

## 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 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025

#### At Ixworth Village Hall

**Councillors Present:** Ben Lord (Chairman), Terry Lilley, Sam Linton, Tony Molloy and Kate Rees and John Rowe

**Others in attendance:** Claire Usher (Clerk), Joanna Spicer County Councillor and John Griffiths District Councillor and 30 members of the public.

210525/01     **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Clare Black and Cllr Stephen Mann. All Councillors resolved to accept the apologies.

210525/02     **Declarations of Interest (DoI):** No interests were declared.

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

**Public Forum:**

210525/03     **DC/25/0666/FUL – Provision of 215 dwellings with access, public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure and the provision of 2.2 hectare site for education purposes – Land of Crown Lane**

The Chairman welcomed the public to this extra meeting that had been called to receive feedback and comments from residents of the village regarding the application received by Persimmon Homes. The Parish Council will then formally meet on the 28<sup>th</sup> May to consider their response to this application taking into consideration all the comments made tonight.

Cllr Lord started the meeting updating residents regarding the planning application on the Pigeon site on Bardwell Road. The Parish Council had submitted its response objecting to this application. He had met with the Headteacher of the High School who has also objected to this application especially concerning the access road in and out of this proposed housing site.

The current system for school buses has been functioning efficiently for years. They park on Bardwell Road before the end of the school day, and then make their way to the school to collect the children. Any disruption to that arrangement—especially if the proposed access road interferes with waiting buses—could cause logistical and safety concerns.

With concerns coming not just from the Parish Council, but also from Senior Highways Officers at Suffolk County Council, it seems the proposed development is facing significant scrutiny. The request to defer consideration of the application suggests that the issues raised—especially around access and bus parking—are serious enough to warrant further discussion before any decisions are made.

It's interesting that the applicant has engaged with the High School but not yet approached the Parish Council. Given the Parish Council's opposition, direct communication could be key in addressing local concerns. The Chairman will keep residents informed through social media and meetings as this was a great way to ensure everyone stays involved and the Parish Council can continue advocating for them.

Regarding the Persimmon Homes application, the Parish Council opened the debate and the following comments were made:

- i) School Provision – would the current school be able to cope with the increased numbers of students and who would have the final say if a new school was needed – Cllr Spicer advised that it would have to be considered by the Diocese and the school's Trust, the developers would have to agree a Section 106 agreement to provide a school.
- ii) Cllr Lord explained the difference between a Section 106 Agreement and the CIL monies that the Parish Council receives from developers.
- iii) Concern was expressed that the current GP surgery would not be able to cope with increased patients, there was currently inadequate car park provision at the surgery and it was felt that a new surgery needed to be built.
- iv) The number of houses proposed – Cllr Lord explained that Persimmon Homes acquired the bottom section of the field in 2008 and at the time the West Suffolk Council's Master Plan including its Rural Vision Plan had allocated 70 houses for the site, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the field up to 90 houses, but this Master Plan is out of date. Persimmon intends to develop the whole site in one phase and West Suffolk Council stipulates a policy requirement for a renewed Master Plan. The proposed 215 houses are 50% more than the emerging Local Plan states.
- v) The housing density - it has increased, especially compared to Micklesmere when these houses were built, it is 30 dwellings per hectare.
- vi) Noise levels on the site from the A143, and acoustic fencing being installed to help alleviate this.

- vii) Which routes the construction traffic will use - Cllr Lord informed the meeting that there had been approval for a vehicular entrance towards the north end of the site some time ago and before the permission ran out, the developer laid some bricks at this site entrance so that the permission remained in place. It was proposed as a ghost junction and then traffic to join the already busy roundabout on the A1088/A143. It was felt that a proper junction onto the roundabout would be safer. Residents were of the opinion that the traffic from this site will use the High Street, and this road was not suitable to take more traffic.
- viii) Would a new sewer need to be put in place by Anglian Water.
- ix) Would West Suffolk Council take into consideration individual objections from residents.
- x) If the number of houses was reduced will this have an effect on the provision of a new school.

Cllr Lord also expressed concern that the piece of land allocated for potential extension to the cemetery appears to be encroached by this application. The Parish Council formally requested in December 2021 to engage with the landowner to secure a purchase agreement but the landowner has failed to meaningfully engage.

The Chairman and the Parish Council are encouraging residents to make their voices heard in the planning process. The more individual comments submitted, the harder it becomes for the District Council to ignore public concerns—strength in numbers.

Also, residents can attend the planning meeting at West Suffolk Council and have a chance to speak. Three minutes might seem short, but it can be enough time to make a strong, well-prepared point.

Cllr Rowe thanked the Chairman who has played a long-term role with this site and his dedication, as well as his continued involvement ensuring that community concerns are taken into account.

With no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Signed ..... Date

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