

Great Ellingham Parish Council
Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council
held at the recreation centre on Wednesday 17 February 2016 at 7.30pm.

In Attendance: Cllr T Betts (Chairman) Cllr T Getley, Cllr S Banks, Cllr J May, Cllr S Mellor, Cllr N Perkins, Cllr D Simpson, Cllr G Snelling

Locum Clerk Anne Rayner
District Councillor Bill Smith
16 members of the public

Breckland Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Preferred Directions Consultation

The Chair gave an introduction of the format for the meeting and explained that the parish council had formed a working party to discuss the Local Plan Consultation. The key information within the plan and also the parish council's recommendations would be shown in the form of a presentation. Key points included within this were:

- 14925 new dwellings are needed throughout the District.
- The majority will be in the market towns and the 14 local service centres (of which Great Ellingham is one).
- Breckland propose that Great Ellingham have 187 new build properties between 2011 and 2036.
- The working party proposes that the settlement boundary be amended to include only land put forward for development which lies to the south of the B1077.
- Members of the public were asked to consider areas of land put forward by landowners for potential residential development and indicate on paperwork provided whether or not they agreed with the area being developed.
- The working party identified plot 15 as a potential area for a sheltered housing development.
- The parish council believes a 40mph limit should begin at the junction of Attleborough Rd, Little Ellingham.
- Also, should plot 19 be developed, the 30mph zone should be extended.
- Concerns over the proposed link road, which would have an impact on traffic in the village.
- Breckland Sustainable Development Policy – Conflicts with the proposal to have 187 new properties, given the lack of public transport, health care facilities and school provision.
- Breckland Locational Strategy – Serious consideration must be given to the issues in Attleborough including – traffic issues, lack of parking, strain on health facilities and the dentist is no longer taking new NHS patients. The parish council have supported 40 new home applications in the last two years. These have mainly been through small developments. Limited opportunities remain for further small developments so, if a larger development is needed, the parish council's preferred option would be plot 19. An area of open space would be required as part of any development.
- Breckland Level and Location of Growth – the parish council strongly feel there are several anomalies within this section of the plan. One striking issue is the planned number of houses planned for Great Ellingham (170) and Old Buckenham (0) – given that both villages are service centres. Thetford also have a zero allocation.

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- Breckland Affordable Housing – The parish council would prefer to see the number of houses as a trigger for affordable housing raised to 10, as it felt the current level of five is turning developers away from small developments. Developments of between five and 10 should require a commuted sum to be paid.
- Breckland Non- Statutory Heritage Assets – The parish council is concerned about the possible development of plots nine, 16, 17 and 20. All are close to the site where 85 graves were discovered in 2011 – the largest excavated Anglo Roman burial site in Norfolk.
- Breckland Renewable Energy Development – Whilst the parish council agree with the policy, consideration must be given to the extra heavy traffic needed to supply the Biogas plant.
- Breckland Developer Contributions – The parish council believe that S106 agreements should be formally agreed before planning permission is granted and parish council's should be signatories on the agreements.
- Breckland Sustainable Transport Network – Appears to be in direct conflict with the amount of new houses proposed and the current public transport provision.
- Breckland Design – Whilst the parish council agree with this policy, it is imperative that the village accepts no further street lighting, in order to maintain the "dark sky" status.
- Breckland Principle of New Housing – A staggered process of development would be preferred, as the proposed number of houses are over a 20 year period.
- Breckland Community Facilities – An area of open space is necessary. If plot 19 is developed the open space would need to be at the western side of the field with access to Church Street, allowing safe pedestrian access to the open space from the centre of the village. No vehicular access is recommended from plot 19 to Church Street.

The Chair invited comments from member of the public. Main points raised by members of the public were as follows:

- It was asked why Great Ellingham has been designated as a service centre? The village has the same facilities as Rocklands so why is Great Ellingham a service centre and Rocklands not?
- District Councillor Smith advised that he believed the parish council made a mistake in supporting the planning application on the triangle of land between Long Street and Town Green. Cllr Smith understood the area had special designation as open space and by allowing it to be built on, the parish council have unlocked the door to unwanted development. The Chairman replied that he understood the land had no formal protection and had never been classified as open space, with which Cllr. Smith disagreed.
- A member of the public voiced their concern that the District Councillor is not supportive of the parish council, however, the Chair advised that Cllr Smith has always been supportive of the parish council, with a conflict of views only arising over this one particular issue. The ultimate decision over permission was with Breckland Council and they opted to approve the land for development.
- The issue of speeding in the village was raised again. It is widely agreed that the speed limits are generally not respected. A member of the public asked why police are not present more often, with speed guns, or why a permanent speed camera could not be obtained for the village. The Chair advised that police were in the village just last week with speed guns,

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however, they are under time and financial constraints, which limit the number of visits they can make. Speed cameras tend to be used on main roads only.

- Concern was raised over the potential development of plot 19. A member of the public raised the safety issue for children walking to school and asked that if it were developed, then appropriate pathways be included.
- It was suggested that the density of the housing be reduced, helping to retain the village feel. District Cllr Smith advised that, with reduced density comes increased cost, which is why this is not favoured by developers.
- In line with and at the same time as future development, it was suggested that major changes to Hingham Rd / Attleborough Rd be incorporated. The purpose being to link the two roads by crossing the field upon which Orbit Homes are hoping to build 80 homes. This would result in the part of Hingham Road next the village school becoming a cul-de-sac. Again, Cllr Smith advised that this was investigated several years ago and the cost was prohibitive, potentially running into the millions.
- District Cllr Smith also pointed out that, whilst it is accepted that many villages do not want additional housing, Breckland have been set housing targets by central Government which they must meet.
- The Chairman asked Cllr Smith if he thought 179 houses for Great Ellingham was acceptable and Cllr Smith responded that it was important to take into account that the development is proposed to happen over a twenty year period.
- Cllr Smith was asked about the difference between the suggested number of houses for Great Ellingham and Old Buckenham. Cllr Smith suggested that Great Ellingham's close proximity to Attleborough makes it stand out as suitable for development.
- A member of the public felt a fairer way to ensure all areas accepted their share of new development would be for every town and village to be given a percentage increase in their housing. If every town and village accepted a percentage increase, this would ensure the spread was fair and also appropriate to existing growth.
- It was suggested that with development does come a certain protection of amenities and facilities.
- A member of the public pointed out that the Church land near Glebe Meadow had previously been ruled out for development, due to the land being too wet.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and, there being no further comments, the meeting closed at 9pm.