

ECC and CCC report for 19th March 2024.

Please see my ECC and CCC report.

Ref Item 23/1798 – is it okay if you all take my report as a briefing on the issue – as it is interlinked with County Council.

ECC Report

Member Led pothole scheme:

All of my 39 (of the 36 allocation from 2023) have been completed, including the numerous ones to the West of Pleshey.

There will be a new scheme starting April 2024, but this will be expanded and include pavements and other defects. It is being funded by an £8M grant from Central Govt which has to be spread over 75 ECC divisions.

I have already received numerous requests for defects to be addressed. I won't be able to do all the pavements and carriageway pot-holes, so will need to make priority decisions.

LHP

All LHP meetings have been delayed until April pending new processes and budgets.

A number of schemes had been delayed from last year (wending March 23) to this year. Despite numerous requests to get a progress report on those planned schemes, I have not been able to get an answer. I have escalated to the Highways Cabinet Member.

Ford End Land (Item 23/1798)

Having received a number of complaints about the enclosure of land adjacent to Eagle Cottage, Ford End, I visited the owner of Eagle Cottage in my capacity of County Cllr. Parish Cllr Alan Martin accompanied me.

The complaints from local residents included the loss of open space, blocking a PROW, encroachment of fence/hedge on to the highway, and blocking the view of vehicles exiting Church Lane. I understand that the Parish Council also received other complaints.

The owner of Eagle Cottage stated that the land belonged to Eagle Cottage.

PROW, highway encroachment and safety of sight lines fall within my remit as County Cllr.

I have looked at the PROW map, which indicates that there is not a PROW crossing this land!

In terms of plantings or fences near highways, County Council Highways have requirements that they should be a set distance from the edge of the carriageway (this is usually 45cm – even when fully grown) and should not constitute a safety hazard. I have referred this to Highways.

In terms of the ownership of the land, I had previously had an enquiry from Eagle Cottage owner in 2021 and at that time my own search did not reveal a registration on the Land Registry (confirmed as still the case).

I have referred the issue of open space, to the Parish Council but have continued to assist in establishing ownership. Eagle Cottage owner claims that they have “*dropped pins which identify the land as belonging to Eagle Cottage* “ and could supply screen shots.

Working with the Clerk, we believe that we have discovered that the land in question was the subject of Commons Commissioner finding in 1983 which directed ECC, as registration authority, to register GWPC as the owner of the land under Section 8 of the Act of 1965. I have obtained copies of the Register of Village Greens held by ECC, which shows GWPC registered as the owner.

GWPC Clerk asked me to send an email to the owner of Eagle Cottage on behalf of GWPC, as I had their contact details and didn't have their permission to pass on such contact details. This email was sent to the owner of Eagle Cottage 13th March and said:

“On behalf of Great Waltham Parish Council can you contact the owners of Eagle Cottage; with whom you have had direct contact; and request they stop any additional work on the green which I understand is ongoing from photos I have been sent. This land is registered as Village Green under VG150 – CL 257. This was registered in 1984 by direction of the Commons Commissioner. Its an offence to build a fence or exclude any member of the parish from access. The matter will be discussed at Tuesdays meeting which the owner of Eagle Cottage may wish to attend.”

At the time of writing, I have not received a response.

Whilst the evidence I have unearthed indicates that GWPC own the land, as common land or village green, the nuances of ownership and claims may challenge that. Hence, I was keen to hear from Eagle Cottage on the basis of their claim.

National Grid ESO Report

I attended the Electricity System Operator's (ESO) East Anglia 4th March presentation on the outcomes of their study for alternative routes. This considered 9 options in total including offshore, buried, onshore pylons and hybrids. The options were compared in terms of

1. Environmental Impact
2. Community Impact
3. Deliverability (e.g., planning considerations, operations)
4. Economics – Capex cost, lifetime costs compared with cheapest option

All options were assessed for 2034 delivery for comparison purposes.

No option achieved a clean slate – i.e., no silver bullet

Assessment was done at high level.

The study will be published this week.

Transport Safety Officer pilot launched in Essex

Essex County Council and partners have launched a pilot Transport Safety Officer (TSOs) initiative in Essex. This follows a successful joint bid by Essex County

Council, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea City Council to the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of their national roll out of the scheme. £490,000 was awarded for the scheme in Essex.

The introduction of specially trained officers aims to make public transport in the county safer. The officers will deal with low-level nuisance and disorder, tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and target hotspot routes and locations on public transport. They will also possess enforcement powers, including the authority to issue fixed penalty notices for specific anti-social behaviours.

The initiative aligns with broader government commitments to enhance public transport services. Read more about [the Transport Safety Officers initiative](#)

Recycling centre bookings made permanent across Essex

Essex County Council has made recycling centre bookings permanent following public consultation.

A booking process trialled across recycling centres managed by Essex County Council has been made permanent following positive feedback from residents.

A full evaluation of the booking trial is available at

<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/essex-recycling-centre-vehicle-bookings/>

To find out more information or to book a slot, visit www.loveessex.org/bookings

City Council

Land Adjacent White Cottage South Street

23/01916/PIP

I asked for this to go to Planning Committee (5th March). I presented on the basis that this site is an anomaly! It is an anomaly, because the defined settlement boundary and the conservation area boundary, run together at the back of all the dwellings, until it gets to this piece of land – where the conservation boundary continues at the back of this piece of land, but the settlement boundary diverts specifically to the front of the site, and only for the site and garden of South House, before rejoining the conservation boundary. The net result is the only gap in dwellings as you go down South Street.

I recognised that it is outside the boundary of the defined settlement and within the Conservation Area, but that in my opinion, adding a suitable dwelling to this site, would not detract from the character of the area. I appealed for the Planning dept to work with the applicant to find an appropriate dwelling for this site.

However, the Planning Officers believed that this contravened many planning policies, and convinced the committee that there was not the opportunity to develop this site within current policy. Even though there were no residents' objections, or GWPC objections, and GW needs smaller dwellings, the PIP was refused.

I have to say that I am disappointed with this decision as it ignores local views.