

IXWORTH & IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Councillor Ben Lord

Clerk: Claire Usher

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 22nd October 2025

At Ixworth Village Hall

Councillors Present: Ben Lord (Chairman), Terry Lilley, Sam Linton, Stephen Mann and Kate Rees

Others in attendance: Claire Usher (Clerk) and 12 members of the public.

221025/01 **Apologies for absence:** Clare Black, Tony Molloy and John Rowe. All Councillors resolved to accept these apologies.

221025/02 **Declarations of Interest (DoI):** None.

Dispensation: Councillors noted no requests had been received and none were requested at the meeting.

Public Forum:

221025/03 **Church Vandalism:** Cllr Lord reported that he had received notification from the Rev'd, that the church had been vandalised. Someone had ripped off half of the decorative metalwork that surrounds the main door. They had prised up the bottom of the other half before possibly being disturbed. This has been reported to the police.

221025/03 DC/25/0370/OUT – Members of the public raised concerns with the proposed access onto Bardwell Road and the situation with the school buses and felt these concerns had previously been raised but not addressed by the applicant and were astonished to hear that Suffolk County Council Highways had no objection to the arrangements for school bus drop and pick up of students adjacent the proposed junction and felt the results of the traffic audit undertaken by the applicants during the school closure in August were not factual compared to the traffic movements during school term time, and inadequate infrastructure being proposed especially in connection with provision of GP services in the village.

221025/04 **DC/25/0370/OUT** – Outline planning application (means of access to be considered) –
a. up to 160 dwellings b. provision of open space c. landscaping d. sustainable drainage e. associated infrastructure and works f. footpaths off Thetford Road - Land off Bardwell Road

Cllr Lord reported that following a meeting between the developers and the Parish Council, it had highlighted that the developers were determined to go ahead with the proposed junction for this development off Bardwell Road, despite the traffic

objections to this application. The applicant believes the picking up and dropping off of students using the school buses will not impact this junction. The Parish Council believes that the audit was done at a very inappropriate time, during the school summer holidays, and was therefore flawed by the results produced. It was felt by the Parish Council that this junction could potentially threaten the safety and wellbeing of students attending the high school when using the school buses. He reported that County Cllr Joanna Spicer is hoping to arrange an independent audit to be carried out so that the figures could be compared with the audit being undertaken during a school term.

221025/05

DC/25/0666/HYB – Revised Application a. Full planning application – provision of 215 dwellings with access, public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure b. outline planning application (means of access to be considered) provision of 2.2 hectare site for primary school – Land off Crown Lane, Crown Lane

Section 106 Funding Request: Cllr Lord firstly reported that he had received confirmation from the Planning Officer at West Suffolk Council that following submission of the S106 Funding Request by the Parish Council, a total of £223,421.29 will be allocated to the village hall regeneration project. This has been secured across both applications following the SPA calculations of developer contributions against the number of expected new occupants across both sites. Without the Strategic Evidence commissioned by the Parish Council in collaboration with the Jiggens Trust these contributions would not have been secured. This has been a successful piece of the work and highlighted the Parish Council's determination to achieve the best results from these two developments for residents of the village in terms of community infrastructure.

Cllr Lord reported that this was a revised application with over 305 documents to consider, many of which were several pages in length. As well as Councillors, Roger Spiller had also worked his way through these documents on behalf of Green Ixworth and he expressed his continuing concerns with the application and reported several of the issues that his group were not happy with to the public in the room.

Cllr Lord reported that to date no masterplan had been produced by developers as is a policy requirement of West Suffolk Council. The number of proposed dwellings was far greater than that allocated in the West Suffolk Council's Local Plan, and that the developer had rules that the installation of a pedestrian bridge over the A143 was not a feasible option with Suffolk County Council Highways. Not only was this fundamentally unacceptable, but it was also misleading according to the reflections of a meeting held in August between Suffolk County Council Officers and the applicant as letters seen by the Parish Council outlined. County Cllr Joanna Spicer reported that Suffolk County Council continues to investigate this and will now out a more detailed feasibility study.

As regards the cemetery access off Stow Road, Cllr Lord reported that the developers could not confirm this as there is now a strip of land outside land ringfenced for the development and is outside of their control. This piece of land is unregistered but was not considered by the Parish Council to be a reason why this vital opportunity to modernise connectivity into the Cemetery could not be secured. It is disappointing that after so many years of formally expressing our need for this that it continues to be obfuscated between the landowners and the applicant.

It was felt by Councillors that none of the concerns raised in their previous objections had been addressed and therefore Cllr Rees and seconded by Cllr Mann agreed that the revised application is not supported. This was unanimously agreed.

Resolved: That Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council refuse the application for the following reasons: -

The Parish Council is greatly concerned by:

- The fundamental non-compliance by the applicant of not providing a Masterplan for the site as is a policy requirement.
- The number of dwellings remaining significantly higher than that allocated in the West Suffolk Local Plan by 50%
- The continued inadequate access arrangements to the site from a ghost island junction granted only at appeal that fails to take into consideration the material differences in traffic flow and congestion, particularly at peak periods on approaches to the A1088/A143 Walsham Road Roundabout.
- The continued intent to include uses on land well noted historically as being intended for the extension to Crown Lane Cemetery. Continued deviations on the status of this by the applicant are both helpful and obfuscating our well determined need expressed over the last 15 years.
- Rather than look positively at the opportunity to deliver a footbridge over the A143, the applicant continues to look for opportunities to discount this need to improve the safety of existing villagers and future residents that this development will become home to. The Site Allocation Policy clearly indicates that as part of the masterplan, the applicant is required to undertake a feasibility process to determine if a bridge is deliverable, yet the narrative provided to us by the applicant clearly indicates they are intending to prove it is not feasible, rather than it is. This yet another demonstration of profit before people.
- Representations to improve capacity within local GP services fall short of what is required now, let alone in the face of development of potentially, 600 homes within a 2-mile radius of Ixworth. It is not sustainable to continue building mass-scale developments and expecting already impoverished public infrastructure to withstand added capacity impacts without meaningful robust investment.

We also note the various deferrals from statutory consultees due to lack of detail and information as well as holding objections by others. We continue to be concerned at the applicant's attitude that seems to sidestep the need for quality data and detailed information if a proper assessment to determine the suitability of this application is to be made. Until a comprehensive improvement is made to this, the Parish Council objects to this application, and considers it appropriate to refuse planning consent.

221025/06 The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Signed

Date