

Wigginton Parish Council

The Old School, Mill Lane, Wigginton, York YO32 2PU

Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Meeting of Wigginton Parish Council, held virtually on Thursday 4th February 2021, starting at 19.00

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs Gates (Chairman), Denton, Edwards, Finch, Lakey, Leaf, Runciman, Spence and Vaughan.

In attendance: Ward Councillors Cuthbertson and Pearson, Mr Parish, 3 members of the public and the Clerk

20/E1 Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He set out the procedure for the virtual meeting and explained that the meeting would be recorded.

20/E2 Apologies for absence

It was RESOLVED unanimously to approve Cllr Wreglesworth's reason for absence. Cllr Spence apologised for having to leave at 19:30.

20/E3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

20/E4 Planning

1. To consider a response to the following planning applications:-

a) 20/02376/FULM – Land to rear of Moor House Narrow Lane. Change of use from agricultural land to pre-historic recreation and education centre, erection of replica Iron Age Round Houses, Neolithic Long House and Long Barrow, replica Stonehenge and visitor facilities including coach parking, toilets and café.

It was RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting to allow for public participation.

The applicant, Mr Parish, gave a presentation regarding his plans for a prehistoric recreation and education centre. The 8.5 acre site is to be divided into 4 stages of British prehistory from 9000BC with replicas of prehistoric buildings. Local residents and schools will be invited to help in the creation of the site using traditional methods and building materials. Traditional British trees will provide screening, a wetland will be created and willow and ash copses, a cereal crop is envisaged to be grown for food and thatching, and fruit and vegetables will be grown on site. Ancient breeds of farm animals will be kept on site. Solar panels are planned to provide power and rainwater will be collected for gardening and farming. The University of York supports the proposal as a facility for experimental archaeology.

Key points arising from Members' questions to the applicant included:

- The site will be open to school groups during the week and to the wider public in the weekend with slots having to be booked in advance. In addition to this, the site would also offer workshops in prehistoric crafts.
- The scheme will be funded by the applicant and would take several years to create. It could potentially open when one of four stages of prehistory is complete.
- The site would be open from April to November to avoid the wettest season.
- The car park surface would be gravelled to facilitate drainage. The car park had been designed to accommodate two coaches.
- Concerns were raised about the safety of traffic leaving or entering Narrow Lane from Sutton Road.
- In response to a question whether a bus service would service the site, Mr Parish explained that a City Centre survey had been carried out that found that most people would arrive by car. The bus stop nearest the site is on Corban Lane but there is no suitable and safe pedestrian route from it to the site.

-Other questions related to the access along Narrow Lane and the lack of passing place. Mr Parish said that the transport statement has overestimated the number of visitors and the numbers were most likely half of these forecasts. A transport update is still awaited and once it arrives, a copy will be sent to the Parish Council.

-Further questions related to the connection of the scheme to Wigginton. The applicant responded that the replicas would be based on Yorkshire examples. No replica Stonehenge was envisaged. Unfortunately, no archaeological finds had been made on site. The site's working name is Wichestun, the old name for Wigginton. At this time Cllr Spence left.

-A member of the public asked for confirmation that no café was intended to be on site and the applicant confirmed this.

Ward Councillor Cuthbertson. Cllr Cuthbertson said that he had met the applicant on site during initial discussion and at that point the site was envisaged to be purely for educational use. Despite the emphasis changing from use by school groups to also admitting members of the public, the scheme was still felt to be imaginative. Nevertheless, Cllr Cuthbertson raised that some issues need to be addressed. The issues raised were the need for visibility splays from Narrow Lane onto the busy Sutton Road, upgrading the condition of Narrow Lane, the requirement for a passing place, sufficient to let a coach pass, as well as dealing with the access into the field and the impact on the amenity of neighbours by weekend opening. The applicant responded that if it would become a requirement, he would be content to widen and pave the access junction with Sutton Road. He would also be agreeable to half the visitor numbers at the weekend. A member of the public raised that questions remain regarding ownership of the lane.

The public participation was closed and the meeting resumed.

The Chairman mentioned that the Planning Portal contained a number of internal responses from officers and he mentioned in particular comments from the Network Management. Members felt that any substantive consultation response in favour or in objection of the proposals was premature until the additional transport statement had been received.

It was RESOLVED that the Council would submit an initial response that it is generally supportive of the project but that it has concerns about access and the roadway as outlined in the email by Emma Leonard of Network Management dated 22 January 2021.

20/E5 To ratify delegated decisions made between meetings:-

It was RESOLVED to confirm the delegated decision to accept a quotation for emergency works to the pond for £620 plus VAT.

20/E6 Financial Matters and Governance

1. To approve the payments in Appendix 3.

The approval of payments was deferred to the February meeting.

20/E7 To confirm the date of the next virtual Parish Council meeting

It was confirmed that the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting would be held on zoom on Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 7pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 19:44