

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE PAVILION ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, FOWLMERE  
on TUESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY at 7:00pm

PRESENT: Cllr P Burge (Chairman), Cllr D Roberts, Cllr S Mulholland, Cllr L Wragg, Cllr Lennon, Cllr P Collinson and Cllr C Howe (arrived at 19.20)

IN ATTENDANCE Ms K Byrne (Clerk)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Vinton.

**2. Declarations of interest (if any)**

Cllr Roberts declared that if an application is later placed before South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) she will approach any new information afresh. Also, because Cllr Roberts is a District Cllr at SCDC, the same applies and she will look at any application, which goes to SCDC, afresh.

The Parish Council is the applicant in item 5, therefore all members have an interest.

Cllr Roberts declared an interest in historic applications relating to item 4, but she will look at this application afresh.

**3. Minutes from Previous Meeting 14th January 2020 – Matters Arising**

The minutes were agreed as a true record, and were signed by Cllr Burge.

**4. S/0181/20/PN (agricultural) – Deans Farm, Long Lane, Fowlmere**

**Prior approval for the erection of an agricultural building to be used for the storage of hay, straw and grain**

Cllr Burge said that this is a prior approval application to confirm whether the proposed development can be undertaken. If, as the application form states, the total area of the agricultural unit is 2.17 hectares, then it is to be judged against Class B, Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 'Agricultural development on units of less than 5 hectares'. This proposal should then not be deemed as permitted development as it is not within the curtilage of another building, and if it were, would exceed the permitted increase of 20% by volume. However, it is likely that the stated area is incorrect and is considerably larger, in which case it should be considered under Class A 'Agricultural units of 5 hectares or more'. The key test that needs to be considered is whether it meets the criteria for permitted development, i.e.:

*The carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of:*

- a) works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building; or*
- b) any excavation or engineering operations,*

*which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.*

This would allow erection of new buildings, but they have to be 'reasonably necessary'. There are some exclusions, which the plans suggest the application meets, so the PC need to decide if the building is 'reasonably necessary'.

Cllr Roberts said that not enough information has been given. When this area was last discussed there was concern as to why such a small farm needed so many buildings so quickly. Only reasonably recently a barn at the front of the site received planning permission but it was not used, could the applicant not use that barn? The applicant needs to show how and why they are going to use the buildings. The farm's existing operations are already causing concerns for some neighbours.

Cllr Wragg said that the papers the PC had received do not include comments from neighbours.

Cllr Burge said it is hard to understand why so much development is required unless the farm has significantly increased its agricultural output (unlikely); more likely is that they plan to bring in produce, which would make this a commercial not an agricultural operation, and therefore would need full planning permission.

The PC concluded that insufficient information had been provided within the application to allow it to be properly assessed. Cllr Burge will write to SCDC to say there is not enough information, and if the applicant wants to change his land use it needs to be more transparent.

**ACTION – Cllr Burge and Clerk to write a letter to SCDC in response to this application**

**5. S/0204/20/FL – St Marys Church, High Street, Fowlmere**

**Rebuilding of church wall**

The application was noted. As this is an application submitted by Fowlmere Parish Council, the PC has a declared interest, and had no comments.

**6. S/0294/20/TC – Mere House, Rectory Lane, Fowlmere**

**Sycamore to remove branch as indicated in photograph**

Fowlmere Parish Council has no objections. No comments to be sent to SCDC, as requested by the tree officer.

**7. SCDC Planning Delegation Provisions – Update**

Cllr Roberts said that during last week's SCDC Planning Meeting the wording SCDC had proposed to use in the constitution was not lawful and was withdrawn, then 6 other planning delegation proposals were produced to be considered. Out of 10 councillors present one 1 was not critical of this. Nonetheless, the committee voted for the proposal that the delegation of applications, where an application had been requested to be seen by the planning committee, will now be dealt with by one officer, the director of planning or his nominated officer.

There will be a review of the planning operation by a local government body. Councillors at the planning meeting had said they wanted this to happen as quickly as possible, and that the changes have to come back to full committee. However, when the review will happen is not yet decided. Cllr Wragg suggested the PC write to SCDC Planning Committee and ask them to outline the planning review procedure and how PCs can express their views.

**ACTION – Cllr Burge and Cllr Wragg to prepare a letter to SCDC to say Fowlmere PC wish to engage with the planning review.**

**8. Migration to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning portal from SCDC Planning portal**

Cllr Burge and the Clerk had been to demonstrations of the new Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP) portal, on 29 Jan and 5 Feb, respectively.

The new portal can be found at the following address:

<https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/>

After 18 February 2020, users will be automatically directed to this site from the old SCDC Planning portal.

The new portal will allow members of the public to do a range of searches and keep them if an account is set up. Updates on particular applications, or parishes, can be tracked. Historic applications have been uploaded, which will be searchable with keywords or reference numbers. If comments are submitted via the portal they will go into the 'Comments' section but if submitted as a letter they may be in the 'Document' section on the portal. There is a measuring tool which will allow a user to measure dimensions and areas on plans.

The Clerk can also submit comments on behalf of the Parish Council, and has a 'Consultee In Tray' on her account. For this purpose, the Clerk has submitted her email address as Fowlmere PC consultee. As Chair of the Planning Committee, Cllr Burge could act as a backup for if the Clerk is away or unable to submit the PC's comments. All agreed with this. Clerk to submit Cllr Burge's email address to GCSP.

Cllr Mulholland asked in view of this, whether all members of the PC should have Fowlmere PC email addresses.

This to be discussed further at the next PC meeting.

**9. Other Matters and Updates (for information only)**

Cllr Roberts said that the 5-year land supply is now at 5.07. Mr Kelly still to update SCDC, who were seemingly unaware of this until a planning inspector told them.

Cllr Burge suggested that the status of the 5-year land supply could be a standing item on the Agenda. All concurred with this.

The meeting closed at 19.44.