

**FRECKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the meeting of Freckenham Parish Council on**  
**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7.30 pm held at Freckenham Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Cornell, Cllr Englebrecht, Cllr King and Cllr Tucker

In attendance: Cllr Harvey, Cllr Stanbury, Parish Council Clerk, Jadi Coe, Neighbourhood Plan Chairman Nick Woolley and 12 members of the public

Cllr Cornell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**22/07/01 Apologies for absence & approval of reasons tendered**

Apologies were received from three members of the public

**22/07/02 Co-option of councillor**

No applicants have come forward

**22/07/03 Declaration of interest in any items on the agenda**

None

**22/07/04 Members of the public are invited to give their views on any item within the agenda**

Members of the public were given the opportunity to give their views at this point, two parishioners asked if they could speak later on in the meeting following agenda item 8.2. This was agreed by the Chairman.

**22/07/05 To receive reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor and to receive the Police Reports**

Cllr Harvey reported on various issues including Sunnica, West Suffolk Local Plan, County Lines. Cllr Harvey also confirmed that the SDRs (Sensor Data Recorders) were installed on 13<sup>th</sup> July and will be removed on 21<sup>st</sup> July. A member of the public asked why more of these have not be installed, Cllr Harvey confirmed that these had been placed strategically to record the type and volume off traffic travelling through the village. Cllr Stanbury reported on the Highways issue other the county and that the key to prevent these issues is to firstly obtain the data.

**22/07/06 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were proposed and agreed as being a true record of the meeting held.

**22/07/07 Matters arising from the Minutes not covered in the agenda**

None

**22/07/08 Planning:**

8.1 To consider any planning applications:

DC/22/0761/FUL – one dwelling and new vehicular access at land north of Horseshoe Barn, Mortimer Lane, Freckenham

It was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council has no objections to the application.

DC/22/1073/FUL – conversion of barns to two dwellings, change of use of agricultural land to residential garden and associated external works at Hall Farm Church Lane, Freckenham

It was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council has no objections to the application.

DC/22/1187/TCA – fell one Ash tree in a conservation area at White House Farm, North Street, Freckenham

It was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council has no objections to the application.

To note applications pending and determined:

Pending-

DC22/0532/HH and DC/22/0533/LB – two sash windows to front elevation, b) part garage conversion into habitable rooms with two rooflights and replacement flat roof at The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Freckenham. – *pending at 3.7.22*

DC/21/1621/HYB - hybrid planning application - a. proposed 70 kilometre pipeline and associated above ground infrastructure at Gazeley, Isleham and Woodditton; b. Outline planning application - for above ground infrastructure at Bexwell, Kentford, Lady's Green and Rede with all matters reserved except for access at land required For Bexwell To Bury St Edmunds Anglian Water Pipeline For Anglian Water, Moulton Road, Gazeley. – *pending at 3.7.22*

Decided-

DC/22/0491/HH – single storey side extension at 20 North Street, Freckenham, IP28 8HY –*approved on 27.5.22*

## 8.2 West Suffolk Local Plan

West Suffolk Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18) consultation began on Thursday 26 May and ends 5pm Tuesday 26 July 2022.

Site WS085, (site 1 as per the NH Plan) land North of Fordham Road by Grange Farm has been included as 'preferred option' in the draft local plan for 10 dwellings.

Cllr Cornell read out the following:

1 - West Suffolk Council is currently consulting on the "Preferred Options" of their Local Plan. Consultation ends on 26 July. Following this round of consultation, the Council will review comments they receive and prepare their final draft Local Plan, which is expected to be published for consultation in mid-2023.

2 - For Freckenham, the consultation document designates the village as a "Type-A" village, based on the level of services and facilities and access to larger centres. Type-A villages are fourth in the hierarchy of settlements behind Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres.

3 - A primary function of the Local Plan is to identify the amount and location of housing growth over the lifetime of the Plan, which in this case is to 2040. Type-A villages are proposed to have 1.3% of the planned growth which, in villages where allocations are made, amounts to between 10 and 15 dwellings.

Freckenham implications

4 - The Local Plan consultation document proposes a site of 0.6 hectares at Grange Farm on Fordham Road for 10 dwellings.

5 - In coming to their preferred site, the Council has dismissed a number of other sites that have been put to them by landowners. The only other sites that they considered might be suitable are:

- i. Land opposite the Village Hall, Fordham Road
- ii. Land at Millfield Fordham Road
- iii. Land adjacent to Freckenham House, Mildenhall Road/Elms Road
- iv. Land between North Street and Mildenhall Road

Freckenham Neighbourhood Plan

6 - The Neighbourhood Plan has to be prepared to be in accordance with the Local Plan for the area. As such, if there is an objection to the amount of housing or allocated sites, then this must be tackled through the Local Plan process and not by preparing a neighbourhood plan that says something different. The Neighbourhood Plan would not be allowed to proceed to parish referendum if, for example, it made provision for less housing.

7 - In the work undertaken to-date in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there has always been an anticipation that some additional housing development would be needed during the period to 2040.

8 - The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey in 2019 identified that, of those residents that would support more housing, most preferred 10 or less to be built.

9 - The Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee has previously carried out a "call-for-sites" to locally identify any sites that might be suitable for development. 16 possible sites were put forward and these were independently assessed for their suitability.

10 - In September 2020 residents were asked to express their preference for sites based on the outcome of the independent assessment. The three most preferred sites were, in order of support:

- i. Meadcroft and Millfield, south of Fordham Road
- ii. Opposite the Village Hall, Fordham Road
- iii. South of Mildenhall Road

It should be noted that the independent assessment did not score the site south of Mildenhall

Road as well in terms of suitability as the other two preferred sites.

11 - Since the consultation in September 2020, the Sub-Committee has been awaiting the publication of the draft Local Plan to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to be inline with it and succeed at independent examination. Further work to assess the availability of the three preferred sites (identified above) has been ongoing, particularly given that the sites are larger than would likely to be required to meet the West Suffolk minimum housing requirements. The key would be what would happen to the remainder of each site.

Community Consultation

12 - The publication of the Preferred Options Local Plan has provided the Sub-Committee the opportunity to test West Suffolk's preferred site against the previous three shortlisted sites.

13 - In order to help inform a response to the Local Plan consultation, a leaflet was prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee and distributed to every house, and a well-attended drop-in event was held at the Village Hall on 2 July. Residents were asked

i. "What are your thoughts on the number of houses (10) proposed by West Suffolk Council?" and

ii. To rank the four sites in order of preference. These sites were:

1. Grange Farm, Fordham Road
2. Evergreen Stables/Millfield, Fordham Road
3. Opposite Village Hall, Fordham Road
4. South of Mildenhall Road

14 - Some 259 responses were received when the online survey closed at midnight on Sunday 10 July, suggesting that 72% of residents have responded, or 88% of residents aged 18 or over. Most comments were submitted online with a few paper responses being received at the drop-in event or by returning the survey on the leaflet.

15 - The survey was anonymous, but it is known that a small percentage of online responses were multiple submissions (4 or more) from the same internet IP address. It is not considered that the multiple responses have significantly swayed the results.

16 - In terms of the amount of housing proposed:

- i. 46.3% thought that 10 was too many;
- ii. 50.2% thought that 10 was about right; and
- iii. 3.5% thought it was not enough

17 - In terms of identifying the preferred site, the ranking for the first preference resulted in the following votes:

- i. South of Mildenhall Road – 100
- ii. Opposite the Village Hall – 97
- iii. Millfield – 40
- iv. Grange Farm – 22

18 - When first and second preferences are added, the results show:

- i. South of Mildenhall Road – 192
- ii. Opposite the Village Hall – 158
- iii. Millfield – 111
- iv. Grange Farm – 57

19 - These results are at variance with the September 2020 Neighbourhood Plan consultation when the Mildenhall Road site was third in order of preference.

The Way Forward

20 - The Parish Council, along with all residents, has the opportunity to submit comments to West Suffolk Council by 26 July.

21 - The Parish Council should consider submitting comments on:

- i. The classification of Freckenham as a Type-A village
- ii. The amount of housing proposed in the village to 2040
- iii. The preferred site

22 - Village Classification: Having considered the basis for the determination of the village classification, Freckenham is comparable with the other Type-A settlements in the level of services and facilities that residents have access to. There does not appear to be any grounds to seek a change to the designation, either upwards or down.

23 - Amount of Housing: There is no overwhelming show of support for the amount of housing proposed in Freckenham, and the number of residents supporting 10 additional homes by

2040 is close to those that consider this is too many. The Parish Council might consider reflecting the results of this survey in its response to West Suffolk Council.

24 - Preferred Site: It is clear that the site proposed by West Suffolk Council has little support from residents. Only 8.5% supported the site as their first choice. It is also understood that Suffolk County Council, the owners of Grange Farm, are likely to object to the development of the site given that it has recently been re-tenanted. Residents' preferred site, south of Mildenhall Road, has previously been ruled out by West Suffolk Council as it does not adjoin the current Local Plan Settlement Boundary.

25 - Based on West Suffolk Council's own assessment of sites, the only ones considered above that they might accept are at Millfield, south of Fordham Road and opposite the Village Hall. Of the two, residents have favoured the site opposite the Village Hall in the most recent consultation.

The Neighbourhood Plan

26 - It had always been the intention that the Neighbourhood Plan would identify a site for housing, perhaps rather than West Suffolk Council taking the decision. Clearly at this stage the District Council is intending to take that decision.

27 - Given the uncertainty over the preferred site, it will be necessary for the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee to consider the way forward and have further discussions with West Suffolk Council as to the form and content of the Plan. There is no compelling requirement in neighbourhood planning regulations for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate a housing site when the need is addressed in a Local Plan, but the West Suffolk approach does take away the opportunity to decide locally. The Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee will seek to meet with West Suffolk Council at the earliest possible opportunity to seek guidance on the way forward.

Conclusion

28 - It is suggested that the Parish Council submits comments on the West Suffolk Local Plan on the basis that:

- i. The designation as a Type-A Settlement is supported
- ii. There is no overwhelming support amongst residents for 10 additional dwellings in Freckenham
- iii. That the preferred site at Grange Farm is not supported and that consideration should be given to residents' preferences, as expressed in the recent consultation, in respect of identifying a suitable and deliverable site for Freckenham.
- iv. That an early meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee and West Suffolk Council Local Plan officers is sought to agree an acceptable way forward.

A member of the public asked why WSC had included Grange Farm if that wasn't an option originally. Nick Woolley responded stating that they had only been made aware that this site was West Suffolk's preferred site in April, just a couple of days before a meeting with West Suffolk planners. Nick told West Suffolk Council planners that this site was deemed not suitable, and that this is backed up by external assessments appointed by the Neighbourhood Plan committee. Nick confirmed that West Suffolk planners knew these assessments had been carried out but they did not consult the Neighbourhood Plan committee. The Urban Vision Assessment detailed that this sites visual sensitivity is very high and any change on this site could be seen from a long distance in many directions. Nick confirmed to resolve this then an urgent meeting would need to be arranged with West Suffolk's planners.

A member of the public voiced their concerns that the two sites (Grange Farm and Fordham Road) were owned by WSC. It was confirmed that the sites were owned by SCC not WSC.

A members of the public asked what site will Parish Council back. Cllr Cornell responded that the Parish Council will propose the site on Mildenhall Road, as this is the residents preferred site and at the meeting with the planners will confirm that the Parish Council do not want to see Grange Lane developed.

Cllr Harvey reported on the purpose of the consultation including that the planners want feedback form sites included and excluded and that the West Suffolk Plan would work alongside a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Harvey also reported that Freckenham had been included as a type A village and he thought that this should be included as a type B village, the same as Worlington to prevent overdevelopment.

Members of the public voiced their concerns that the information regarding the Neighbourhood Plan is confusing and some points may have been persuasive.

The Parish Council agreed to arrange a meeting with West Suffolk planners to state that Grange Farm was not an appropriate site for development. This was supported by a recent village survey, together with the independent assessments carried out by the NH Plan.

The Parish Council, Parishioners and Neighbourhood Plan committee believe the site 7 (as per NH Plan) South of Mildenhall Road should be included for development.

This site has the full support of residents which was confirmed during a recent drop in event and survey held in July 2022 again supported by the NH Plan.

8.3 Neighbourhood Plan

A member of the public asked what the timeline of the plan is.

The clerk confirmed she would obtain this and update the Parish Council website.

8.4 Sunnica Proposal

Sunnica are holding a preliminary meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022, at Bedford Lodge, Newmarket. Cllr Cornell and Tucker will attend the meeting but will not speak at the meeting.

Following the preliminary meeting there will be two types of hearings; Open floor hearing on 28<sup>th</sup> July and an Issue Specific hearing.

**22/07/09 Recreation Ground and other assets:**

9.1 Playground/Recreation Ground Report

Cllr Cornell reported on the increase of dog fouling, it was suggested that cameras could be installed along with a sign stating cameras were in use.

Cllr Cornell also reported that nettles and weeds are encroaching the footpath from the bridge to the playing field.

9.2 Update on grass cutting

Cllr Cornell reported that this would be cut this week.

Cllr Harvey asked about the grass cutting issue on North Street, with cars being covered in cuttings.

Cllr Harvey asked for photos if this occurs again.

9.3 Any other matters

Cllr Tucker reported that the light from a street unit was being partially blocked by a tree.

The clerk to determine if this is a SCC or Parish Council unit once Cllr Tucker provides the unit number.

**22/07/10 Highways Inspection**

Cllr King reported on his concerns on the lorry traffic building up on Elms Road and parking on North Street.

Cllr Harvey suggested waiting on the results of the SDRs to determine the traffic type and volume travelling through the village.

**22/07/11 Chippenham Road Wall**

Cllr Cornell reported that the work has yet to begin and she continues to chase Flagship Housing.

**22/07/12 SALC, to confirm the date of the next local area meeting**

The next 2022 local area forums for West Suffolk will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> September with the last one being held on 15<sup>th</sup> March. The meetings will continue to be held remotely.

**22/07/13 West Suffolk District Council Town & Parish Forum, to confirm the date of the next meeting**

Cllr Harvey reported that no date has been confirmed but it is likely that it will be after the comments on the Local Plan have been reviewed.

**22/07/14 Financial Matters:**

14.1 To approve any quotes received

None to consider

14.2 To confirm payment of invoices

The following expenses were approved or payment:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Q no.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Jadi Coe	Clerk salary	NA	1,010.00
Jadi Coe	Clerk expenses	NA	28.72
HMRC	Clerk PAYE and NI	NA	90.00
Suffolk Cloud	Website hosting	NA	120.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,248.72</b>

14.3 To consider any invoices received after the agenda was issued –

<u>Name</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Q no.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Cllr S Cornell	Food for Jubilee BBQ	NA	142.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>142.00</b>

14.4 Clerk to update on bank balances held

The clerk reported the following:

Deposit account on 18<sup>th</sup> May (latest statement date) £30,831.34

Current account on 26<sup>th</sup> May (latest statement date) £763.23

**22/07/15 Working Groups Report:**

15.1 Circular Walk

It was reported that this is overgrown. The clerk to inform SCC.

15.2 Emergency Plan

No update

15.3 Defibrillator monthly check report

The volunteer who carries out monthly checks had reported everything is as it should be.

15.3 Community Speedwatch

Cllr Cornell reported that no check had recently been carried out due to various reasons including holidays and illness. More volunteers are required.

**22/07/16 Correspondence Received:**

None

**22/07/17 Letting of woodland to the East and West of North Street**

As agreed at the May meeting the clerk asked Suffolk County Council whether they would consider one of the following options:

1. £5 per annum rent, and the PC would carry out all maintenance work or
2. £521 per annum rent, but SCC must bring the area up to a maintainable state including ensuring it is a safe area for members of the public.

Cllr Cornell also confirmed she was trying to get two footpaths reinstated including that from Isleham to North Street.

**22/07/18 Adopt Members Code of contact**

SALC have updated the Councillor Code of Conduct. The new Code of Conduct was adopted by Freckenham Parish Council.

**22/07/19 Parish Council clerk Facebook Profile**

It was agreed that the clerk would set up a profile as the clerk to post updates on the Freckenham pages.

**22/07/20 Report celebrations for the Queens Platinum Jubilee**

It was reported that on Saturday £300 was raised with £100 going to the Village Hall, MacMillan, and the Church and that Sunday was a wash out due to the weather.

**22/07/21 Update on the re-printing of the book, Manor of Freckenham**

No update. Cllr Cornell to get information from previous councillor to take this forward.

**22/07/22 Parish Pump**

Shores Charity have asked if a small panel providing information about the Shores Charity Christmas Gift can go into the Parish Pump at no cost as previously agreed.

It was agreed that they could do this at no charge.

**22/07/23 Urgent Business:**

None

**The meeting closed at 8:57pm**

*Jadi Coe*

*Clerk to the Council*

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