

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

CLERKS REPORT – July 2011

Agenda Items

5a) Co-option of councillor to fill casual vacancy - At the time of sending the agendas we have 3 candidates for co-option to fill the casual vacancy:

Mr. Ted Henson

Mr. David Hope

Mr. Kit Stallard

I am attaching their personal statements as extra documents.

Other candidates are entitled to come along to the meeting on Monday and give a short presentation to members.

b) Request to support proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act -

I am writing to ask your Council to support the proposal (see detail further below) agreed by Leiston-cum-Sizewell on 7th June and by the Suffolk Coastal SALC area on 13th June. It seeks new planning guidance to major developers urging them, as a matter of planning procedure, to

- (i) Attend our meeting to answer questions about their planning application if we so wish and to
- (ii) Provide resources (if we so wish) to enable us to assess their applications – which may be over 1000 pages long – based on a professional critique of their evidence.

May I please emphasize those words above 'if we so wish': this means that no council is **required** to do anything. The proposed guidance would **enable and empower** us to do these things if we chose to.

Both of these things would help us as councillors when making recommendations on large planning applications. Clearly there are details to be sorted out with the Minister – e.g. the definition of large. But these are details – which follow the agreement of the idea.

I do hope you feel able to support this. **Already some 300 Local Councils have done so** (and if you are one of them – thank you). Please do contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Ron Bailey

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town councillor

Suffolk Association of Local Councils 13th June 2011
Proposal by Ron Bailey re Planning Applications
Agreed by Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council 7th June 2011

To: Town and Parish Councils

Dear Town/Parish Council

The proposal below was agreed by Leiston-cum-Sizewell on 7th June and by the Suffolk Coastal SALC area on 13th June. It seeks new planning guidance to major developers urging them, as a matter of planning procedure, to

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May I please emphasize those words above 'if we so wish': this means that no council is **required** to do anything. The proposed guidance would **enable** us to do these things if we chose to.

Both of these things would help us as councillors when making recommendations on large planning application. Clearly there are details to be sorted out with the Minister – e.g. the definition of large. But these are details – which follow the agreement of the idea.

Negotiations with the relevant Minister, Greg Clark's officials are already underway, and it is clear that the greater the support from town and parish councils the more likely we are to persuade the Minister to issue this new guidance.

May I please, therefore, invite your council to formally declare support for this (300 local councils have done so already and thank you if you are one of them). If you need more information please do contact me on 01728 831515 or ronbailey@btinternet.com

Thank you and yours sincerely

Ron Bailey
Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Councillor

Introduction

1. This is **NOT** a proposal either in support of or against any particular application. It is a proposal that I think will assist us in our deliberations on all applications: however there is one current application that we would like it to apply to: that by Tesco Ltd.
2. This application arouses strong feelings in the Town. But there is one issue on which both the 'antis' and the 'pros' agree: it will have a significant impact on Leiston. Some say that will be a bad impact: others say it will be for the good.
3. We have to make up our minds on our response by reading the application, listening to both sides, assessing any other evidence we can gather and in the end using our judgement. This proposal is to help us get as much evidence as possible on which to base our final judgement.

The Proposal

4. This proposal is that we use the rights and powers given to us under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 ('the SCA') and the Sustainable Communities Act (Amendment) Act 2010. The proposal is

Rationale

The Resolution passed by the Town Council on 7th June/ Suffolk Coastal Area of local councils on 13th June.

We ask the current Minister at the Department of Communities and Local Government (Greg Clark MP) to make the following planning policy/guidance to apply to large planning applications in the area of a Town or Parish Council

- 1. That any applicant or representatives of any applicant who submits such an application that will have a significant effect on an area must, if requested by the Town or Parish Council attend a meeting of**
 - (i) that Council to answer questions from elected councillors; and**
 - (ii) a Town Meeting, should one be duly called, to answer questions from all electors.**
- 2. That any applicant who submits such an application that will have a significant effect on an area must, if requested by the Town or Parish Council, or a Town Meeting, pay for the Council or Meeting to get an independent assessment carried out as to how the proposed development will affect the sustainability of the local communities.**
- 2A. That if we agree the above or either of the above that we communicate this to Suffolk Coastal District Council with the request that they delay determination of the Tesco application for a reasonable amount of time to enable us to act on this proposal and to get a decision from the Minister.**
- 3. And if we agree 1 and 2 above, we seek the support of other Town and Parish Councils.**

5. Re Proposal 1 above. The application is about 8 inches thick: I have read some of it; I have many questions. Others will probably have their own questions. We need them answered to enable us to make our best judgement. There is no way that this can be done by letter or email., It is reasonable, and indeed necessary to enable us to make the best judgment (whichever way that judgement goes), to seek the right, using the SCA, for us to require any such applicant to attend our meeting.

6. Re Proposal 2 above. Tesco's have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on this application. The consultants they have used do not come cheap! Inevitably their evidence supports their application: there is nothing wrong or improper in that. But there may be other views that 'other' consultants may take. Indeed, we need an alternative view, or even a 'critique', so we can make the best decision based on a fair weight of evidence from both sides. There is no way we can afford this amount of money. Tesco's have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds presenting their case; they will almost certainly have budgeted for an appeal if one should be necessary. They are going to significantly affect our town. It is reasonable that they pay what will be a far smaller amount to enable us to get evidence to carry out our quasi-legal duty regarding assessing this application.

Re Proposal 2A above. This is a reasonable request to enable us to get more information and to involve our electors. We have checked with the Planning Officer – it is not against the law for this reasonable delay to be agreed – but it is more likely to be so if the process that we have requested in place, as this would give the local planning authority a good reason to postpone their decision..

7. Re Proposal 3 above. The Minister is more likely to reach agreement with us if we have other local councils also backing this idea.

The Sustainable Communities Acts 2007 and 2010: background

8. In order to explain the legal background as to how we can use the SCA I now add a few words about what the SCA is and how it works, the legal rights it gives us and how it can help us. I start with a brief background to the Acts.

9. These were both Private Member's Bill promoted by Nick Hurd MP (now Cabinet Office Minister for Civil Society) and Alistair Burt MP. The campaign to get them through Parliament was organised by the Local Works coalition of which I was the National Organiser^[1]. This was a very wide coalition supported by over 100 organisations from The Association of Chief Police Officers, to the National Association of Local Councils, to the Society of Parish and Town Clerks, to Friends of the Earth, to the NFWI, CAMRA, Age Concern, Help the Aged, the National Federation of Retail Newsagents, CAB and many more.

^[1] So should I 'declare an interest 'in using the SCA? If so – I hereby do so.

10. It was in the end a totally cross party campaign: at a rally in Westminster Hall in support of the (then) Bill in 2007 the speakers were David Cameron, then Leader of the Opposition, Sir Menzies Campbell, then Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Phil Willis MP, then the relevant (Labour) Minister of State at DCLG.

11. They are both important Acts – establishing in law for the first time the principal of ‘bottom-up’ governance (explained below in this note). The Labour Minister, Phil Willis, said at the Third Reading of the 2007 Bill in the House of Commons:

‘I genuinely believe that the Bill will change the relationships in British politics I am proud to be the Minister who helped it through Parliament’ (Hansard 15.6.2007 col 1035)

And the current DCLG Minister, Greg Clark, recently said in the House on 29th March this year:

‘The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 is one of the most important Acts that this House has passed ... (it is) a seminal piece of legislation’ (Hansard col 146).

So he is going to take our proposal seriously.

The Sustainable Communities Acts 2007 and 2010: our rights

12. The 2007 Act gave principal councils the right to make proposals for government action to help them build and protect the sustainability of local communities. Those proposals were submitted through a ‘selector’ (the Local Government Association) for short listing. The government then had a duty to ‘try to reach agreement’ (i.e. NOT just consult) with the Selector on implementing the proposals. Initially there were 199 shortlisted proposals and the Minister responded positively on 2/3 of them.

13. The 2010 Act extended this right to submit proposals to county associations and to parish and town councils – again with the duty on the Minister to ‘try to reach agreement’ with these bodies. To quote the Minister, Greg Clark MP again:

‘We are very keen indeed for parish and town councils, which represent their communities so successfully, to submit suggestions and proposals we will ensure that the duty to “try to reach agreement” ... will apply to requests from parish councils’ (Hansard 29th March col 149).

The Minister has also indicated that in future the National Association of Local Councils and the Local Works coalition will also play a role as ‘the Selector’.

14. These are the legal rights that underpin this proposal.

***c) Priority gritting routes – email from Wiltshire Council’s Highway Management Technician:** ‘We have now evaluated all of the requests we have had for additions to our network for the coming season. The Council endeavours to make the County’s roads as safe as possible for road users, and to reduce delays caused by bad weather. We salt key routes during the winter period when there is a risk of ice by providing 24 hour cover to respond to weather conditions using a fleet of specialist vehicles. The key routes comprise a total length of about 1160 km (725 miles) and represent some 25% of the entire maintained network. Once this has been done and if there is still a persistent problem with a road then it will be treated again using our Tertiary Routes, we will be adding Manor Road, North Road, Upper Water Street, Castle Hill Lane to one of these routes.’

10g) Diamond Jubilee Celebrations:

Extract from SLCC Newsletter (June 2011) on Queens Diamond Jubilee

Next year the whole nation will be in celebrating HM The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee marking 60 years of the her reign. The celebrations will centre around an extended weekend in 2012 on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th June.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for

co-ordinating the Government's role for Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. [Buckingham Palace](#) will be co-ordinating the Queen's programme for the Diamond Jubilee, including the arrangements for the central Jubilee weekend in the first week of June 2012.

When will the Queen's Diamond Jubilee take place?

The Diamond Jubilee will take place in 2012. The Queen came to the throne on 6 February 1952 (her Coronation took place on 2 June 1953).

How many Jubilees has the Queen celebrated?

The Queen celebrated her Silver Jubilee (25 years) in 1977 and her Golden Jubilee (50 years) in 2002. The only other British monarch to celebrate a Diamond Jubilee was Queen Victoria in 1897.

When will the celebrations take place?

The celebrations will centre around early June 2012 (2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th). The Government has announced its plans for a special four-day Jubilee weekend which will allow communities the time to come together to celebrate and commemorate the events of the last 60 years. This has involved putting back the late May bank holiday to Monday 4 June and adding an additional Jubilee bank holiday on Tuesday 5 June.

On Sunday 3 June, The Queen will lead a flotilla of up to one thousand boats, assembled from across the UK, the Commonwealth and around the world, along the River Thames in London. The event is being organised by the [Thames Diamond Jubilee Foundation](#); individuals and associations wishing to take part can register their interest and details on this website.

Further details of other events planned for the four-day Jubilee weekend will be announced in due course.

How will schools be affected by the extra bank holiday?

In England, the [Department for Education](#) has made regulations to reduce the minimum length of the school year in 2011/2012 by one day: to a minimum of 378 half-day sessions, or 189 days. This will allow children and school staff to benefit from the extra bank holiday.

It is anticipated that most schools in England will take their half-term break w/c 4 June instead of the last week in May. The Joint Council for Qualifications is planning the timetable for public examinations on this basis. Wales will be making its own arrangements.

Diamond Jubilee Emblem Competition

Will there be an emblem or logo to identify my event as a Diamond Jubilee event?

Following a national competition, the winning emblem is now available for use for all activities associated with the celebrations including community and national events, as well as publications. The official emblem for the Diamond Jubilee, along with guidelines, is available on the [British Monarchy website](#).

Royal Arms and Images

I would like to sell Diamond Jubilee souvenirs using the Royal Arms and/or Images of the Royal Family – who do I contact to get permission for this?

The use of Royal Insignia and Photographs on souvenirs is usually prohibited under the Trade Marks Act 1994. However, this has been temporarily relaxed, in certain circumstances, to allow them to be used on souvenirs for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

[Detailed guidance on Diamond Jubilee souvenirs](#) (PDF 100kb)

If you have follow up queries, please write to The Lord Chamberlain's Office, Buckingham Palace, London, SW1A 1AA.

Funding

Will the Government be providing any funding for local authorities to help mark the Diamond Jubilee in 2012? The Government and Buckingham Palace expect the celebrations to reflect the current economic climate.

Will Lottery funding be available for community projects or events?

It is likely that Lottery funding will be available for small, local community based projects, however this will be a matter for Lottery distributors to consider. In the meantime, The Big Lottery Fund and ITV, with the approval of Buckingham Palace, will be helping to mark The Queen's Diamond Jubilee through the Jubilee People's Millions competition. Entries for the competition have now closed but further information can be found on the [The People's Millions website](#).

Regional Events

How do I go about organising an event to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in my area?

The Department of Communities and Local Government is working with principal local authorities on producing guidance to help communities to organise locally-run events in their area. In the meantime, the principal authority or Lord Lieutenant may be able to provide details of any planned activities in your area.

For further information or if you have any questions, please email the Department at diamondjubilee@culture.gsi.gov.uk.

Information Items

Application Number: S / 2011 / 514
Location: Hillview Castle Street, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Single storey rear extension
Agent:
Case Officer: Mr T Wippell
Category Of Application: FULL PLANNING
Decision: APPROVED **Date of Decision:** 06/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 528
Location: Swainsford Fish Farm Woodlands Road, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Proposed agricultural store/workshop with ancillary domestic use
Agent: M.L. Lawson MCIAT The Square Gillingham SP8 4AS.
Case Officer: Mr T Wippell
Category Of Application: FULL PLANNING
Decision: APPROVED **Date of Decision:** 06/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 562
Location: Hillcrest Hazards Hill, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Demolition of existing rear extension and sheds. Erection of a new rear extension and alterations. The extension of the existing garage to form a double garage
Agent: Mr Peter Coe Coe Design Ltd Pound Lane Studio Yarlinton Wincanton BA9 8DG.
Case Officer: Mr S Banks
Category Of Application: FULL PLANNING
Decision: APPROVE **Date of Decision:** 10/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 656
Location: 12 Oak Lane, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Erection of single storey orangery / conservatory
Agent: Mr Peter Watkins Rosedale 162 St Michaels Avenue Yeovil BA214LL.
Case Officer: Mr S Banks
Category Of Application: FULL PLANNING
Decision: APPROVED **Date of Decision:** 21/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 731
Location: Pitching Piece Farm Charnage, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Extension to existing grain storage barn
Agent: Architect Chartered Services 8a Church Hill Shaftesbury SP7 9QG.
Case Officer: Mr S Banks
Category Of Application: PRIOR NOTIFICATION
Decision: APPROVED **Date of Decision:** 17/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 579
Location: Convish Farm West Knoyle, Warminster.
Proposal: Conversion of existing outbuilding to provide annexe accommodation, workspace and retention of

Agent: domestic storage and garaging
Case Officer: Brimble, Lea & Partners Wessex House High Street Gillingham SP8 4AG.
Category Of Application: Charlie Bruce-White
Decision: FULL PLANNING
Date of Decision: APPROVED 20/06/2011

Application Number: S / 2011 / 620
Location: Newmead Southbrook, Mere, Warminster.
Proposal: Demolish existing dwelling and outbuildings and erect 3 dwellings and form access
Agent: Architect chartered Services 8a Church Hill Shaftesbury SP7 9QG.
Case Officer: Charlie Bruce-White
Category Of Application: FULL PLANNING
Decision: APPROVED
Date of Decision: 27/06/2011

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