

# DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on  
**Monday 29th April 2019**

**Present:** Cllrs Cousins, Hembra, Moss, Schofield, Thurlow, Youngs

**Attending:** Parish Clerk Mrs Hilary Workman

19.04.E01 **Noted:**  
Apologies received from Cllr Lambert

19.04.E02 **Noted:**  
That there were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items and no additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

19.04.E03 **Noted:**  
That there was no correspondence to the meeting not dealt with as an agenda item.

19.04.E04 **Noted:**  
That when public comment or question was invited on any agenda item, there were none.

19.04.E05 **Noted:**  
Planning applications as notified by MSDC for comment:

E5.1 **DC/19/01715** – Planning Application – Erection of 1 No. Dwelling  
Land South East of Greyfriars, Rattlesden Road, Drinkstone, Suffolk

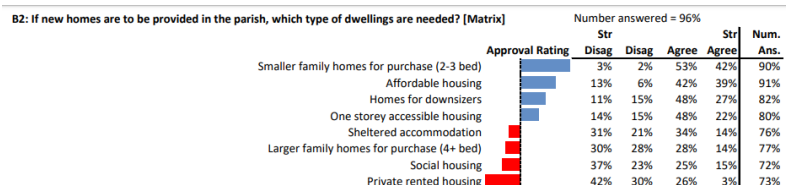
Whilst it is acknowledged that the site [~~Delete: identified had been included in~~] [*Insert: had been suggested as a possible development site for inclusion in*] the Draft Neighbourhood Plan [*Insert: process*] [~~Delete: for development~~], Councillors determined to object to the application for the following reasons:

### Need/Demand for housing

The building of a 6 bedroom dwelling goes against the wishes of the community as expressed in the emerging neighbourhood plan, and housing needs survey. The preference and need is for smaller 2 or 3 bedroom houses for young people or downsizers.

In Section B (Your views on housing development in the village) in the [Village Survey Results](#) (which formed part of the initial consultation with local residents on the Neighbourhood Plan currently being developed), respondents were asked in Question B2 which type of dwellings were needed if new homes were to be developed in the village. Agreement, or Strong Agreement with the following types of dwelling were:

- Smaller family homes for purchase (2-3 bed) 95%
- Affordable housing 81%
- Homes for downsizers 75%
  - Larger family homes for purchase 42%



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**Dated:** 13<sup>th</sup> April 2019

The Parish Council challenges the assertion that pre-application advice, the draft development plan and opinions of local residents led the applicant to believe that a single dwelling on the site would be preferable.

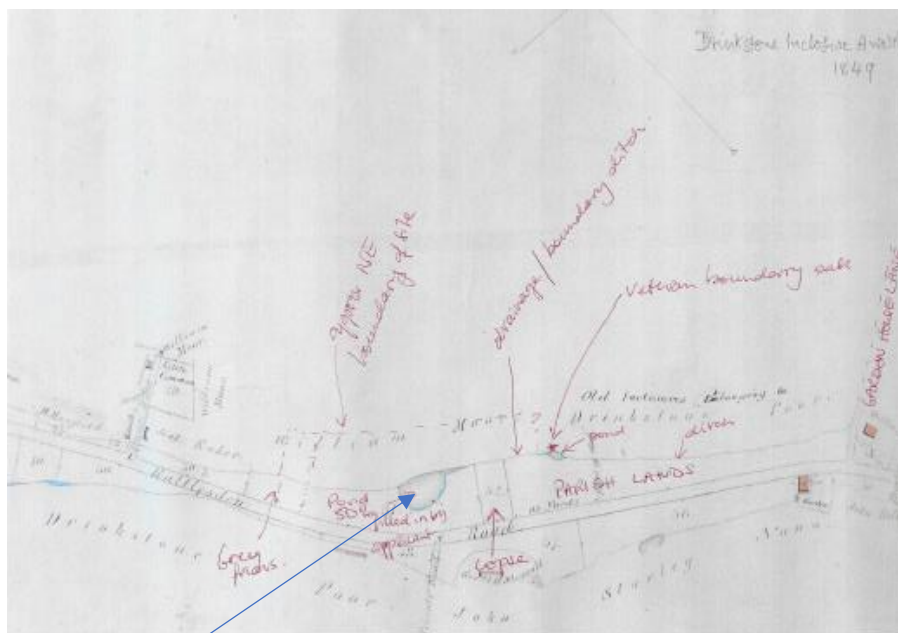
### Layout and use of the site

The Parish Council has identified a number of inaccuracies on the site plan submitted and statements made within the application form, which cause it to doubt the validity of the site boundaries as shown on the site plan.

The red site boundary line extends south of the veteran oak in the SE corner of the site. There are no hedges between the veteran oak at the South East corner of the site and the copse to the north west on the applicant's side of the boundary, the hedges being instead situated on the west side of the boundary ditch and is on the parish land. It should also be noted that MSDC have confirmed that the veteran oak indicated is actually sited directly on the boundary line, and not within the applicants land.



The boundary is actually formed by a deep ditch which runs from Garden House Lane, directly abuts the veteran oak, runs behind the allotments and the adjacent copse and terminates at the pond on the applicant's site (n.b.. the ponds have not been included on the applicant's site plan, and in Section 11 of the application, the applicant did not identify the watercourse (ditch) which forms the southern boundary of the plot).



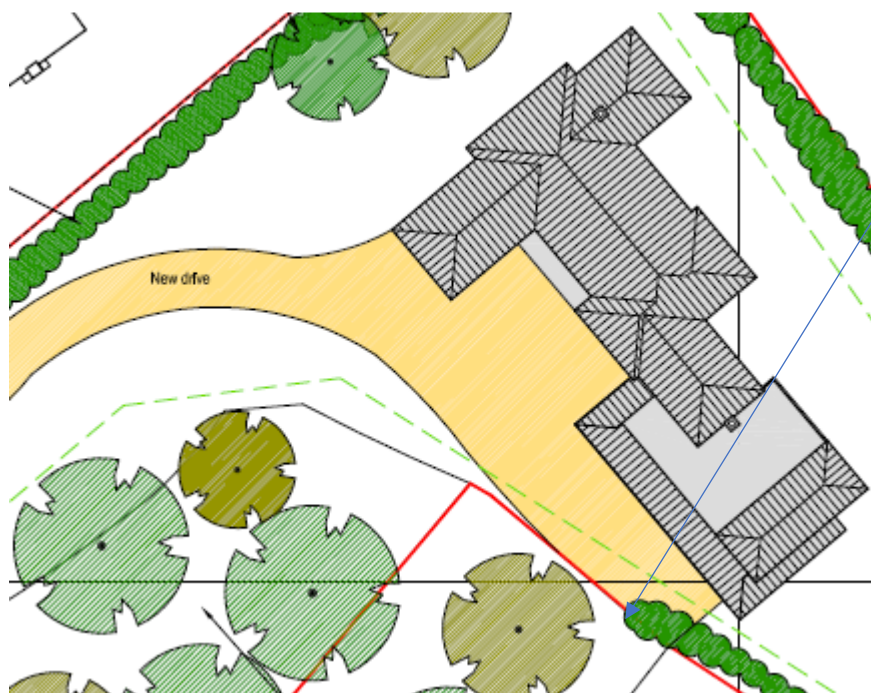
There is a seasonal pond on the site which is not shown on the site plan. This forms part of a natural land drainage system of some antiquity (it is shown in detail on the tithe map of 1842). If this drainage system is compromised by further filling in of the applicant's seasonal pond and any filling in of the boundary ditches, this would be likely to result in winter flooding of the neighbouring copse, and the parish lands including allotment lands, which lie some 2 – 3' lower than the applicant's land (nb, in Section 11 of the application the applicant did not identify that the proposal would increase the flood risk elsewhere, which the Parish Council

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believes to be the case). This drainage ditch became the boundary of the parish land and the adjacent copse upon enclosure in 1853.

According to the site plan, the driveway for the new property appears to lie over the boundary ditch, encroaching onto the area excluded from development in order to protect the root systems of existing trees.



To achieve this layout the boundary ditch would need to be filled in between the applicant's site and the copse. This will also lead to winter flooding on the parish lands. The Parish Council believes that the applicant would have a Riparian responsibility for the ditch which forms part of the boundary of the site (see [Suffolk County Council Guide for Riparian Ownership in Suffolk](#)) which places an obligation on landowners to let water flow onto and across their land without any obstruction to others. This requires that watercourses are maintained and protected, and that the land owner ensure that they are not compromised by any proposed development.

The Parish Council takes the view that the site cannot accommodate the construction of such a large dwelling and associated driveway and parking areas without compromising the health of the mature trees on the site and causing ongoing drainage problems for neighbouring lands. The site is naturally constrained by the presence of the drainage ditches on its southern boundary, the Copse, and the pond on the site.

The Parish Council further notes that in his application at Section 10, the applicant has indicated that there are no hedges or trees on land adjacent to the proposed development site which might be important as part of the local landscape character, which is not the case. There are trees adjacent to the proposed development (the veteran oak at the South East corner, the hedge on the west side of the boundary ditch, and the copse to the south).

## 2. Materials and design

[The Design Guidelines](#) produced by AECOM as part of the emerging neighbourhood plan give a good start in assessing whether this development is in character with its surroundings.

It is acknowledged that the proposal reflects the existing pattern of individual detached houses set well back front of the road behind hedges and screened by mature trees. The proposal fits well by and large, with hedge and tree planting, but the Parish Council are concerned that the proposed development is so large that there would not be sufficient room to the rear of the property to landscape. Such a lack of landscaping at the rear would, it believes, significantly impact on views towards the village from Footpaths 1 and 10. This

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development will be very prominent due to its scale and lack of landscaping at the rear. The size of the dwelling on this restricted site make any significant landscaping or tree planting at the rear of the property unfeasible.

The applicant is proposing to plant or reinstate hedging around the site, with native species or those of ecological value. This is to be commended, but the only planting to date has been partial laurel hedging on the road side to replace the native hedge the applicant removed. The Parish Council is concerned that planting and re-instatement of native hedges on site might not take place on completion of the development.

The applicant has already installed a hard standing beyond the green line indicated on the site plan, directly under the veteran oak. The Parish Council takes the view that this hard standing should be removed and the land under the oak returned to soil and natural grasses.

### 3. Building materials and surface treatment

The dwelling as proposed is red brick with a slate roof. Surrounding dwellings are mainly rendered with tiled roofs. The only other building in the village using this combination of materials is the Grade II listed 18C rectory 2 miles away. See the AECOM report page 33 for examples of typical materials predominantly used in Drinkstone.

The Parish Council takes the view that the proposed development does not harmonize with the adjacent properties, when considered in the context of the height, mass and general proportions of adjacent buildings. For example, the proposed development is about:

- 1.5 times as large as the neighbouring house currently under construction
- 6 times as large in floor area as the detached house next door but one and
- 12 times as large as the neighbouring bungalow

### 4. Other questions

No information is provided within the application on the type of heating system and fuel to be used, or on the energy efficiency measures to be incorporated in the design. The Parish Council refers to the Chancellor's spring statement, which stated that "to ensure consumer energy bills are low and homes are better for the environment, the government will introduce a Future Homes Standard by 2025, so that new build homes are future proofed with low carbon heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency". The application as submitted does not set out what energy and water conservation measures should be included in the design (e.g. ground/air source heat pumps, rainwater harvesting etc.)

### 5. Further conditions in response to neighbours' concerns which we might wish to consider

The Parish Council asks that should the application be granted, the following conditions be attached to control the environment during the development phase.

1. No floodlighting should be allowed during construction.  
*(This has been and continues to be a source of annoyance and nuisance to local residents throughout the construction of the adjoining dwelling)*
2. No Sunday working should be permitted or working between the hours of 19.30 and 07.30.  
*This has been a nuisance to neighbours during the construction of the adjoining property by the same applicant)*
3. All material excavated during the construction of the property should be removed from the site, and should not be disposed of by further filling in of ponds or ditches.  
*(The applicant has already reduced his pond by 50%, by filling it with excavated material from his current build).*
4. There should be no storage of materials, or excavations carried out, within the canopy spread of the veteran oak beside the allotment pond.  
*(Currently there is a temporary dwelling and hard standing for construction machinery directly under the tree. These should be removed and the ground made good. This area, the copse and the pond should be fenced off with a substantial post and wire or post rail fence before any work commences on the site)*

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5. The pond and ditch should be retained as a condition of approval.
6. A revised landscaping scheme should be submitted and approved to include a tree belt of native trees along the NE boundary of the site to screen the development at the rear.  
*(This will make the development fit better with the built character of this part of the village where dwellings are screened from the front and the rear by trees and hedges, making them less intrusive into the wider landscape).*
7. The old hedges along the road edge, removed by the applicant, should be reinstated with native species, and the current replanting with laurel should be removed.  
*(This will be in character with the predominant type of hedging and preserve the streetscape of Rattlesden Road).*
8. A Tree Preservation Order should be granted for the veteran Oak at the South East boundary of the property.  
*(There is a risk that the tree would be subject in future to inappropriate cutting back of overhanging branches in order to increase the light onto this private space. There is also currently a temporary dwelling structure under tree and hardstanding for parking construction vehicles, even though the plans in the application shows that this area will be preserved from intrusion during any new development).*

- 19.04.E06      **Resolved:**  
**That Drinkstone Parish Council make known to the Corporate Manager, Growth & Sustainable Planning, at Mid Suffolk District Council its views on the Planning application on this agenda.**
- 19.04.E07      **Noted:**  
That when any Public Comment or Questions on any matter of Council business was invited, there were none.
- 19.04.E08      **Noted:**  
That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited there was none.
- 19.04.E09      **Noted:**  
That the scheduled date for the next meeting was Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 beginning at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.
- 19.04.E10      **Noted:**  
The meeting closed at 9:04pm.

**Signed:**                      Daphne Youngs

**Dated:** 13<sup>th</sup> April 2019