

Extraordinary Meeting of Campsea Ashe Parish Council

Tuesday 7th December 2021, 19.00 at Station House

DRAFT Minutes

COVID 19 precautionary measures were in place, including a register of participants.

PRESENT/ Participants

Eddie Berger (EB), Richard Fernley (RF), Clare Reid (CR), Gary Lydford (GD), Shaun Wilson (SW), Derick Balaam (DB), Klaus Fortmann, clerk (KF)

SCC Cllr Alexander Nicoll

and

13 members of public (residents), 1 representative of applicant

AGENDA

This meeting deals exclusively with Planning Application reference: DC/21/4896/FUL

Proposal: Change of use from agriculture to private horse riding school and livery, to create grazing paddocks, fence perimeter, build 12 stables and storage, a manege of 40 x 80m and a small dwelling for security and horse welfare

Site address: Part Land Opposite Ashe Green Farm, Ivy Lodge Road, Campsea Ashe, Suffolk.

21.49 Apologies

ESC Cllr Poulter;

21.50 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ed Berger (Chair) declared private Interest (proposed development near to Cllr's residence)

Cllr Clare Reid declared private interest (proposed development opposite to Cllr's residence)

Cllr Reid declared her decision of not taking part in the council's vote on the Development proposal, though the current Suffolk Code of Conduct would allow her to vote.

The clerk issued a brief statement; After consultation with SALC it was declared that a previously held Sub-Committee (Planning) meeting (01/12/2021) was declared invalid, as SALC advised the Sub-Committee should have been correctly termed a Committee (Planning), hence requiring a public notice and for the meeting to be held in public.

The previously issued draft minutes of the 'meeting' were cancelled and Councillors were advised that therefore no recommendation could have been made to the PC. Summarizing notes (Summary of issues to consider) of the informal discussions between Cllr's about issues linked to the development have been distributed to members and were also made available to the public at the meeting.

SALC advised as there was no vote taken, today's meeting – ending with a vote of the PC Cllr's on the proposed development- will be valid.

Therefore the announced agenda point 21.53/3 – Planning Committee Comments is not admissible.

The clerk apologised for his mistake in the matter.

Chair advised public on structure of meeting and for the public to be able to speak for 3-4 minutes each during the open session. The closed session for the Cllr's to discuss the matter would commence at agenda item 21.53/4

21.51 Requests for Dispensation

Under the current Suffolk Code of Conduct (Localism Act 34.1) no potential dispensation re Private Interests is required.

21.52 Public Participation Session

Members of public attended to discuss proposed Livery planning application.

The public was invited to speak for 3-4 minutes

The representative of the applicant was invited to give a statement;

Applicant relayed the family business as being a local concern, in operation for over 15 years and providing livery and equestrian services to children, adults and people with special needs. They believe riding should be for everyone to enjoy, not just for the

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privileged. Their business apparently was the first to receive 5* rating for animal welfare provisions, which required them to live on site.

Resident A (objection) was extremely angry and expressed his irritation at his land being compromised by the applicant, without any consultation nor an attempt at contact and, as part of the plan include parcels of his land, even trenches being dug partially on his land. He expressed a total lack of confidence in the applicant, not helped by also constructing an unlawful road on the site. Objection to ripping up a green field site when there are numerous liveries in the area. Having looked at the business projections, he felt it was not a viable business model.

Resident B (objection) expressed his concern that due to the lack of a Village Plan (NP), Campsea Ashe will face further situations like this, with CA being threatened by Ribbon Developments and creep as is happening in neighbouring Rendlesham. Gravely concerned this development together with others in the pipeline will destroy the rural area, especially with a house being build on the land. Fear of future possible transformation into housing as well as objecting to the scale of the stables/manege and its impacts.

Resident C (objection) expressed her concern of the impact of the development on the landscape and the environment. Ashe Green being a dark environment, with many species/wildlife (bats/barn owls/otters/ lapwings) being affected by development, its noise and its lighting; the development distracting from the historic rural environment creating harm in that rural setting. Resident also commented on the lack of an Ecological Impact Assessment.

Resident D (objection) supported the previous views expressed, especially the destruction of a non designated historical asset (being the Green itself) and of the archaeology of the area. The historic setting of the Green between Grade 2* listed buildings/parks, the green itself having been featured on the Hodgkinson 1773 map. A robust business plan was absent in the application and the business was regarded as non-viable. It was also noted that no detailed Archaeological and Environmental Impact Assessment/Statement was submitted, nor was the Heritage Impact Assessment deemed sufficient – a cut & paste exercise with a conclusion added to it.

Resident E (objection) agreed to previous points made and pointed to the unsuitability of the site, the lack of shelter for some of the horses, additional & cumulative impacts of traffic, development creep (3-bed house), destruction of the dark setting of the area, a HIA that fails to feature 'Rushground', the development harming setting of grade 2 listed buildings around, especially as he was refused permission on works with the reasoning being it would impact on the areas heritage assets.

Resident F (objection) felt that as a horse owner themselves, they could not understand how this site could be considered for such operation due to lack of suitable hacking (riding) possibilities, resulting in increased needs to drive horse to locations for hacking. The often very muddy fields and paths are unsuitable for such density of horses on the available land and will likely impact on animal welfare. It was relayed that her two horses had 6 acres of land (within a short distance from development) and that was deemed just enough during the usually wet autumn/winter/spring times. Resident also supported the previous (residents) statements.

Resident G (objection) supported all previous made comments and wanted to re-iterate that the HIA was basically copied info from the Historic England website and not a true inquisitive assessment of impacts. He felt design was not reflective of views, species, landscape and planting and lacked any heritage relevance. He pointed to the serious impact the lighting of manege and stables would have on the neighbourhood. The development being incremental creep, with further traffic, highways safety, noise and lighting impacts afflicted on the rural area. Objected to the house, its impact the position of the buildings and drive way and highlighted the prematurely (un-lawful) started works which would require enforcement action.

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Resident H (objection) agreed with all points raised by previous speakers. Resident regarded the site not being right for such operation, too small for the amount of horses and that it would attract many people/traffic to a relative quiet rural area. Fear of the possibility of further subsequent development on the site was strongly expressed and concluded that it is just the wrong place/site for such a development.

Resident I (objection) expressed support of all previous points made, but was also doubtful about hours of operation. Resident wanted to point out that liveries opening hours would start well before 09.00 hours, when owners visit their horses prior to going to work etc. and regarded the lighting impact as substantial and unwanted in that area. The business plan, its lack of detail substantiating claims of viability was also commented on and led resident to conclude it being a non-viable business. The limited access to/from the site with regards to size of horse boxes and trailers, combined with known speed issues on Ivy Lodge Road would pose a safety threat to other road users, as would the pinch points (road width) on the northern stretch of ILR.

J / Cllr AN (objection) strongly objected to the proposal on multiple grounds and dismissed the amount of ESC Planning Portal logged (74) non CA -resident supporters for the project, basically in support of a business but not actual planning issues. He argued that this should not be construed to be admissible support for the proposed physical site-specific development and demanded for ESC to respect foremost the resident's views, which are driven by specific planning issues. His own objections are based on planning issues, of land use in an historic greenfield site outside the village envelope.

Cllr AN pointed out the road safety issues, traffic levels, cumulative impacts of travel from ongoing neighbouring developments, the erroneous 5* Animal Welfare claim re 3 bed house requirements, the danger of development creep especially near listed heritage assets and on a non-designated heritage asset, lighting/noise impact on a still rural and beautiful environment.

Most residents stated that they expressed objection against the location of the development, not against a horse-riding business, by all regarded as a wonderful activity.

21.53 Parish Council Discussion

1 Chair & clerk referred to the summary of issues (document)

2 Summary of Public comments

Chair stated that several written objections had been sent in and that two of those were of particular interest and proceeded to read/summarize the following letters of objection

Resident NP wrote a letter advising of misrepresentation in the planning application re The Animal Welfare Regulations (2018) the 5* rating, where the applicant incorrectly states that 'a person MUST be on site at all the times' (actually **only an optional requirement, where 50% off six are required**), whilst the applicant **must meet certain requirements to achieve 5* rating**, such as 'Horses must be inspected at least once during the out of hours period'.

As the applicant used the statement to justify a 3-bed house, this is a highly relevant statement.

Resident CM (Executive Director Natural History Museum) points out in her letter the environmental aspects we must consider today and the impact developments like this have on our local environment, especially the impact of lighting on species living around the proposed site. CM gives a detailed breakdown of impacts and the depletion of our natural world. CM also questions the planning and economics of the proposal and states the development represents yet one more step in the incremental creep that

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depletes the natural world around us. CM states this is not the right site for such business.

Chair stated, as CA PC is engaging pro-actively (with Wild About Campsea) in small scale environmental activities, CA PC regards this as an important aspect when considering applications.

3 Planning Committee comments – NON ADMISSABLE

As per clerk statement at the beginning of the meeting.

4 Councillors comments

The chair thanked all residents, the applicant and Cllr for their comments.

Councillors were referenced to the notes 'Summary of issues to consider'.

Chair referred to issues highlighted by residents earlier, which focused on the Heritage area, Environmental concerns, traffic related concerns, impacts on surrounding area and a perceived future development threat.

It was stated, that the PC had acted and highlighted the ongoing traffic issues affecting CA, those having been the PC's priority to address for several years, and that this application – together with larger developments in the Rendlesham area – will add further to the traffic flow through CA and impact the narrow N end of ILR especially. Concern was expressed about the light pollution and the visual intrusion the proposal would bring to this important setting within a heritage rich area, this being a primary concern, as there were not many such area left around Campsea Ashe.

In discussions referring to Issues 5/6/7, reference was made (re increased traffic levels) to the recently granted TRO on ILR. The lack of sufficient bridleways (for hacking) would lead to more horse box traffic, the likely hosting of private (invitation only) events again creating additional traffic impacts all with associated noise and safety issues on the very narrow roads.

Riding on the adjacent - often already very muddy - paths/bridleways would impact residents, as they will become even more unusable when used regularly by horses.

Further comments were made about the proposed 3-bed dwelling, that would require the PC to make a strong statement regarding being outside the village envelope and that no acceptable explanation (5* & actual viability of business) has been found to justify the building of such house. Concern was raised (re business viability) that the proposal could lead to future conversion to residential purposes, something the PC could not accept.

Environmentally, it was stated, the PC has over the past year been active in starting and supporting small actions that will add to environmentally positive outcomes and this project would very much inherit a hugely environmentally negative impact.

Potential benefits such as offering some activities to residents and potential increase of shop users when passing through were discussed, but it was felt those being most likely to be relatively minor, as were potential employment chances, as the business is already local and family staffed & operated. The chair stated that the PC in principle fully supports horse riding activities, but that the generally expressed concerns are purely based on the issues surrounding that specific location.

21.54 Parish Council Vote

The chair re-iterated the abstention of Cllr CR and also declared that he would also not take part in the vote. (Private Interest, Nolan Principles in Public Life)

1 Campsea Ashe PC voted unanimously (4-0) to object to the Planning Application.

2 The PC voted unanimously (4-0) for the application to be sent to the Referral Panel / Planning Committee, should ESC Planning Department accept this application.

Klaus Fortmann, Clerk

13/12/2021