

## **NOCTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Notes on the Meeting of Nocton Parish Council held at 7.15 p.m. on Tuesday, 11 October, 2022 in Nocton Hub.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ian Goldsworthy (Chair)  
Councillors Andy Hone, Mike Kaye, Richard Marshall and George McDonnell

County Councillor Ian Carrington (present for part of the meeting only)

Approx. 30 members of the public were also in attendance

#### **Nocton Hall and former RAF Hospital Site**

Prior to the start of the formal meeting, Mr Ben Wills gave a further update on the current situation regarding the proposed development of this site. In summary, a firm of quantity surveyors, had now advised that the following costs were associated with the various options being considered for the future of Nocton Hall:

- Record and demolish: £680,000
- Restore as a ruin: £3.3 million
- Partially restore the building: £6.0 million

These figures were, however, only indicative and could vary by as much as +/- 25%. The figure for restoring the Hall as a ruin also very much depended upon the nature and extent of the restoration involved. The next step was to carry out a Development Appraisal and to this end discussions were taking place with a specialist builder in order to refine the costs associated with each of the various options. When this work had been completed, discussions would then be held with Historic England and subsequently the local Planning Authority as part of a pre-planning exercise. Ben Wills was not yet in a position to comment on the extent of the enabling development associated with each of the options although he was of the firm view that a major housing development on the former Hospital site to meet the costs of a major restoration would not be viable under current planning guidance given the significant and adverse effect it would have on the village. In order for progress to be made, however and to ensure that a solution for the site could be found which was acceptable to all of the parties involved, Ben Wills was clear that compromises would be required on the part of the owners, Historic England, NKDC and the Community.

He also referred to the possibility of restoring the former Pleasure Gardens which surrounded the Hall and to the need to provide for a regular source of income (e.g. through the construction of a number of holiday lodges) which would enable them to be properly maintained. This, together with other ideas for the site would be considered further as part of the wider exercise referred to above. He also confirmed that he was aware of the existence of the remains of a medieval church in the grounds and that this would be included in the considerations for the site.

Finally, and in response to a question from a member of the public, Ben Wills confirmed that LEDA had agreed to carry out repair work (specifically to deal with potholes) on the road leading from Main Street to the Cottage Care Home. It was hoped that the work would be carried out in the near future.

Ben Wills agreed to attend either the next, or next but one, meeting at which he would be in a position to provide considerably more detail on each of the options for the future of both the Nocton Hall and former Hospital site, together with a possible way forward.

The Chair thanked Ben Wills for his presentation.

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDERS, ETC**

No questions had been submitted in advance and none were raised at the meeting

### **1. WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor MaryAnn Williams (reason accepted) and District Councillor Fran Pembury.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 AUGUST, 2022**

MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 be approved, subject to the deletion of the word “unused” in Minute No. 11(i)(g).

The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

### **5. APPLICATIONS FOR CO-OPTION TO THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Chair reported his disappointment at the lack of response to the recent letter to all residents asking for people to come forward to fill the existing vacancy on the Parish Council and, more importantly, to consider standing for election in May 2023. Although three residents had asked for more information on the role of a parish councillor, which had been provided to them, there had been no further response. This called, therefore, the future of the Parish Council beyond next year's elections into question and, as such, the Chair would be contacting the Monitoring Officer at NKDC to ascertain the implications for the village should such a situation arise.

Nevertheless, the Parish Council would continue to use the period before next May to encourage residents to think seriously about becoming a parish councillor and asked for those members of the public present at the meeting to do likewise.

### **6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

County Councillor Ian Carrington apologised for not having been able to provide his usual report (he had only recently returned from holiday) but would let the Acting Clerk have it shortly for publication on the Parish Council's website.

He also said he would let the Acting Clerk have details of the dates/times he was available to meet with parish councillors to undertake the previously agreed village “walkabout” to assess the condition, etc of the road and other aspects of the infrastructure for which the County Council was responsible.

## 7. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The RFO's report was received and noted with specific reference to the following points:

**(i) Payments made and income received since the last meeting:**

INVOICE DATE	ITEM DESC	EXPENSE ACCOUNT	TOTAL ITEM (£)
25/08/22	PLUSNET	PLUSNET/INTERNET	26.40
25/08/22		HUB STAFF	238.33
25/08/22		HUB STAFF	83.70
25/08/22		HUB STAFF	92.25
25/08/22		PC STAFF	411.64
25/08/22	ECLIPSE	WINDOWS	60.00
18/08/22	WAVE	WATER	0.00
11/08/22	WAVE	WATER	27.00
29/08/22	EON	MAINTENANCE-STREETLIGHTS	167.40
01/09/22	EON	HUB ELECTRICITY	457.60
02/09/22	HUB BOOKINGS INCOME	HUB REFUND	50.00
12/09/22	TRANSFER TO EQUALS		0.00
28/09/22	34 SP	IT	95.40
28/09/22		HUB STAFF	70.00
28/09/22	PKF LITTLEJOHN	AUDIT	240.00
28/09/22	PWLB	PWLB	8,393.63
26/09/22		PC STAFF	411.64
29/09/22	OPUS	ENERGY-STREETLIGHTS	
29/09/22	OPUS	ENERGY-STREETLIGHTS	
29/09/22	OPUS	ENERGY-STREETLIGHTS	73.24
30/09/22	BANK CHARGES	BANK CHARGES	18.00
03/10/22	PLUSNET	PLUSNET/INTERNET	20.07
13/09/22	WAVE	WATER	27.00
13/09/22	HUB BOOKINGS INCOME	HUB REFUND	30.00
30/09/22	BANK CHARGES	HUB BANK CHARGES	18.00
04/09/22	TESCO - COLIN SMITH	VILLAGE MAINTENANCE	4.00
15/09/22	AVANTI SOLUTIONS LTD	HUB MAINTENANCE	179.40
20/09/22	AMAZON	HUB MAINTENANCE	27.25
30/09/22	EE TOPUP VESTA	HUB MOBILE	10.00
01/08/22	EE TOPUP VESTA	HUB MOBILE	10.00
31/08/22	EE TOPUP VESTA	HUB MOBILE	10.00

Income received from Hub Bookings: August - £2,074.00; September £1,221.77

**(ii) Bank Accounts**

As at 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 there was a total of £29,969 across each of the three Parish Council accounts, plus a credit balance of £122.87 on the Equals Card.

**(iii) Budget Monitoring**

A detailed report on the overall financial situation of both the Parish Council “mainstream” expenditure and Nocton Hub, to include the projected outturn for the current year was currently being prepared by the Acting Clerk and RFO and would be presented to the next meeting.

**(iv) Payment of Responsible Financial Officer**

MOVED by Councillor Mike Kaye; SECONDED by Councillor Richard Marshall and RESOLVED that a payment of £311.25 (plus a £15.00 Office Allowance and £25.00 reimbursement for her purchase of the Remembrance Day Wreath) be paid to Ruth Keillar, the temporary RFO, in respect of the work she had carried out (including that associated with rebuilding the Parish Council’s website) for the period 25 August to 30 September 2022.

The Chair confirmed that both he and the Vice-chair had inspected her time-sheet and work diary for the period in question, both of which documents were available to other parish councillors should they also wish to see them.

**(v) Report of External Auditor into 2021/22 Accounts**

The report of PKF Littlejohn, the Government appointed External Auditor, was noted and was now available on the Parish Council website. Given the difficulties which the Parish Council had experienced as a consequence of the actions of a former Clerk in producing the accounts for the previous financial year, the Chair was pleased to report that no serious issues or concerns had been highlighted by the Auditor. The comments made would, however, be addressed at the time of the submission of next year’s accounts.

**(vi) NKDC Litter Grant**

The Chair confirmed that he had agreed the terms of a report to NKDC in order that the Parish Council could claim a grant of £173.67 towards the cost of the Village Keeper’s litter-picking activities.

**8. ACTING PARISH CLERK’S REPORT (i) Correspondence**

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The Chair reported that no relevant correspondence had been received since the last meeting which was not otherwise included on the agenda.

**(ii) Tree Inspection**

MOVED by Councillor Mike Kaye; SECONDED by Councillor George McDonnell and RESOLVED that the Parish Council commissions the NKDC Tree Officer to carry out the three-yearly inspection of the nine trees on the Village Green and outside Nocton Hub at a total cost of £24.75 (excl. VAT)

**(iii) Website Update**

The Parish Council noted that the RFO was continuing to make good progress in rebuilding its website to accord with current access, etc requirements. It was intended that the new site would go “live” on 1 December, 2022 when the existing site would be closed down.

The Chair asked a local resident and keen photographer, Mr David Chapman, if he would be willing to provide a number of photographs of the village to include on the new website. **(iv)**

**Village Keeper’s Lawn Mower**

It was noted that the lawnmower was not able to be used and needed an urgent minor repair and service. Accordingly, Councillor George McDonnell had arranged for it to be taken to a local repairer for the necessary work to be carried out at an estimated cost of £135.

**9. REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES, ETC – STANDING ORDERS**

It was MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Richard Marshall and RESOLVED that the revised the Standing Orders as recommended by NKDC and as amended to reflect the local situation, be approved and adopted with immediate effect. A copy of the document would be posted on the Parish Council’s website.

A report recommending revised Financial Regulations would be presented to the next meeting.

**10. PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT**

It was MOVED by Councillor Andy Hone; SECONDED by Councillor George McDonnell and RESOLVED that (i) the Schedule of potential risks facing the Parish Council be approved; and (ii) that Councillor Mike Kaye present a report to the next meeting on ways in which the various identified risks may be mitigated, etc.

**11. NOCTON HUB (i) Maintenance and Other Issues**

- (a) External Noticeboard for the Hub – The Acting Parish Clerk said that, despite previous reports that the Noticeboard being provided by Dyson Farming was ready for collection, this was not, in fact, the case as it had not yet been completed. Further enquiries would be made and should it appear that it was likely to be some considerable time before it was ready, then thought would need to be given to purchasing one.
- (b) Commemorative Plaque – In the absence of Councillor MaryAnn Williams, the current position could not be confirmed but there was no reason to doubt that the matter was in hand.
- (c) Revised Terms and Conditions of Hire - It was MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that the revised and simplified Terms and Conditions of Hire for Nocton Hub be approved for circulation to new and existing hirers with immediate effect. Councillor Mike Kaye would provide an updated copy to the Hub Manager.

- (d) Revised Hire Charges – The Acting Clerk said that a report on potential increases to the Hub Hire Charges would be presented to the next meeting once the detailed budget monitoring report referred to in Minute No. 7(iii) had been completed.

**(ii) Hub Manager's Report**

The Hub Manager's report was noted and the following actions agreed:

- (a) It was MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that the existing window cleaner be asked to clean the internal windows of the Hub once a quarter at a cost of £30.00.
- (b) It was MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that a budget of £50 be approved for the purpose of providing decorations for the internal Xmas Tree which was being donated to the Hub by the Chair and his wife.
- (c) It was noted that a report on establishing "call out" arrangements to deal with emergencies, etc which may arise when the Hub Manager was unavailable would be presented to the next meeting.

**(iii) AG Property Consultants**

MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that Sills and Betteridge (Solicitors) be appointed to negotiate on behalf of the Parish Council with AG Property Consultants the removal of various restrictive covenants which affect the Nocton Hub and other associated matters at a cost of £2,000 plus Land Registry fees and Title Insurance (exclusive of VAT).

**(iv) Disposal of Chairs**

MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that a further 10 of the older red plastic chairs (which remain surplus to requirements) be gifted to Nocton Parish Church for use in connection with its fund-raising and other activities. In so doing, the Chair referred to a card he had received from the Church thanking the Parish Council for its generosity in this matter.

**(v) Hub User Group**

It was noted that arrangements for the first meeting of the HUG were currently being made with a view to meeting in early November.

**(vi) Service Level Agreement between the Parish Council and Ripon Arms**

It was noted that arrangements had been for the first formal review of the SLA to take place on 24 October at 7.30 p.m. between the Chair, Vice-Chair, Hub Manager and representatives of the RA.

**12. ERECTION OF CHRISTMAS TREE ON THE VILLAGE GREEN**

MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Andy Hone and RESOLVED that a request by a local resident to erect a Christmas Tree on the Village Green and to hold a Carol Concert thereon on 18 December at 4.30 p.m. to which all villagers would be welcome to attend be approved, subject to any necessary health and safety precautions regarding any cabling for the tree lights, etc.

### **13. HUB CHRISTMAS TREE**

Councillor Mike Kaye undertook to contact Councillor MaryAnn Williams regarding the purchase of a suitable Christmas Tree for outside the Hub for which there was a budget of £180.

### **14. VILLAGE GREEN BENCH**

A resident had recently asked if there were any plans to replace the wooden bench on the Village Green which had been removed some time ago as it had become dangerous. Councillor Andy Hone agreed to investigate the purchase of an appropriate replacement and to report back to the next meeting.

### **15. PLANNING, ETC ISSUES**

#### **(i) Tree Works**

It was agreed to make no comment on applications relating to various tree works at 3 Main Street; Chestnut House, The Green; and Abbots Grange, The Green.

#### **(ii) Outline Planning Permission for up to 6 x dwellings on land south of Wellhead Lane (22/1387/OUT)**

The Parish Council considered this application in considerable detail, paying particular regard to its associated Heritage and Conservation aspects, Flooding and Surface Water issues and proposed Access arrangements.

As a consequence, it was MOVED by Councillor George McDonnell; SECONDED by Councillor Richard Marshall and RESOLVED that the proposals could not, in their current form, be supported and that the Parish Council formally object to this application in the following terms:

#### ***“Heritage and Conservation***

*The Council is already on record as opposing the submission of outline planning applications within its Conservation Area (CA). Only a Full application allows a balanced assessment of its effect on important heritage assets such as The New Ten Row immediately adjacent to the site, which is not mentioned in the Applicant’s Heritage Statement, despite its being described in the Nocton CA Assessment as an “example of Sensitive Buildings important to the character and appearance of the village”*

*The Application quotes Policy LP25 “The Historic Environment” of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) which seeks to protect heritage assets, and then signally fails to comply with its requirements when the access track to the development passes within a metre of the boundary of No 19, The New 10 Row. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should take account of:*

*.... the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

*In this context The Council is extremely concerned that outline applications often conceal the real agenda of a developer and once approved, facilitate consideration of the Full Application. Witness the Application for 12 semi-detached dwellings in a field down Wellhead Lane, Nocton (14/0986/OUT) which by the time that the Full application was approved (16/0101/FUL) had morphed in to 4 Large detached houses.*

*The proposed development does not front onto the Highway and as such can be considered as backland development in complete contrast to the rest of that part of the C A which consists of linear development. Thus, it does not conform to CLLP policy LP2 in that it fails to “retain the shape and form of the settlement”.*

*The single non-linear dwelling near the site is the bungalow behind Nocton Hub on the former tennis court whose outline application was approved by the casting vote of the Chair of the Planning Sub-Committee (on non-planning grounds) and against the recommendation and advice of Officers. This application should not be allowed to be seen as a precedent; it was development of a brownfield site. The remainder of the Land in question may be considered greenfield and was until recently used for the grazing of horses.*

*In determining the consequences of allowing this application to build within the CA, it must be recognised that this is (in effect) an application to develop the entire site - a housing estate in the middle of the CA. If this application is approved, this will inevitably facilitate further development to the detriment of the CA.*

*The Application shows little concern about obtaining local support for the development of a sensitive site within the CA. It is at pains to point out that CLLP Policy LP2's requirement of a “demonstration of clear local community support” does not apply because of what they see as the permissive nature of Policy 1 of the Nocton and Potterhanworth Neighbourhood Plan (NPNP). The Council profoundly disagree and point out that Policy 1 does not permit proposals for developments of up to 6 houses without their “demonstrating that such proposals are in keeping with local character” a characteristic that clearly is a matter of opinion - local opinion. So far this requirement has not been addressed.*

### **Flash Flooding and Surface Water**

*The Environment Agency estimates and makes it clear that this is only an estimate that the houses in Wellhead Lane immediately behind the development have a risk of surface water flooding (flash flooding) of between 0.1% and 1% each year, a 1 in 100-year event. The associated map shows flash flooding could occur in the back gardens of Nos 21-27 Wellhead Lane. In truth there have been 3 events of severe flash flooding in the last 20 years equating to a 15% risk. During the latest event, on 7 November 2019, the drains in Wellhead Lane were completely overwhelmed, the Beck almost overflowed and Anglian Water cleaned up the raw sewage from the street.*

*This development is immediately uphill from the affected area of Wellhead Lane and consists, as far as can be determined from the plans, of some 50% non-absorbent surfacing, The Council do not know what effect this will have on surface water flooding. More to the point - neither does anyone else, particularly with reference to the resurfacing and widening of the access track.*

### **Access**

*The access to the site is from Wellhead Lane along an existing farm track which, as the scale plans indicate, is to be widened to about 7.5 metres without provision for the pedestrians who regularly use this route to access Nocton Hub, Nocton School, Nocton Post Office and Main St. This involves a considerable change of levels and a change of surface materials from the current*



*hardcore and grass. As already mentioned, this passes extremely closely to a “sensitive” building affecting its context and environment and with unknown surface water effects.*

*Wellhead Lane is within the 30mph zone and as such one could reasonably expect there to be a 2m x 43 metre (x : y) visibility splay at the junction in accordance with the parameters laid down in the Manual for Streets. An on-site assessment indicated that the maximum that could be achieved, would be 2m x 12m (approx.) to the east and 2m x 20m (approx.) to the west. In addition, this would be complicated by the fact that there are nearly always many parked cars, further reducing visibility, to the east of the junction along the south side of Wellhead Lane and the fact that the developer has no control over developments of more than .6 metres high in the front gardens or on the grass verges in the future.*

### **Conclusions**

*It is impossible to make a definitive assessment of the nature and consequences of an outline application for a development in our CA. The Application posits that enough detail has been supplied. The Council beg to disagree. Such as it is, the application raises serious concerns as to its interpretation of CLLP policies LP2 and LP 25 and Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. It also has some important omissions as has been shown. We are sure that those residents along Main Street, behind the Hub and along Wellhead Lane who, in a wider context, enjoy the shape and form of the CA will see this as an unwelcome attempt to put in jeopardy the “peaceful and rural character of their villages”. (NPNP para 4.1}.*

*For these reasons The Parish Council objects to this application as submitted.”*

The Parish Council said that it was important for any resident wishing to make similar objections to this application do so on purely planning grounds.

## **16. WEGBERG ROAD, NOCTON PARK**

Further to Minute No. 8(i) of the last meeting, Councillor Andy Hone reported that he had been in contact with NKDC Planning Officers who were currently considering planning and other issues associated with the condition of Wegberg Road and the nearby “bridge”. Unfortunately, they had not yet been able to complete their investigations but hoped to be in a position to do so in time for the next meeting.

## **17. THE BRIDLEWAY (FROM MAIN STREET TO THE ROAD LEADING TO THE CRICKET PAVILION AND DOG WALKING FIELD**

In response to a question from a resident, the Parish Council had been in contact with Dyson Farming (the owner of the Bridleway) who had confirmed that the driving of motor vehicles along this pathway was not permitted (it is, in fact, potentially a criminal offence) and that they would be erecting signs to this effect in order to discourage drivers from using this as a “short-cut” to the Cricket Pavilion and the Dog Walking Field. Vehicles wishing to access these facilities would, therefore, need to do so by using the roadway from “Top Lodge”.

It was noted that these restrictions would not, of course, apply to vehicles requiring access to the two properties either side of the Bridleway at its junction with Main Street.

## **18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 commencing at 7.00 p.m. although this timing may change should it be preceded by the presentation from Mr Ben Wills as referred to above. Further details would be publicised nearer the time of the meeting.

## **19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

## **20. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Moved by Councillor Andy Hone; SECONDED by Councillor Richard Marshall and RESOLVED that the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

## **21. APPOINTMENT OF PARISH CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Moved by Councillor Mike Kaye; SECONDED by Councillor Richard Marshall and RESOLVED that action now be taken to recruit a permanent Parish Clerk/RFO on a contract of 30 hours per calendar month and at an appropriate hourly rate of pay in the range £13.00 and £15.00 depending on qualifications and experience, etc.

Pending an appointment, and in order to minimise the current burden on the Acting Parish Clerk, it was further agreed that the Temporary RFO be asked to carry out the administrative and other follow-up work arising from meetings, including monitoring and dealing with emails sent to the Clerk's email address. The time spent by the RFO on such activity would be recorded on her time-sheet and work diary along with her other duties. The additional costs involved could be met from the savings made from not currently having a permanent Clerk in post. The Acting Parish Clerk would, however, continue to be responsible for drafting agendas, attending meetings and preparing all minutes, etc.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_