskham 'within these Main Open Areas planning permission will not normally be granted for built development'.

Amenity cannot be judged at this stage, i.e., effect on adjacent residents

This is Flood Zone 2 which means that the District Council will aim to steer new development away from these areas.

National Policy Framework 4.25 para 4.24... (development) will enhance, or maintain the vitality of rural communities, policies identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive especially where they will support local services – what local services are supported by 4 or 8 extra houses?

Location – define sustainable access to Newark, etc, and a range of local services. We have no schools, post office/shops (apart from a farm shop) pubs, but do have a village hall, so hardly a range of services.

Scale – the gardens appear smaller than those surrounding which is a common ruse to get as many properties as possible into a small area.

Need – new housing in South Muskham on this scale does not help in any way, shape or form, support community facilities or local services. In contrast, it adds to the burden.

Impact – this will generate excessive car borne traffic with 8 extra cars on the development, taking no account of visitors.

The applicant has not explained how they intend to not have a detrimental effect on local infrastructure. If this development goes ahead, along with the Ashleigh proposal, that will be 7 houses adding to the current sewage system which was overwhelmed in recent weeks without extra houses.

There are approximately 121 dwellings in South Muskham. Four additional properties would be a 3.35% increase, an additional seven (including Ashleigh) would be a 6.6% increase, but adds 8/16 more people at a minimum to add to the burden.

Key Planning Issues:

There is no guarantee that 4 houses are going to support a village hall and a butchers.

Email: clerk@smlcpc.org Tel: 07946 601364

Amenity Space & Biodiversity – no information given on who will manage or maintain it. The applicant states that it could be used for dog walking, but there are already plenty of dog walking areas for residents. As for 'providing a habitat for wildlife', South Muskham is in the countryside so already have plenty of biodiversity.

Buses in daylight, not nighttime and reduced service at weekends. This does not meet the needs of the current population, let alone extra.

The proposal weaves and meanders around, rather than complies, with core strategies.

The current condition of the land is due to the owners allowing it to fall this way. Just because it is unloved and overgrown is not a reason to allow development instead.

The offer of a public open space should not be a basis for allowing development

Traveller homes on the land 50ms away does not match the intentions of this proposal so to say these 4 will act as a natural extension is not correct.

These 4 dwellings will have an impact on roads, flooding, infrastructure pressures and residents which are more important than not acting as intrusive or overbearing.

It is the applicant's opinion that there will be no detrimental impact. They do not live here to make that statement unlike residents living next door do and who have witnessed the danger of cars pulling onto the Great North Road and trying to pull onto their properties.

The applicant intends to ignore the Flood Zone allocation, but the floor levels of the proposed dwellings would be raised.

If permission were granted, would the applicant compensate those affected as in their opinion 'this development will not have an undue impact on local infrastructure'.

The applicant states that the only increase in traffic will be from residents of the 4 dwellings, but makes no provision for service vehicles, visitors, delivery drivers, etc.

The vehicular access is:

At a dangerous point on the road close to a roundabout

Close to a pedestrian refuge

Within a 30mph limit but residents are aware this is regularly ignored and not policed.

No amount of 'wide splay' will make this safe.

A 25m walk by refuse workers/or residents to the service area is not practical.

It will cause an adverse impact on highway safety.

Ecological Impact:

5.26 – The applicant states that the development will protect, promote and enhance green infrastructure to conserve and enhance bio-diversity and contribute to the ecological network – so will not developing the land!

5.33 – Neighbouring amenities – the applicant states that it will not impact neighbours – submissions already made by adjacent residents proves otherwise.

Conclusions

Reading from the applicant's conclusions, apart from 6.1 which is stating this is an outline planning application, the remaining 5 conclusions are not recognized.

Traffic Access Plan 2305620-SK01

Disingenuous as it doesn't show the roundabout and its close proximity. Also missing is the traffic island with the illuminated lane direction markers. It does not show standing traffic (travelling towards Newark) at the mini-roundabout and backed up, preventing a vehicle travelling north from turning right into the development. Such a vehicle attempting to turn onto the property would cause traffic behind it to back up and block the roundabout. Also, have the Refuse department at the District Council been consulted on the proposals for the parking of their refuse vehicles and how to collect the bins.

On the application form PP-12592536:

Approval is sought for ACCESS not appearance, not landscaping, layout or scale. Why is the applicant not being transparent?

Existing use question – is the site currently vacant? They have answered 'no' – clearly a mistake as it is vacant

Pedestrian rights of way – The applicant is saying no new ones so how would anyone reach the included Biodiverse Amenity Space?

An unsatisfactory and worrying application. Too much missing and worded to the applicants narrative.

The Environment Agency, in their email dated 4th January 2024, it states that this is Flood Zone 2 (not 1). The rest of the email is advice on how to place foul drainage not where or what impact it will have.

The letter from D Whittaker of Ventura, High Street, is fully supported by the Chair and Membefs.

Mention in the application of an Emergency Plan for (this) Land off Great North Road – Final Paragraph

Is the Parish Council expected to believe that owners/residents of these proposed properties will 'be responsible for ensuring that the Emergency Plan is reviewed periodically to ensure that it is kept up to date and any other necessary actions are identified'. Furthermore, if this is to be Flood Zone 1 why would there be a requirement for an Emergency Plan.

It was unanimously AGREED, on the basis of the above, that strong objection be raised to this application.

98.2 Decision Notices

23/01329/FUL – Land at Former Ashleigh, Great North Road, South Muskham - Erection of 3 dwellings. Resubmission of approved application 19/00782/FUL to allow extended time to commence works

Members received and noted the decision notice refusing planning permission for the application as outlined.

98.3 Tree Works

There were none to consider.

99.23/24 **Parish Council Matters**

99.1 To receive notes of the Safer Neighbourhood Group – October 2023 and note the date of the next meeting

Members received and noted the notes of the Safer Neighbourhood Group from October 2023. The next meeting was scheduled to be held on 18th January 2024.

99.2 To receive details of the GNR Solar Park Phase One Consultation

The Chair considered that there needed to be a joint meeting with the Steering Group and Elements Green.

The Clerk was asked to contact other interested groups to see if this was feasible.

It was agreed to await the outcome of this request rather than agree for the Applicants to attend a meeting with this Parish Council at this moment in time.

100.23/24 **Beckett Field**

To note the Clerk's response to the PSPO Questionnaire

Members noted the Clerk's response to the PSPO Questionnaire. Some discussion took place regarding whether or not the exclusion zone should remain, but Members considered that the amendment should be allowed to go through.

101.23/24 **Flooding, Drainage & Emergency Planning**

101.1 To note the review of the contents of the Resilience Store

Members noted the review of the contents of the Resilience Store recently undertaken by the Chair and Clerk.

It was AGREED that the metal trolleys be replaced with two sack barrows, and that new batteries be purchased in October ready for the storm season along with 2 Allen keys for the road lamps to be locked and unlocked.

- 101.2 **To consider a review of the Emergency Plan**
The Chair considered that a review of the Emergency Plan should be undertaken as there were certain elements of it that were unclear. Additionally, a review of the names included in the plan was required to ensure they were up to date.
The Chair considered that the plan needed to be clearer in terms of how many sandbags/aqua sacs should be given out to residents during an emergency. An instruction manual had been downloaded for the generator. It was considered that the concrete path needed to be extended to allow easy transport of the generator from the resilience store to the existing concrete path. There should also be a mechanism for securing the generator in place during an emergency.
- Delegated authority was given to the Chair and Clerk to review and update the plan.
- 102.23/24 **Highways**
- 102.1 **Roadworks Bulletin – Temporary Prohibition of Driving – Kelham Lane, Little Carlton - From 08:00 hours on Monday 5 th February 2024 Until 17:00 hours on Wednesday 7th February 2024 – Installation of new valve**
Members noted the work as outlined.
- 102.2 **Roadworks Bulletin – Temporary Prohibition of Driving – Church Lane, South Muskham – 20m either side of level crossing barrier - From 22:30 hours on Saturday 20th & 27th January, Saturday 10th February 2024 Until 09:30 hours on Sunday 21st & 28th January, Sunday 11th February 2024, – Upgrade of level crossing surface**
Members noted the work as outlined.
- 102.3 **Roadworks Bulletin – Temporary Prohibition of Driving – Bathley Lane, North Muskham – 20m either side of level crossing barrier - From 22:30 hours on Saturday 3rd February 2024 Until 09:30 hours on Sunday 4th February 2024 – Level crossing works**
Members noted the work as outlined.
- 102.4 **Update on the Interactive Speed Sign for Little Carlton**
The Clerk confirmed that a site meeting had been arranged with Via for 2pm on Thursday, 25th January 2024. Councillor Tilbury would be attending, together with other volunteers from the speedwatch scheme.
- 103.23/24 **Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils**
There was nothing to report.
- 104.23/24 **Correspondence**
There was nothing to receive.
- 105.23/24 **Other matters arising not on the agenda**
Councillor Tilbury advised that the Community Speedwatch signs borrowed by North Muskham had not yet been received. The Clerk to chase.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, 21st February 2024 at 7.30pm.

The meeting was closed at 10pm

Minutes approved as a true record –