

Meeting held on 29th November 2011 at 7.30pm held in the Margaret Preston Room, Wreningham Village Hall

Present

Cllrs E Brake, Michael Hill (Chair), Barry Jarvis, Donald Whiterod, the Clerk and 4 members of the public.

439. Apologies: Cllrs S Durant, G Page and DC Webster

440. Declarations of interest:

None

441. Planning

The Clerk read the planning notifications received.

2011/7018 – Hethel Engineering Centre. The Chair advised the Council of the background to the application and led the Councillors through the papers. Norfolk County Council are inviting comments from the Council and these would be copied to SNDC. The comments raised were about:

- ⤴ Light pollution – the plans indicated that levels would be controlled and kept to a minimum from evening. It is expected that HEC will operate according to their plan for light management.
- ⤴ Noise pollution – the plans indicated that day and night time noise levels would be low. It is expected that HEC will operate according to their plan for noise management.
- ⤴ Additional traffic – Traffic using B1135, Potash Lane and HEC access already create difficult traffic situations, especially at rush hour, along this stretch of road. This will be exacerbated by the many additional vehicular journeys (some 160 parking spaces provided plus additional service vehicles) which impact travel along B1135 and the Penny Green junction. Many vehicles currently travel to and from the B1113; this would increase traffic levels significantly. Has NCC an appropriate strategy for traffic management and road infrastructure?
- ⤴ Development in the area – HEC is at the front edge of some 20 hectares of land designated by NCC for development as a high-tech industrial site. The Council expressed concern about the NCC having and implementing detailed long term strategies and plans for the area and its infrastructure e.g. those relating to traffic management and environmental management (light, noise, and other pollution).

Proposed : Mr Whiterod, seconded: Ms E Brake.

Mr Dobson reported that plants had been planted at the entrance to Glebe Close which may obstruct future visibility.

442. Village Issues – Final decision about whether to proceed with a Community Orchard in Wreningham

The Chair distributed a copy of a summary document (attached to the signed minutes) produced by himself and Sheldon Durant following a site visit, discussions and a review of the plans for the community orchard. The discussion included:

- ⤴ A covenant for the playing field, when bought by the Parish Council, designated this land for community use and this project was for and by the community
- ⤴ Concerns that planting the orchard would reduce the amount of useable open space.
- ⤴ Some loss of space would occur but it would be limited as it is a small project of 14 trees to be planted in two corners where additional space would be created for them by cut-back of overgrown trees, shrubs and weeds. The trees would be managed and pruned so that they do not occupy excessive space.
- ⤴ It was noted that the trees would be sufficiently spaced at 7m intervals so that the grass cutters can access the field although the orchard committee will be cutting the grass around the trees.

Wreningham Parish Council – Minutes

- ⤴ It was suggested that an orchard would increase the appeal of the land to all age groups, whereas the current playground project is aimed at the younger members of the community.
- ⤴ Concern was raised that there may not be sufficient people involved to maintain the orchard, and also how to share the fruit.
- ⤴ Any produce from the orchard would be taken by the villagers, possibly sold in a local farm shop, used to raise funds by selling apple juice. The Community Orchard sub-committee added that they were open to suggestions as to the way forward.
- ⤴ The Parish Plan was quoted - the majority of respondents wished to maintain the existing open spaces. Although this probably did not solely mean the playing field but included the wider open aspects around the village.
- ⤴ The project may also help the Wreningham Play Project by assisting in their applications by showing that the area is used by a wider range of users.
- ⤴ It was agreed that the main concerns of the objectors is the lack of space rather than the planting of trees. However other areas of land appear to have been exhausted for various reasons.

The following proposals were voted upon:

1. Is it a good idea to have a community orchard as a concept? For – 3, Abstain – 1.
2. Is it a good idea to have a community orchard in the playing field? For - 2, Against – 2.

Possible ways forward were discussed to clarify the views of the Parish. It was felt that the majority of the village have been happy for a community orchard and had supported the project for the last year. However, the selection of the playing field as the planting site had led to concerns being expressed.

Ms Brake agreed to display information about the Community Orchard project in The Bird in Hand and the Clerk agreed to host a display in the village hall one weekend and collect opinions. However the Orchard sub-committee felt that such an exercise would be a waste of time.

After further discussion, it was agreed that without the support of the majority of the village the playing field as a site could not be approved, hence, the Chair cast his second vote against the project.

It was noted that the Play Project should be advised about the significant expression of strong views against development on the playing field.

Dates of Future Meetings in 2012: 10 January, 13 March, 15 May, 10 July, 11 September and 13th November all at 7.30pm in the Margaret Preston Room in the Village Hall, Mill Lane. Note that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held in May 2012 (date to be confirmed)

Ms Brake agreed to represent the Parish Council on the Village Hall Management committee. Proposed: Mr Whiterod, seconded: Mr Jarvis.

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm