



**MINUTES OF NOAK BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT NOAK BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 25th JANUARY 2024 at 7.00pm**

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Terri Sargent

CLLR'S PRESENT: Cllr Jacqui Dowton; Cllr Stuart Allen; Cllr Paul Daft

ALSO PRESENT: Essex County Councillors: Tony Ball; Malcolm Buckley

01/2024 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr Mark Cottrell; Cllr Lynn Gilliam; Cllr Cristopher Bateman

02/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by Members relating to any agenda item
Cllr Sargent, item 09/2024 - Member of Basildon Council cabinet

03/2024 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

To receive and agree the minutes of Noak Bridge Parish Council held on 30th NOVEMBER 2023. Proposed by Cllr Allen, seconded by Cllr Daft that the minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Dowton and Cllr Daft disagreed, Cllr Allen and Cllr Sargent agreed the accuracy of the minutes. The chairman took the minutes as read, using a casting vote the minutes were signed by the chairman - **Agreed**

A request was made for item 05/2024 to be taken before item 04/2024, the Council Agreed

05/2024 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (15 MINUTES MAXIMUM):

A resident reported that dog poo bags were being hung on bushes along Bramble Tye and other places and inquired how many dog bins were provided by Basildon Council in the parish. The chairman asked the resident and Cllrs for the location of dog bins and would notify Basildon Council asking if the bins could be emptied more frequently and if there was a need for more bins. The resident requested an article in the next newsletter to highlight the dog poo problem and requested a date for a community Spring litter pick and to put both items in the newsletter. Residents raised issues on the Wash Road planning application 23/01551/OUT and the chairman urged them to send their comments to Basildon Council. An issue was raised that responding to the planning application online was a problem, chairman to inform Basildon Council and to ask when they would be sending residents a letter giving details of the planning application

04/2024 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSULTATION:

The chairman reported the parish council await the results of the regulation 14 pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents
A Hybrid planning application 23/01551/OUT on Land to the South of Wash Road for up to 400 residential dwellings had been submitted to Basildon Council and was out for public consultation. The parish council had received a summary from the NP consultants on how the application had considered the Design Code, it was rather disappointing. The chairman will prepare a response from the parish council to the consultation adding comments raised and send to Basildon Council. The comments will be attached to the minutes

06/2024

BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024-2025:

The chairman presented the 2024 - 2025 budget of £42, 000.00 for approval, proposed by Cllr Dowton, seconded by Cllr Allen - **Agreed**

The chairman presented the 2024 - 2025 precept of £41,319.68 for approval, proposed by Cllr Daft, seconded by Cllr Dowton - **Agreed**

Chairman to submit the agreed precept to Basildon Council

07/2024

BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES:

The chairman reported that the signature of former Cllr Jane Bunting would need to be removed from the bank accounts and replaced with another Cllr. A discussion followed on the bank account signatories and the limits held in the bank accounts that exceeded the £85k limit of the FSCS. The chairman reported making three telephone calls to Santander and to the FSCS to try and resolve the issues raised by Cllr Dowton, that the finances were at risk. The chairman was advised to open three new bank accounts at different banks of their choice, the amounts evenly distributed in each account. Cllrs would need to become signatories, present themselves to the bank with their personal details and completed mandate forms. Cllr Dowton said she was not prepared to be a bank signatory while the debit card was held in a bank account that exceeded the financial limit of £85k which should hold around £200. The chairman said the same would apply to all parish Cllrs and the issue would remain the same unless Cllrs were prepared to set up the new banking arrangements as advised. The chairman stated since 2016 the finances remained safe in the Santander bank, the current signatories are Cllr's Sargent and Cottrell. As no other Cllr's present are prepared to become signatories the matter is unresolved

08/2024

DEDICATED EMAIL ADDRESS FOR MEMBERS:

The Council considered a dedicated email address for members, Cllr Dowton proposed a Gmail address for all members, seconded by Cllr Daft - **Agreed**

09/2024

BASILDON COUNCIL SHELTERED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION REVIEW:

Cllr Daft confirmed he had contacted three planning consultants in connection with the proposed change of use from a Sheltered Housing Scheme in Fore Street to General Needs but had only received one response from ADP Consultants. A schedule of ADP proposed services was circulated to members for consideration. Cllr Daft declared a conflict of interest in the matter. Cllr Sargent had already declared an interest and would abstain and handed over to Cllr Dowton to take the item. Cllr Dowton read a change to the proposed schedule of services

To prepare in readiness, a letter for Noak Bridge Parish Council, to be sent to Basildon Borough Council, positive objections for a forthcoming planning application to the Fore Street Sheltered Housing Scheme change of use to general needs at a cost of £960.00 plus VAT.

The letter was subject only if a forthcoming planning application was submitted to the Council Cllr Dowton proposed to accept the quotation, seconded by Cllr Daft. When put to the vote, Cllr Dowton and Cllr Daft agreed, Cllr Allen voted against, Cllr Sargent abstained to vote, the item carried by two to one in favour - **Agreed**

10/2024

APPOINTMENT OF CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER:

The Council considered appointing a Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer, proposed by Cllr Dowton, seconded by Cllr Daft - **Agreed**

11/2024

POLICY REVIEW:

The Council reviewed the five policies deferred from the previous meeting: Data Retention; Publication; Personnel Committee Terms of Reference; Virement and Data Retention.

Cllr Dowton proposed to adopt the reviewed policies, seconded by Cllr Daft - **Agreed**

12/2024

FINANCE:

Council considered:

Monthly Bank Reconciliation

Monthly Budget Sheet
January payments

Bluestone Planning - £3,942.50
NBCA Village Hall Hire for January - £90.00
BT Broadband - February Payment

Member considered the items, proposed by Cllr Dowton, and seconded by Cllr Daft - **Agreed**

13/2024

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

23/01478/FULL Location: 5 Gatelodge Way, Noak Bridge

Replacement of windows with UPVC (Black Brown colour) casement windows and composite door to front and side elevations

***Parish Council raised No Objection**

23/01551/OUT Location: Land to the South of Wash Road, Wash Road

Hybrid planning application for up to 400 residential dwellings comprising detailed planning permission for Phase 1 for the erection of 65 residential dwellings (Class C3) including associated landscaping, amenity and play spaces, parking provision, new pedestrian and vehicular access, sustainable drainage, attenuation basin and associated works; and outline planning permission (all matters reserved, except means of access) for the erection of up to 335 residential dwellings (Class C3), a community use facility (Class E), landscaping, informal sports pitches/spaces, amenity and play spaces, parking provision and vehicular access, sustainable drainage, allotments and associated works

***Parish Council to prepare a response and send to Basildon Council, attached to these minutes**

PLANNING APPLICATION DECIDED:

23/01305/FULL Location: 20 Gatelodge Way, Noak Bridge

Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of part single storey/part two storey side extension - **Granted**

14/2024

BOROUGH/COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Buckley and Ball reported on Essex County Council exemplar financial position. The Chief executive is considered the right person to turn around the budget. Homelessness is costing half a billion in additional funding. Essex school attendance is the highest for fines for unauthorised absence, 9% miss one year of schooling, fines deterrent unacceptable

Members questioned the new recycling service. Essex CC is responsible for waste disposal.

Basildon Council new waste collection system is bedding in despite a difficult start, now producing additional recycling figures. Food waste is exceeding targets. Black bins encouraging recycling to increase, less waste in black bins means less waste to landfill

15/2024

TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

Noted

16/2024

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Tuesday: February 20th; March 19th; April 16th; AGM, May 21st, 2024

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm

Signed

Chairman.....

Date.....

NOAK BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PLANNING APPLICATION 23/01551/OUT

In September 2018, Noak Bridge Parish Council began the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan so that residents, services, and businesses would have the opportunity to shape the future of the local area.

The Parish Council considered it appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area to have influence over design elements of new development within the parish area to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which would incorporate additional design policies for development. The policies would be similar to the requirements of the existing conservation area and protect the unique design aspects of Noak Bridge Village, to enable the Neighbourhood Plan to respond to the unique characteristics and planning context specific to the Neighbourhood Area.

Thus, the principle aims of the Neighbourhood Plan was to protect the unique characteristics and planning context of the specified area. To promote the Social, Natural and Environmental qualities within the area and have regard to all existing aspects developed within Noak Bridge. On 22 November 2018 Basildon Council approved the designation of the Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Area

Throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council consulted and discussed the principle aims with many organisations including residents, Health, Education, Highways Authorities, Local Businesses including Croudace Homes with a view to them understanding and meeting the needs and aspirations of the parish and to incorporate them into the Neighbourhood Plan.

In September 2023 the Parish Council consulted over 100 organisation and individuals on the Regulation 14 pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan, Design Code, Character Appraisal and Local Green Space Assessment.

In January 2024 Planning Application 23/01551/OUT Location, Land to the South of Wash Road, Wash Road Hybrid planning application for up to 400 residential dwellings comprising detailed planning permission for Phase 1 for the erection of 65 residential dwellings (Class C3) was submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

The Parish Council comments to the planning application:

- The submitted Design Code does not address the context of the surrounding area in sufficient detail. There is only limited reference to the wider context in the design of the site. Although a detailed analysis has been undertaken.
- The site entrance (Phase 1) appears very suburban, with limited street trees and landscaping (see below).
- An inappropriately located extension to the Nature Reserve and poor buffer / proximity between housing on the southern boundary and the existing wildlife site. The impact of noise and lighting would cause disturbance and be unacceptable. It is likely that residents will also access the nature reserve directly from the southern boundary, which could cause further harm.
- The use of rear parking courts, which currently do not work in the existing conservation area. Some of the parking courts have no surveillance from front facing properties within the courts.
- Poor links with the village in terms of only a single pedestrian / cycle links.
- From the building typologies provided, these appear to be generic, standard house types, but with limited information for the phase 2 element, it is difficult to see whether or not a bespoke response to the site has been provided.
- The palette of materials is not particularly well detailed, and the information does not specify the quality – such as clay tiles or concrete tiles, or whether cladding is composite or timber for example. Just showing a few pictures of what looks to be man-made and non-locally specific materials may result in a low-quality appearance

- There is little mention of the level of detailing to the buildings. The information provided is insufficient and should be accompanied by further examples of attention to detail and a locally specific response.
- There are no window and door details and materials provided. As above, poor quality fenestration could have a significant adverse impact on the scheme. Specifying 'white windows' does not address the material proposed, whether windows will be slim profile timber or UPVC for example.
- The Important view across the site is not addressed, although the hedgerow planting is retained through from this point.

Phase 1 Commentary

The Phase 1 detailed design does not particularly reflect the design code:

- It lacks in street trees and landscaping and has a substantial amount of hard landscaped areas. This is also highlighted in the proposed street scenes, which are suburban and uninspiring.
- There are numerous rear parking courts with no building frontages to overlook the parking area. Rear parking courts have not proved successful in other parts of the village, particularly where they are not overlooked.
- The level of detailing to enhance the appearance of the buildings is lacking.
- Housing appears to be generic, standard house types and has little resemblance to the exemplary designs found in the Conservation Area. Equally, there is no considered contemporary response. The design does not appear to have its own unique identity.
- Plots 3, 48, and 49 in particular show very narrow tall house types, which are disproportionate as single dwellings and at odds with the Noak Bridge Design Code and the scheme in general.
- It is considered that the lack of detail regarding the quality of materials is a key issue. It would appear from the photos of the materials provided, that these are largely man-made – i.e. concrete tiles, composite weatherboarding, poor quality silicone-based render.
- The above issues are a key consideration, as the Conservation Area properties are successful due to a combination of the level of detailing, appropriate building form, choice of high-quality materials and plentiful landscaping. In this regard, it is considered that the proposed scheme does not reflect the high standard of design that is required.

General comments:

This is inappropriate development in the green belt without very special circumstances:

- a. Unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
- b. Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- c. Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

Neighbourhood Plans were part of the 2011 Localism Act designed to give power to local communities, allowing them to shape their future. It is a great disappointment to the Parish Council and its residents to have spent over five years developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Croudace Homes planning application to pay so little attention to the detail of the local area and the service requirements of local people and ride roughshod over their aspirations to shape the future of the Parish of Noak Bridge.