

# Houghton on the Hill Parish Council

## MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON ON THE HILL, ON THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2015, AT 7.30 PM

### PRESENT:

**Members:** Cllr. Mrs. A. Sleath (Chairman), Cllr. Mr. P. Lutman (Vice Chairman), Cllr. Mrs. R. Hamilton, Cllr. Ian Hill, Cllr. Nicola Joyce, Cllr. Mr. J. Sharman.

**Clerk:** Mr. S. Derry

**Members of the Public:** There were 50 members of the public present at the commencement of the meeting including County/District Councillor Simon Galton and District Councillors Amanda Burrell and Peter Elliott.

		ACTION
01-08/15	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> None was received.	
02-08/15	<b>NOTIFICATION OF DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> None was received.	
03-08/15	<b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2015</b> It was <b>resolved</b> that the minutes be confirmed. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.	

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## 04-08/15 INFORMAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

All comments relate to the planning application for the erection of up to 32 dwellings on land north of Stretton Lane, Houghton.

Councillor Hill explained the background to housing development in Harborough District, and specifically Houghton from 2015 to 2017. It was also explained that Houghton does not currently enjoy the protection of a Neighbourhood Plan as this would not be completed until 2017. It would be impossible to prevent all development. Even with the new Harborough District Council (HDC) Local Plan, Houghton was likely to need to accommodate in excess of 100 new houses by 2030. The challenge was to manage the development as well as possible to protect and develop the community of Houghton.

HDC, Councillor Simon Galton said, had an overall shortfall in its five year housing supply. The National Planning Policy Framework therefore applied and there would be a presumption in favour of sustainable developments although objections could be made on technical grounds including highway matters, drainage, ecology and heritage considerations. Planning applications, including the one under discussion, had to be decided within 14 weeks, otherwise the applicant could appeal. In those circumstances the decision would be made by an inspector who would adhere to the national policy. The applicant had commissioned an ecology survey although it was understood that Leicestershire County Council (LCC) was unhappy with the methodology deployed and it might therefore need to be repeated in Spring 2016. In these circumstances the applicant could decide to withdraw the application. LCC, in providing its consultee response on highway matters, needed to determine whether the proposed development was likely to exacerbate traffic problems. Although its consultee response was not publicly available, it had been suggested that the applicant's traffic surveys had not been undertaken during school term time and did not therefore accurately reflect a typical scenario in relation to parking and traffic volumes. Despite possible flaws in the application, Councillor Galton advised the Parish Council to continue with its response to the consultation invitation. In the event of residents wishing to speak at HDC's planning committee, he advised them to be organised such that each resident addressed a separate issue.

The following points were made by residents.

1. The Great Crested Newt survey was flawed as not all ponds had been surveyed.
2. Traffic and parking problems would be exacerbated, especially during the morning and afternoon 'school run', if the application was successful. The road structure was appropriate for a small rural village although it could not accommodate the additional traffic created by the proposed development.
3. Tight bends in Stretton Lane in the vicinity of the proposed development already created driving hazards which would be made worse if traffic volumes were increased.
4. Resistance to development could not be made 'per se' and it had to be

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accepted that some development was needed.

5. The application, if approved, would lead to a loss of farmland.
6. The application, if approved, would lead to the destruction of habitats for newts, badgers and bats.
7. The application, if approved, would set a precedent for similar large scale developments.
8. It was essential to undertake traffic surveys during the school term.
9. Stretton Lane was used as a 'cut through' and this problem would be worsened when more traffic was generated by the proposed development.
10. There were already serious parking issues in the vicinity of the proposed development which would be made worse if it was approved.
11. The development comprising up to 32 dwellings could create approximately 64 cars in addition to increased usage of the surrounding road infrastructure by lorries, buses, refuse collection vehicles etc. and the existing traffic problems on Main Street should be resolved first.
12. Whilst it was important that traffic surveys took account of school term time volumes, it was particularly necessary to consider traffic problems in the afternoon.
13. Pavements in the affected area were narrow and caused difficulties for children and parents with pushchairs.
14. The village would need to accept in excess of 100 new homes by 2030 and the application submitted by the Co-operative Group was likely to be the first of many.
15. There was a need to accept that not all development would have a negative impact on the village and that section 106 funding could help to obtain the most favourable outcomes.
16. The Parish Council should set aside funds to obtain legal advice.
17. The school's views should be sought and it should be encouraged to object to the proposal.
18. An archaeological survey should be undertaken prior to consideration as it had been suggested that a roman villa containing pre-modern pottery had been present to the south of the site. The chairman commented that the Heritage Group supported that view.
19. The school was too small to accommodate more children.
20. The applicant had stated that an alternative mode of travel to the site could be achieved by bicycle. A resident challenged this supposition as there were no safe routes available in the locality.

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21. The public transport proposals were unsustainable.
22. The proposals conflicted with several provisions of the core strategy.
23. Councillor Galton advised that Parish Councils often recruited planning consultants to assist with the determination of consultee responses.
24. The proposal was on a greenfield site and rare plants including orchids could be present.
25. Two developments, including the one under consideration, could necessitate five more classes at the school.
26. Only 32 parking spaces were provided for on the plans submitted which were insufficient. Secondary traffic including visitors' cars and delivery vehicles would also add to traffic volumes.
27. The village could double in size in 8 years.
28. If more children of primary school age needed to attend the school, there would be fewer places for non-Houghton children.
29. The road into the development was opposite the cricket ground and, since balls were already being hit into the existing field, it followed that in future they could land within the development.
30. There should be an obligation for builders to provide employment prospects. The application did not appear to address this issue.
31. The village pond should be added as an 'asset of community value'.
32. Expansion of the village should be handled in a sensitive way.
33. Whilst residents were receptive to dialogue, development needed to be undertaken responsibly in a democratic and accountable way.
34. Grants were available for botany and woodland aspects.
35. New homes were not affordable for young people.
36. Potential business development land had in the past been used for housing.
37. The Neighbourhood Planning process could identify sites for employment.

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05-08/15	<p><b>CONSIDERATION OF RESIDENTS' VIEWS ON PLANNING APPLICATION 15/01067/OUT - ERECTION OF UP TO 32 DWELLINGS (MEANS OF ACCESS TO BE CONSIDERED) (LAND NORTH OF STRETTON LANE, HOUGHTON)</b></p>	
	<p>The Chairman assured residents that their comments would be considered when the Parish Council's consultee response was determined at its meeting in September.</p>	
06-08/15	<p><b>a) 15/01044/FUL - Erection of a single storey rear extension (10 Stretton Lane Houghton)</b></p>	
	<p><b>Resolved</b> to submit a '<b>has NO COMMENTS</b>' response.</p>	Clerk
	<p><b>b) 15/01066/FUL - Erection of a rear ground and first floor extension and installation of three dormer windows to the front elevation (85 Uppingham Road Houghton)</b></p>	
	<p><b>Resolved</b> to submit a '<b>has NO COMMENTS</b>' response.</p>	Clerk
	<p><b>c) 15/01098/FUL - Demolition of existing detached dwelling and erection of detached dwelling to the rear (Hillcroft, Uppingham Road, Houghton)</b></p>	
	<p><b>Resolved</b> to submit a '<b>has NO COMMENTS</b>' response.</p>	Clerk
	<p><b>d) 15/01161/TCA - Works to trees (29 -31 Scotland Lane Houghton)</b></p>	
	<p><b>Resolved</b> to submit a '<b>has NO COMMENTS</b>' response.</p>	Clerk
	<p><b>e) 15/01200/PCD - Discharge of conditions 2 (materials), 5 (hard and soft landscaping) and 6 of 15/00036/VAC (Hollies Farm, Tilton Lane, Billesdon)</b></p>	
	<p>Councillors noted that PCD types were not subject to statutory consultation although any representations made would be considered if a decision had not been taken.</p>	
	<p><b>Resolved</b> to submit a '<b>has NO COMMENTS</b>' response if no decision had been taken.</p>	Clerk
07-08/15	<p><b>FINANCIAL MATTERS</b></p>	
	<p><b>a) Invoices received and approval of payment.</b></p>	
	<p>It was <b>resolved</b> to approve the payments detailed in the Schedule of Payments as circulated by the Clerk with the agenda.</p>	Clerk

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	<p><b>b) Retrospective reimbursement of travelling expenses</b></p> <p>Harborough District Council, approaching the options consultation stage for the Local Plan, had invited Parish Council representation at a free event at HDC's offices in July 2015. As notification of the event had been received after the agenda for July's meeting had been published, prior approval of the Parish Council had not been possible. Two Councillors attended the event and in accordance with paragraph 7.4 of the Financial Regulations, it was <b>resolved</b> that payment of expenses be approved retrospectively.</p>	Clerk
<b>08-08/15</b>	<p><b>ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA</b></p> <p>The following item were agreed:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Appointment of Deputy Planning Representative</b> <b>Councillor Vacancy</b> <b>Notice Board Policy</b> <b>Remembrance Day arrangements</b> <b>Village Walk</b> <b>Weight restriction signage</b></p>	Clerk
<b>09-08/15</b>	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10 September 2015, commencing at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Houghton.</p>	Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.08 p.m.

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Chairman  
10 September 2015