



THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 22nd June 2021 at 7:30pm in Bolford Street Hall

Present: Councillors: T Frostick (Chairman), A Frater (Vice Chairman) V Knight, J Spencer, A Howells, R Barrington, J Perkins

Also Present: Dena Ludford (Clerk & RFO)

Combined Essex and District Cllr Martin Foley

Richard Haynes & Peter Neal from the Local Plan committee

16 members of the Public (2 members of the public left at 19:45, 1 member left at 19.58 12 leave at 20:50)

21/22.817 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Tayer Uttesford District Council

Cllr R Williams

Cllr A Wattebott – who wishes to formally record that her absence is in protest against the Government’s failure to extend permission for zoomed meetings beyond early May, even though the epidemic is clearly far from over. – Cllr Frostick agrees and understands the reason for this absence.

21/22.818 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr V Knight declares a NPI in relation to matters relating to Cutlers Green by virtue of the fact that Cllr Knight is a Resident.

21/22.819 **PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

Hands Off Thaxted are represented here this evening and wish to include the following statements in relation to planning applications being heard tonight.

Elers Way

HOT is opposed to this development proposal, as not only is it yet another urbanisation of Thaxted, but it is against the neighbourhood Plan and it will cause untold misery to many residents particularly in the area between Town Street and the proposed development. Last year HOT forwarded 319 consultation replies to Vistry.

We are working with our solicitor to draft our response to Uttlesford District Council.

Cutlers Green Solar Farm

We understand the need to de-carbon our energy supply, but it is becoming widely understood that large scale solar parks on agricultural land do not necessarily achieve that aim. The proposed solar park will lead to the loss of 53 Hectares of prime BMV land. This is the land that should feed us, so its loss will result in an increase of the amount of food that will have to be imported. Ultimately we would be exporting our CO2 emissions not eliminating them. Solar should be on buildings, and land of low value.

We have posted a petition on the UDC site urging out council to develop a policy on solar, before the district is taken over, to date we have 650 signatures. This is virtually the same as achieved by the county of Cornwall when they did a similar exercise in 2013.

We are working with our solicitor and Professor Mike Alder. (Professor of the Rural Environment (Emeritus) from Essex University and a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society) to make our response.

We would be happy to meet with the parish council to discuss these and other development proposals

Weaverhead Close

I note that several trees have been planted on the North side of the green in Weaverhead Close. This is commendable, but has anyone considered that before long they will make the green unsuitable for use by the Air Ambulance. Helicopters do need flat ground to land so trees could be positioned further to the east.

In addition to the aforementioned, at the location Weaverhead Close, HOT note that several trees have been planted on the North side of the green in Weaverhead Close. This is commendable, but has anyone considered that before long they will make the green unsuitable for use by the Air Ambulance. Helicopters do need flat ground to land so trees could be positioned further to the east.

21/22.820 **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED**
See attached combined report from County & District Cllr Martin Foley

21/22.821 **REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED**

21/22.822 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED To **APPROVE** and sign as a correct record the minutes of the **ANNUAL** Council meeting held on **4TH MAY 2021**

21/22.823 **PLANNING**

a) UTT/21/1200/OP

PROPOSAL: Outline planning permission for the erection of 7 dwellings with associated parking and landscaping, with all matters reserved except for access

LOCATION: Land To The North Of Mayes Place Monk Street

RESOLVED to **STRONGLY** and **UNANIMOUSLY OBJECT**.

The Parish Council objects to this development on the basis that it is contrary to both Local Plan policy S7 and to Neighbourhood Plan policy TX LSC4 which specifically restricts development in the 'outlying settlements (which includes Monk Street) to extensions, replacement, conversions and infill. The development proposed cannot be regarded as 'infill' since infill is required to be land between existing dwellings. This is clearly not. With regard to the Council's lack of a five year land supply the NPPF presumption is only in favour of sustainable development. Monk Street could never be regarded as a sustainable location.

We would draw your attention to an appeal decision in relation to another development previously proposed in Monk Street (Land opposite Monk Street Farmhouse (appeal ref.: APP/C1570/W/19/3233508) where the inspector not only gave 'significant weight' to policy S7 but also expressed full support for Neighbourhood Plan policies. Of particular note was his comment that the cul-de-sac arrangement of the development would 'introduce a stand-alone development of suburban appearance and character which would be at odds with the area's rural nature.' It is exactly the same arrangement that is proposed in this case.

b) UTT/21/1836/OP

PROPOSAL: Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access, for the development of the site for up to 49 residential dwellings, vehicle access from Eller's Way, associated infrastructure, sustainable drainage, landscaping, public open space and linkages for pedestrians and cycles.

LOCATION: Land To The East Of Wedow Road

RESOLVED to **STRONGLY** and **UNANIMOUSLY OBJECT**

The views here were aired in the room this evening and will form the objection letter from the parish council. This is a summary of the overall reasons as presented during the meeting.

Contrary to planning policy. 4 of the views that are identified in the NP are impinged upon, other issues relating to traffic generation and the impact on junctions further along Wedow road. The Tanyard may not take the support of thousands

of more lorry movement, the concern that this would cause a sinkhole, there is no transport management strategy which was asked for by Essex highways so the application is not complete. HOT forwarded 319 forms from the public. Access for construction, and once constructed is the traffic the other issue is water, these houses are going to generate more waste and with further development the drain off road. The Anglia water letters on the application they site the sewerage systems needed improvement downstream flooding.

The previous application had provision for three storage containers for water and the S106 culvert replacement and improvement our understanding is that they were quoted for with UDC and the quote exceeded the quantum of the funds, the finance set aside for this will be transferred directly back to the developer (Circa £50k). This will have a significant impact along Bell Lane and Margaret Street, the pavements are slight in that area. The previous 95 houses which have already been built should be taken into consideration and we wonder if the traffic survey has been completed including Wedow road and the Tanyard and Weaverhead lane. In connection to the proposed emergency pedestrian cycle entrance, the access is owned by the occupant of what would have been Wedow close, the 6 properties in this area actually own this ransom strip. This area was not included in the call for sited in the first round. The heritage statement needs much improvement, there has been no attempt to show the impact on views with just two of three vague lines going off on different angles, we object on the basis of the heritage setting. They have now rescinded on the land on the meadow being transferred into the hands on the Parish Council

c) UTT/21/1850/OP

PROPOSAL: Outline application with all matters reserved for the demolition of a pair of defective bungalows and the erection of 1 no. bungalow together with new vehicular parking and associated external works.

LOCATION: 10 And 12 The Mead Thaxted

RESOLVED to OBJECT

The council would like to see the statement corrected in relation to the fact that UDC needed to undertake a biodiversity survey in a place of special scientific interest. The house being replace with one unit is also unacceptable, the need to house residents with smaller property is clear. Why are these not being providing to social housing when there is a desperate need for this in our area. The Council are disappointed that UDC did not come first to the Parish Council to discuss what further options might have been available.

d) UTT/21/1833/FUL

PROPOSAL: Construction and operation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays and battery storage together with associated development, including inverter cabins, DNO substation, customer switchgear, access, fencing, CCTV cameras and landscaping.

LOCATION: Land West Of Thaxted Cutlers Green Lane

RESOLVED to UNANIMOUSLY OBJECT

The views here were aired in the room this evening and will form the objection letter from the parish council. This is a summary of the overall reasons as presented during the meeting.

Business case and the efficiency of the operation the NRG supply would be to about 13000 homes, this is the same figures that they gave for Terrirs farm bear in mind that one wind turbine in the North Sea can supply 16000 houses, to take up all that land for such a low inefficiency. Loss of productive farmland, Natural England have their sums wrong and this does exceed 20 hectares and have been asked by the CCRE to readjust their number and go back to UDC, the landscape an heritage makes no mention of Thaxted's most important domestic building which is Horam Hall and the land surrounding, there has been no attempt to do any mock ups to show views in connection to the security fencing, then ecology wildlife and biodiversity. The issue for the long-term impacts in relation to decommissioning the site, the money set aside is inadequate, and in UDC are to insist on a fund. UDC are considering setting up a standard policy on solar farms.

What appears to be alarmingly misleading I that the developers claim that 40 mega watts will be generated and 8900 tonnes of carbon, it could do, there is a European commissioners website which is the developers and available for public access. The actual output would be just 4.6 mega watt's that's 1100, and offset about 1,000 tonnes of carbon. Obviously the developos knows this, Terriers farm is proof of this, the concern is that the planning officials need to know how misleading the statements are. The illusion is the farmland is being rescued where in fact this is a massive brownfield development, it will never go back to farmland ever again. The community of Thaxted utilise this are for peace and exercise and tranquillity. Surface water drainage is a real concern in the area the carbon offset to consider not to mention the 1200 movement of lorry's to construct this should also be factored in. Renewable energy makes everyone feel warm and fuzzy and what we must consider is that we are losing 53 hectares of land which should be

feeding us in the UK. The impact on imports of grain and beef to support the loss of this land will also have a negative carbon in the longer term. 650 signatures across UDC with a petition through HOT. Waterhall farm takes the whole area of water and we get flooding each year as a result of this, the flood risk assessment doesn't go in to the drainage from waterhall farm and they don't discuss where it goes. Government policy in regard to the cumulative impact of this with two already surrounding Thaxted on all sides.

A formal Request from the Parish Council to Cllr foley to call this item in.

e) GREAT DUNMOW TOWN COUNCIL WISH TO BRING THIS MATTER TO OUR ATTENTION :

Have your say now on Land East of High Wood Quarry 1,200 homes details **UTT/UTT/21/1708/OP** open now on the Uttlesford DC planning portal.

Dunmow Town Council strongly objects and has as prepared a set of Frequently Asked Questions(PDF) which will be updated. A landscape and character assessment shows that impacts will be significant and it will effectively join Gt Dunmow and Lt Easton. Links to both are as follows:

<https://greatdunmow-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/FAQs-Land-East-Highwood-Quarry-May21.pdf>

<https://greatdunmow-tc.gov.uk/new-housing-growth/>

After some further information from Richard Haynes and in consideration to the documents provided by Great Dunmow Parish Council. Thaxted Parish Council **RESOLVED** to coordinate with Great Dunmow Town Council a joint council's response in **STRONG** and **UNANIMOUS OBJECTION** to this application.

Anything traveling north will be coming through Thaxted so the traffic is a huge concern. This is just a rehash of a failed local plan, essentially joining up joining up Dunmow with little Eastern. We are a little further forward with Caver Barracks becoming a brownfield site, the urban sprawl along the A120 would be seen as a huge development along a major road. There seems to be an increase of new jobs in Cambridge so there is an argument that the development should be coming from this sector. The chairman asked the residents present if they felt this would be a bad idea for Thaxted as a community and having heard the impact assessment of those present today wished to gather the views of the residents present, by a show of hands the residents unanimously voted that this would be something they would wish their Parish Council to strongly object to.

21/22.824 CLT LAND LEASE

In accordance to item 14.3 of the Financial Regulations, This council it to consider the Lease & proposed costs of the land known as 'The Levitts amenity Site' to the CLT for a period of 150 years at a peppercorn rent.

RESOLVED:

To **APPROVE** the Clerk & Chairman to coordinate the necessary legal paperwork and Council will meet costs , then return the paperwork to council for final signature.

To ensure there is a Break provision in case the CLT folds and to ensure that the land comes back to the council.

Proposed Cllr Barrington seconded Cllr Knight. All Unanimously approved.

21/22.825 PAVEMENT LICENCE POLICY REVIEW

Policy for the placing of Tables and Chairs on the pavement, Objections to the proposed policy, specifying the grounds upon which they are made, must be sent via email to licensing@uttlesford.gov.uk no later than Wednesday 30th June.

To **CONSIDER** the councils response to this consultation.

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/licensing-consultations>

The Chairman wishes to note that, both Town and Parish Councils are not listed as consultees. Also there is no reference to current usage of pavement such as Town street Market The Food & Drugs Act 1984 we are permitted to run a market on a Friday, these must be considered and tie in with what is already in place. And that all H&S matters are considered when policies are granted.

21/22.826 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Have your say on how your parish is run.

To **NOTE:** Uttlesford District Council has commenced a review of the governance arrangements of local councils and wants to hear your views this summer.

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/ParishCGR>

The Parish Council wishes to remain as things are, no changes to considered.

21/22.827 HM THE QUEEN PLATINUM JUBILEE JUNE 2022

To consider forming a working group and what and how Thaxted are going to celebrate this momentous occasion.

RESOLVED to form a working group, Cllr Knight is happy to be part of the group. The Chairman believes that the group should be a collaboration of all sorts of people who form part of the community. Cllr Perkins is also happy to be part of this.

21/22.828 ANNUAL RETURN 2020 - 2021

i) **Resolved** To **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement

ii) **Resolved** To **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements

iii) **Resolved** To **APPROVE** the recent internal audit report and authorise the RFO to take any necessary actions as required

Proposer Cllr. V Knight seconded Cllr. R Barrington Unanimously accepted.

21/22.817 FINANCE

a) **EMR'S & CURRENT ACCOUNTS FROM 01-04-21 – 31-05-21**

To **NOTE** the revised EMR's

To **NOTE** Account income and receipts

(See attached report's)

b) **TO REVIEW ON LINE PAYMENT FOR APPROVAL**

RESOLVED to sign and approve the on line payments as detailed

21/22.829 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Council Meeting will be on **TUESDAY 13th JULY 2021** at Bolford Street Hall at 7:30pm.