

# Castle Acre Parish Council

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## **Minuted record of Parish Council business conducted via Zoom video online meeting 8 April 2021.**

Present: Mr M Hickey (MH) Chairman, Mr L Fisher (LF) Vice Chairman, Mrs H Breach (HB), Mr T Hubbard (TH), Mrs S Moister (SM), Mr N Patrick (NP), Mr L Manson (LM), Mr M Tate (MT), Mr S Allen (SA)

In attendance: Mrs L Firth (Clerk), Mr J Moriarty (JM) (Borough Councillor) and seven members of the public.

**1. Apologies:** None. Apologies not received: Cllr G Middleton (NCC).

### **2. Pearce Recycling Group Local Quarry- presentation by Strutt & Parker**

MH welcomed David Fletcher, National Development & Planning and Elena Drozdowska both from Strutt & Parker, plus their colleagues Andy Berridge from Pearce Recycling and Colin Edmonds from Colin Edmonds Ltd who, in 2019, jointly purchased the chalk quarry off the A1065 near Manor Farm. In a PowerPoint presentation Mr Fletcher covered a brief history of the quarry before explaining their plans to upgrade the current restoration project. Residents wishing to view the PowerPoint presentation can do so via the clerk. Following the presentation Cllrs were invited to ask questions:

MH thanked Mr Fletcher for the presentation and asked for clarification on how long it would take before the site was fully restored and for more details on HGV movements to and from the site. Mr Fletcher confirmed the current permissions to extract the chalk from the quarry run until 2042. The restoration of the site would take place gradually over the next twenty years. The amount of HGV movements would remain modest, as per its current level, though this could fluctuate during busy periods depending on their order levels. Around twenty vehicle movements per day is anticipated based on the current ten lorries a day being the average comparative figure.

LF asked if the recycling machinery would lead to increased noise and for more detail on what their inert waste will consist of. Mr Edmonds replied that the site has screens which reduce noise. Noise levels would not increase further and will comply with set regulations. Mr Berridge confirmed that inert waste was not comparable to household waste in skips. TH asked what will be the incoming tonnage during the restoration project. Mr Fletcher stated about five hundred thousand tonnes over the twenty-year period - an approximate forecast as these figures are still being worked on.

MT asked if at a later point, a more detailed slide could be shown to the PC containing cross sections for point A and B on their site plans. MT enquired what the Group's plans are to manage possible surface water runoff from the increased raised topography of the site. Mr Fletcher informed Cllrs that they are working with a drainage consultant who has been liaising with the lead local flood authority. There will be two drainage flood falls within the raised area of the site. MT also questioned if there would be sufficient visitor car parking? Mr Berridge responded that this would be incorporated into the scheme.

JM wished to convey the village's sensitive and cautious history with quarries and how residents would be looking for early reassurance that there wouldn't be an increase in HGV traffic through in the village from the site's future activities. JM also enquired at what stage is the Group's planning application and about its communications with Norfolk County

Council (NCC). Mr Fletcher confirmed the Group will enter into a routing agreement to ensure HGVs are not driving through the village. He will pass on more detailed plans of the phased restoration project once they are completed, apologising for the lack of detail at this stage. He explained that a formal pre-planning application was submitted to NCC last year and the company is continuing to communicate with the Council in the expectation of submitting a full application this year, hopefully in early summer. Currently the team is focusing on the technical part of the planning application as well as engaging with local interested parties such as Parish Councils.

TH wanted to ensure the recycling group is aware of the site's proximity (within a thousand meters) to the River Nar, a SSSI site. Potential pollution is of concern with the chalk extraction level getting close to the water level. Mr Edmondson confirmed that at the moment the lowest part of the site was sixteen meters above the water table level.

### **3. Minutes of Zoom online PC meeting 11 March 2021**

SM proposed approval of the Minutes, seconded by LM.

### **4. Health and Safety - any new reports. Trees.**

None

Trees - TH reported: Stocks Green limes – all the work previously approved has been scheduled and confirmed.

Maples on playing field - Greenman Woodlands contacted the PC after a resident who lives on the northern side of the playing field, next to the skate park, asked them to reduce two of the maples trees which are close to her property boundary, at the resident's cost. TH attended a site visit with Greenman Woodlands and agreed that all four maples in that area need crown thinning and partial reduction. CAPFA concur that the work should take place. TH asked Cllrs to agree to underwrite the quoted £350 to reduce these other two trees. LF considered the PC should get a second quote before proceeding. Agreed.

Cheery trees on East Green. Awaiting a site visit from Holkham's Head Forester following the request at the March PC meeting. TH confirmed that Holkham intends to assess the state of all of their trees in the village.

Planting one million new trees: NCC plans to work together with partners, landowners and communities to plant one million trees across the county over the next five years. On enquiry, Holkham stated it has no plans to plant new trees on their land around the village. Cllrs agreed to support TH in researching Holkham land on the edge of Minns Meadow which could benefit from new tree planting. MT supports such a project which should improve ground water uptake, mitigating future flooding.

### **5. Updates on actions required from previous meetings**

#### **41. Surface water flooding and road debris off Jubilee Bridge**

No new update. MT is still awaiting a response from Highways to his request to investigate a possible outlet ditch in the area behind Foxes Meadow. No success yet in contacting the nearest property in Foxes Meadow to inform them of possible remedial work.

#### **29. Damaged bench on St James' Green**

SA has removed the bench from St James' Green and is currently repairing the damage.

#### **67. Status TRO South Acre ford**

MH expressed his frustration that while NCC officers passed the relevant documents to the legal team on 15 February to prepare the wording on the official TRO consultation notice, it requires approval by our NCC Cllr Middleton and he still not given that by 1 April despite both NCC and MH chasing him.

### **86. Objection to proposed erection of five new BT telegraph poles along St James' Road**

While sympathizing, Openreach's site surveyor told the clerk that the planned installation will still go ahead as both the PC and the resident's objections were not valid. The resident strongly refutes this stand and has submitted a further statement which the clerk will forward to Openreach for comment.

### **86. Bricknel Close road name - Holkham development, Massingham Road**

No resolution yet on setting one name – Bricknel Close – for the whole development. JM has made the PC's strong case for one name to BC's senior management.

### **54. New PRO and permissive paths on Holkham land**

MH continues to push Holkham's manager and their surveyor for completion of the long promised (2019) written guarantee to CAPC not to remove the current permissive paths on Holkham land around the village (and adding one extra along Emanuel Common) for the next 50 years. Further, to request NCC to declare the footpath, managed by the PC, from the ford along the bottom of Priory Meadow to Common Lane as a Public Right of Way (PROW).

### **83. Donated Bench for Pales Green**

MH met with the resident to see his handmade wooden bench and to thank him for his donation. It was agreed the bench should be positioned beneath the tree to the right hand side on entering the green. MH also removed the 'For Public Use. No dogs allowed' sign from the green's entry gate, following agreement from Cllrs to trial the sign removal and monitor possible dog waste on the green.

### **Missing letters on road sign at Massingham Road, Town Lane and Back Lane junction**

HW have finally replaced the old sign which had missing letters, three years since first requested.

### **Newton Road trod, Highways assessment**

The PC was successful in its bid to NCC's Parish Partnership Scheme funding. MH is in contact with Highways to assess the ground and agree a start date. Clerk to return to NCC the completed PPS forms and the outstanding balance of £3,350.

## **6. Matters requested by Councillors**

### **CIL Grant Application to Borough Council**

Given the high estimated cost of a new bus shelter and public toilets, it was agreed Cllrs would monitor another summer of activity in the village before taking this project any further. MH recommended applying to the BC CIL fund before the deadline of 30 April to replace the 95 metres of old chain link fencing along the western side of the playing field – a favoured proposal amongst the infrastructure projects Cllrs reviewed for future CIL grant funding opportunities. MH offered to complete the CIL grant application, if Cllrs approve. Agreed. LF cautioned MH to build in at least £1,000 to the fencing quote to cover inflationary increases. TH questioned whether CAPFA could help with donating some of their recently awarded funds towards the cost of the fencing. MH felt the funds should be channeled into improving the pavilion car park.

### **Ostrich pub - bottle/paperbank**

Following the closure of the Ostrich pub, Greene King laid concrete blocks at the entrance to the car park which is common practice when a public house closes to prevent unwanted visitors. Unfortunately, this also means access to the village bottle and paper banks via the car park is also blocked. Thankfully the paperbank was emptied the previous week and it will take several weeks to fill up; also the bottle banks while the pub remains closed. MH

has contacted Greene King to ask them to consider moving the blocks to allow access to the banks and to be kept informed as to progress on the new tenancy at the Ostrich.

### **Village Greens- No Mow May**

MH brought up the current initiative being promoted by Plant Life which encourages householders not to mow their lawns in May, benefitting garden wildlife. MH wondered if the PC could participate this May by not cutting two areas of St James's Green where the daffodils are in bloom. Cllrs agreed and will review the results for the following year. MH and the Clerk to meet with the green cutting contractor.

### **PC meetings from May 2021- Zoom or in village hall? Annual Assembly**

The Government has not yet extended the 'sunset clause' permitting online council meetings after 7 May 2021. The National Association of Local Councils is taking legal action to force a decision by 30 April. Agreed to wait until then before deciding how to hold our Annual Parish Meeting and PC meeting on 13 May. Cllrs agreed virtual meetings would be their preferred setting, if allowed. JM advised it is highly unlikely that virtual meetings would be allowed to continue and suggested PC be prepared for that eventuality.

## **7. Planning**

### **Request to review PC objection to 67 Pales Green approved planning application**

The property owner requested that the PC reviews its unanimous decision to submit an objection to the planning application for the renovation and extension to 67 Pales Green - approved planning application 19/00869/F - extension at rear of No.67 Pales Green. The owner believes this 'premier quality refurbishment of this entire village' should be acknowledged and the objections withdrawn.

The principle objection, as opposed to concerns of more parked cars in Pales Green, centred on the blank wall of the rear extension which, as was stated at the time, would be visible from the highway and not in keeping with the surrounding listed buildings in the Conservation Area. Now the extension is complete, Cllrs have not changed their opinion. It was also their unanimous opinion that the PC's objection should not be retrospectively withdrawn. This would also set a precedent for other past planning applications to which the Parish Council in all good faith, and in viewing any applicant's plans and site drawings presented them at the time, were moved to object.

## **8. Correspondence**

### **Pales Green – e-mails on fire brigade access and traffic concerns**

Clerk exchanged e-mails with a resident concerned about access to Pales Green for fire engines, given various property alterations and parked cars. The Clerk explained about the Swaffham Fire & Rescue Service confident risk assessment in 2014 and has asked them for an update. MT suggested that they include a review of Pye's Lane which has similar traffic congestion restricting access to residents' properties. A negative report would trigger a demand to Highways to improve access to both lanes.

### **Holkham development site on Massingham Road - mud on carriageway**

E-mail from a resident asking the clerk to contact the site manager to request the removal of mud from the carriageway left by site vehicles. The site manager was very apologetic and immediately looked to rectify the situation and prevent it happening again.

### **English Heritage- Adventure Outgames at the Castle**

A company called Adventure Outgames has been given permission from EH to run events at the Castle from 23 April 2021 and throughout the summer. MH contacted EH for further details such as a site map, whether customers would be directed to park at the Priory, noting the refurbished public toilets. Also what steps will be taken to prevent excess litter. Waiting for EH to respond.

## **Play area - parking on Massingham Road - signage**

Thanks to CAPFA who have now placed larger signs along the playing field fencing, directing visitors to park at the pavilion car park and not on the Massingham Road.

## **9. Reports**

### **Highways**

MH reported: - still awaiting the new restricted traffic directional sign on the A1065 exit onto Lower Lane.

### **Village hall**

HB reported: the hall is opening for the local elections on 6 May. The hall will reopen to the public on 19 May, subject to Covid restriction guidelines.

### **CAPFA**

NP reported: the next committee meeting is on Tuesday 13 April. The new gym equipment on the playing field is now safe for general use.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

MT reported: the Examiner has finally made contact with some formulated questions, also some for the local authority, which will need to be assessed and responded back through the local authority. Pleased to confirm that nothing major has been raised. This is this first contact from the Examiner since January 2021.

### **BCKLWN**

JM reported: BC meetings have now resumed. The Local Development task group starts next week. If elected to the County Council, JM plans to create a steering group which would look into the requirement for public toilets in the village.

## **10. Accounts to be paid:**

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£74.40 (£12.40 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£77.27 (£3.44 VAT)
Clerk's expenses - Zoom monthly account	£14.39 (£2.40 VAT)
Clerk's Salary Jan-March	£606.33
Reimbursement, Sean Allen supply of post mix for traffic mirror	£16.50
BCKLWN - annual fee, dog bin emptying	£659.57 (£109.93 VAT)

Noted: the URM invoice covers two months' worth of charges after URM contacted the clerk asking for a mislaid cheque to be reissued for its January invoice P102686. Clerk to cancel missing cheque No.200026

TH proposed approval of the accounts and LF seconded.

## **89. Village Maintenance**

### **Potholes repairs –**

New potholes reported: one on Newton Road on the verge, western side near the highway railings. Clerk to report to HW.

**Portcullis resetting.** Clerk to chase EH again for confirmation of the resetting and written confirmation that it does not pose a safety threat.

### **Damaged street sign- St James Green**

Clerk reported damaged sign to the BC.

**Bin at Castle Square.** JM reported that the newly installed bin is being well used and having a positive impact. It is emptied regularly.

**90. Public questions**

The new owners of The Old Vicarage in Priory Lane joined the meeting to introduce themselves, expressing their excitement to be moving into the village in the near future, following some refurbishment to their property.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 13th May 2021** at 7.30pm via Zoom video communication.