

Shouldham Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the above-named Parish Council held on Monday 6 August 2018 at Shouldham Village Hall

Present

Parish Councillors:

Angela Caley (Chairman), Adele Berryman, Geoff Hipperson, Paul Gascoyne, Keith Matthews and Nigel Walsh
Parish Clerk – Zoe Bevan

Cllr Brian Long and Mike Hurley from Sibelco UK Ltd

Approx 100 members of the public in attendance.

58/18 Accept Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Kevin Carter. Cllr Tom Nickerson was absent.

59/18 Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items

None.

60/18 Norfolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan Review

Mr Hurley gave a talk regarding the sand resource lying in Marham Parish and partly in Shouldham Parish. He advised that if the Secretary of State approved these preferred sites, as detailed in the Draft Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan, then Leziate Quarry would be the company managing the extraction. Sibelco is a global material solutions company which was founded in 1872 and the Silica sand deposits would be used in the manufacturing of glass and glass related products.

Leziate Quarry currently transports 850K tonnes of sand per year via rail link and operates twelve trains a week. The Quarry has eight to ten years reserves of materials left and Norfolk County Council has a duty from Central Government to identify new sites. The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan is reviewed on a five-yearly basis and can take ten to fifteen years to process and adopt each time. As reserves are low, new sites are constantly being sought and investigated for future planning provision.

The current proposals are a mid-term plan of the current adopted Plan, which runs to 2026, with the intention of adding sites and extending the plan to 2036. The sand in Marham and Shouldham is of very high quality and could produce 15-16m tonnes, hence these currently being preferred option sites in Norfolk. It was envisaged that, subject to the consultation and planning process, the mineral extraction would commence in 2027.

The sand in this area is 8-16m deep and the water table is high so the sand would need to be dredged electronically prior to being processed and despatched at Leziate. It was likely a maximum of three pipes would need to be laid to and from Leziate; overground piping was preferred and each pipe would be approximately 8km long. Expert assessments were only undertaken when sites were approved; it would be at this stage that the routes to and from Marham and Shouldham would be designated and approved in accordance with the National Planning Framework process.

The proposed extraction sites had already been drilled with the landowners' permissions; their subsequent approvals and lawful lease arrangements would also need to be provided prior to any planning applications being made.

The Chairman then opened the meeting to a question and answer forum to enable members of the public to express their views and obtain further information. Questions and issues from the floor were raised as follows:

- It was felt there was a general lack of information as the initial survey work had commenced in 2015.
- Concern was expressed about the potential health hazards of silica sand in connection with levels of dust. Mr Hurley advised that the sand would be extracted using water dredging and pumping which should reduce levels of dust to a minimum. Mr Hurley also referred people to the HSE for further data on health issues.
- Mr Hurley was asked if he could guarantee that no sand would be used for fracking. He responded that the sand was intended primarily for glass making but he could not give guarantees.
- Cllr Long confirmed that there would be conditions imposed regarding reinstatement of the quarry if the scheme reached planning stage. There was understandable concern about the loss of landscape which would be obtrusive and detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.
- Cllr Long sought to reassure everyone that all relevant issues would be considered at the planning stage – if indeed the scheme actually reached the Planning Committee in due course.
- There was a request for the initial consultation date of 13 August to be extended to enable more people to make their individual representations. Cllr Long undertook to liaise with Cllr Graham Middleton and the Planning Department about whether this was possible as a matter of utmost urgency.
- Concerns were raised about the timing of the consultation – why had it been scheduled in the middle of the main holiday period? There was obvious suspicion and mistrust as a result of this timing.
- Questions were asked about the impact on groundwater levels in the area. Mr Hurley confirmed that the water used in the extraction and transportation process would be recirculated and therefore would have no effect.
- Cllr Walsh asked what infrastructure would be needed. Mr Hurley confirmed that the process would require a lake and dredger. The top level of clay would be removed and held on site. On site trucks would therefore be required several times a year in order to expand the area of dredging.
- Mr Hurley was asked about the plant's operational hours. He advised it was likely to be 0700-1800hrs Monday-Friday with 24hr operation of the electric dredger.
- Questions were raised about the pipeline route and structure. Mr Hurley advised that no route had yet been considered but it would be in the region of 9km in length, with a total of 3 pipes each of 200mm in diameter, laid over and underground.
- A member of the public asked whether the silica sand extracted could be used for fracking. Mr Hurley replied that the sand was intended for glass production and Cllr Long advised that material usage was not a planning consideration.
- When asked, Mr Hurley confirmed that Sibelco did not own any of the land under consideration for sand extraction.
- There was consensus that Shouldham and Marham communities should collaborate on this consultation. Marham Parish Council are to hold another meeting on Wednesday, 3 October at 7.30pm in Marham Village Hall.
- Finally, everyone was urged to make their own individual representation on the proposals.

The Q&A forum drew to a close at 9pm.

The agreed Parish Council response to Norfolk County Council was as follows:

It was agreed to submit a response to Norfolk County Council with the following reservations/observations:

- The loss of landscape and amenity would be obtrusive and detrimental to the visual amenity of the area as a whole.
- Concern about what will happen to the quarry sites afterwards – will the landscape be restored sympathetically?
- What will the impact of the dredging lakes be in the area – particularly regarding the attraction of birds to the area and the potential for bird strikes on aircraft from RAF Marham?
- Impact of the construction of site infrastructure such as pipelines and access roads.
- Potential for heavy road traffic and the construction of access roads and routes.
- Dust and noise from the extraction area – and its potential health impact.
- Light pollution in the area.
- Impact on listed buildings/monuments in the area.
- Destruction of habitat and SSI's, together with the impact on wildlife.

61/18 Planning Applications Received

18/00058/TPO – 9 Hallfields, Shouldham – Lime Tree - reduce height by 2m, thin crown – It was noted that this work had been approved.

62/18 Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service – Consultation

The Parish Council did not agree with proposals for the Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service to report to the Police Commissioner as the services had vastly differing priorities and responsibilities. Parish Clerk to ensure this view was fed back into the current consultation.

63/18 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 17 September 2018 at 7.30pm in Shouldham Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.32pm

Chairman

Date

Zoe Bevan, Parish Clerk

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<http://shouldhampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>