

Worlabby Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the virtual extra ordinary meeting of Worlabby Parish Council held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 26th February, 2021 via a Zoom Platform.

Present: Cllr Bowles, Cllr Cave, Cllr Edwards, Cllr D Empson, Cllr N Empson, Cllr Newton (Chair), Cllr Speakman & Cllr Whitfield.

Also Present: Cllr N Sherwood, Cllr C Sherwood, Cllr Waltham, 35 residents (residents counted on logins to Zoom although in most cases there were more than 1 attendee to each login) & Deb Hotson – Clerk to the Council.

2102/17 Apologies for absence

All members present.

2102/18 Public Participation

Cllr Newton thanked all those attending stating the meeting had been called in response to concerns that have been raised on social media with regard to the pig farm located on Carr Lane. The Parish Council welcome the Ward Councillors and Mr Truelove who have offered to answer any questions raised by residents.

Cllr Newton read out the information that the Parish Council have received from NLC Planning Enforcement which is detailed below: -

- Any stipulation on the number of pigs that can be farmed intensively under planning policy is in relation to pigs that are housed in buildings only. There are no limits on outdoor farmed pigs under planning jurisdiction.
In this case, NLC was informed by the landowner that there is no use of the old poultry house for the purpose of raising pigs, it is empty. Therefore, as the pigs are farmed completely outside there is no requirement for planning permission or an Environmental Impact Assessment and there are no limits on numbers.
- Any stipulation on the distance that pigs must be kept from the curtilage of a protected building (i.e., a dwelling) is in relation to pigs that are housed in buildings only. There are no distance limits on outdoor farmed pigs under planning jurisdiction.
Again, as the pigs at Carr Lane are farmed completely outside there is no requirement for a set distance from dwellings which need to be assessed under a planning application or an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Concerns about mud on the highway and creation of accesses into nearby fields which the pigs are being transferred to.
Mud on the highway needs to be dealt with by the Police and the Highway Department at NLC, it is not a planning matter.
NLC did raise the point in a discussion with the landowner who acknowledged that the road is very muddy at present. This is due to a combination of recent poor weather and a carrot crop being taken from the land further along Carr Lane. NLC have been told that there is a road sweeping contract in place by the tenant farmer which is operational but due to the reasons mentioned there is an unprecedented amount of mud which is a temporary situation only and is being dealt with.
There is no creation of new field accesses. This is still being investigated and the Officer has been provided with details.
Some of the pigs are being moved to land off Bonby Road over the coming weeks as part of the land along Carr Lane has become very boggy.

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Hardcore/stone has been placed in existing field entrances to assist in farm machinery moving the animals on to the new areas of land. This is to reduce the amount of mud being carried onto Bonby Road. The accesses are not being improved/widened/created as permanent/formal entrances; they are merely being toughened to cope with movement of traffic in the short term. Planning permission will not be required for this work.

- **Land Drainage works**

A point to note and in an attempt to improve the situation for all, the landowner has undertaken and continues to improve the state of the land by carrying out extensive land drainage work. Planning permission is not required for this work.

NLC hope this covers the points that have been raised with the local planning authority. There are currently no breaches of planning that have taken place for which they can pursue further action.

There may well be other areas of legislation that cover some of the issues raised in relation to the number of animals and distance etc but not under the Town and Country Planning Act.

The following information was also sought. The Environmental Team at NLC will deal with any odour nuisance issues if they occur and the following link is useful: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nuisance-smells-how-councils-deal-with-complaints>. Any potential odour must "unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of a home or other premise".

Any future complaints can be made via environmental.health@northlincs.gov.uk.

The Animal Health Officer, Trading Standards will be carrying out an inspection on 16th March 2021. This will cover:

- Livestock welfare
- Animal movements (which must also be logged on a national database)
- Records and paperwork
- Feed hygiene

Cllr Newton asked that residents speak respectfully in the meeting.

The Clerk stated that residents wanting to speak will be taken in order. The following minutes will log all questions asked by those present and the answers/actions.

Resolved – to close the meeting.

Q. How many pigs will be on the site? How many piglets and how often will they give birth?

A. Mr Truelove said there will be 1200 breeding sows on the site. These are already present and there will be no additional ones coming to the site. Mr Truelove will find out approximately how many piglets per litter and how often.

Q. How many times a year will the piglets be taken from the site?

A. Mr Truelove said there will be no more than 3 artic HGV movements per week.

Q. Where will the pigs be loaded; will this be on Low Road?

A. Mr Truelove said the pigs and any deliveries will be carried out from the Carr Lane site.

Cllr Newton informed those present that the Parish Council have approved the shared purchase of a mobile speed sign between all 6 low villages.

Q. Are the pigs going to be located in the fields on Low Road going east of the village.

A. Mr Truelove said, yes, the pigs will be located in these fields.

Q. How long will the pigs be in the same field?

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A. Mr Truelove said that the pigs will be in the same field between 15 – 24 months.

Q. How long is the contact for the pigs to be on the farm?

A. Mr Truelove informed the meeting that the contact is for 10 years.

Q. If there is a problem with any issues relating to the pigs who should residents contact?

A. Contact details for Truelove Properties will be made available to residents

Q. Swine dysentery can be contracted by animals, humans and wildlife, what precautions are in place.

A. Mr Truelove said that the company was a good company with an excellent welfare record, second to none.

Q. The condition of Carr Lane is a concern to residents and should not be funded from tax payer's money to make the repairs. This should be funded by the businesses that have caused the damage.

Note - A site meeting was held at the beginning of November when Mr Truelove, members of the Parish Council and Ward Cllrs met to discuss the repair and maintenance of the lane.

Mr Truelove stated that he has paid £10k to have the lane regularly swept which has been passed back to the contractors. It was also noted that farm machinery is not the only heavy vehicles using the lane. Anglian Water and Network Rail also regularly use the lane.

A. NLC have committed to improve the road and support the comment that was made earlier about not spending tax payer's money to repair and maintain the road damaged by commercial vehicles. NLC will be having a conversation with these companies to manage the arrangements for the use of the lane.

Q. Cllr Newton asked if the farm machinery has to be so large?

A. Mr Truelove said that at present the Drainage Company HGV are large but this is for a temporary period of time. The pig farm has 2 small tractors on site only. Once the pig farm is up and the running internal farm fields will be used.

Q. Cllr Waltham thanked Mr Truelove for being candid and answering residents' questions but asked for confirmation on who to contact if there were any questions.

A. Mr Truelove to provide contact details to the Clerk who can provide to all residents via the website and social media

Mr Truelove stated that the contract can be ended if either party are not happy with how things are progressing. Mr Truelove went on to say that he too enjoyed living in Worlaby and hasn't been happy with the carrot contractor on some occasions.

There is now to be a 3-year break harvesting carrots to allow the fields to recover and it is hoped that more field locations away from Carr Lane will be created.

Q. The current fence posts being erected are only 2-3 metres away from residents' properties on Low Road, will pigs be this close to properties.

A. Mr Truelove said that there is no law stipulating how close the pigs can be to properties but there is to be a 40m buffer between properties and where the pigs will be located. The company are extremely proactive towards animal welfare and are premier pig producers.

Q. Mr Truelove was thanked again for his presence and co-operation and the temporary road issues should eventually disappear. Could a wheel wash be located inside the farm on Carr Lane which would alleviate any road sweeping costs and addressing the issue prior to vehicles leaving the site.

A. Mr Truelove stated that this will be put to the contractor.

Q. Could a 500m gap be introduced between the pigs and properties?

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A. Mr Truelove stated that the land towards the railway track is boggy and not suitable for pigs but in time there could be a possibility to move the pigs further back and introduce a wildlife habitat of land in between the pigs and properties.

Q. Carr Lane is currently dangerous and can it be made wider to allow for the larger vehicles using the track.

A. Cllr Waltham stated that Carr Lane is a rural farm track and NLC priority is for pedestrians and cyclists to be safe.

Q. Can bollards be installed to stop vehicles damaging the verges.

A. NLC will look at certain area to protect any infrastructure but to put bollards all the way along would not be a good use of tax payer's money.

Q. What will happen to the pig waste and will this attract flies to the site.

A. Mr Truelove said the pig waste will be spread on the surrounding land. With regard to the flies Mr Truelove will ask the question.

A resident stated that the Chair, Parish Council, Ward Cllrs and Mr Truelove were to be thanked for arranging this meeting which has identified that there is no planning permission needed.

The wheel washer is a great idea and the Parish Council should now work with NLC and Mr Truelove respectfully and co-operatively to find a solution.

This was seconded by another resident.

It was hoped that the pig contactors respect the village unlike the carrot contracts who abuse the weight restrictions and speed limits in Worlaby and surrounding low villages.

Q. What will be the normal working hours of the farm?

A. Mr Truelove to find out, although this may alter with any birthing issues.

Q. Are there currently any pigs in the sheds?

A. Mr Truelove said, no, and it is not thought there would be any in the future.

Q. Could the company respect the school movements?

A. Mr Truelove will make the company aware there is a school and ask if transport movement could avoid school opening and leaving times.

Q. There is a new access on Carr Lane, is planning not required for this?

A. NLC have been provided with the relevant information and will get back to the Parish Council once investigated.

The farm vehicles should respect the village and not speed.

Q. Should there not be a time limit on some actions so they are not lost.

A. Mr Truelove stated that as soon as the carrot lifting is completed the verges up to the farm entrance will be reinstated and grassed.

Mr Truelove stated that the verges have been tidied leading to Bonby outside the farm. This had been noted.

Mr Truelove informed the meeting that a cleaning contractor was on standby to clean the resident's fence who lives down Carr Lane once the carrot lifting has been completed.

Q. The width of the lane is 3m, the majority of the farm vehicles are 3.5m and are churning up the verges, can hardcore not be laid to prevent this?

A. Mr Truelove said that initially the verges will be reinstated and grassed. Long term it is hoped to keep the farm vehicles out of Carr Lane and located in the field.

Q. How long will the piglets be on the site, how old before they are moved on?

A. Answers to be sought by Mr Truelove.

Residents were thanked for their questions.

Resolved – to reopen the meeting.

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2102/19 Declaration of Interest

- a. To record declarations of interest by any member of the council in respect of the agenda items listed below. Members declaring interests should identify the agenda item and type of interest being declared.

Cllr Whitfield declared a personal interest in agenda item 2102/20.

- b. To note dispensations given to any member of the council in respect of the agenda items listed below.

None outstanding.

2102/20 Worlabby Pig Farm

To discuss concerns with regard to the pig farm located on Carr Lane determining actions required.

Cllr Newton asked the Ward Cllrs if they could talk to their colleagues in Parliament to protect small rural villages from such a large-scale venture which requires no planning permissions.

Cllr Waltham stated that he had spoken with Andrew Percy MP on the subject and any planning would be dealt with locally by NLC. National Planning Policies will change in the future as part of the Brexit Strategy as the UK becomes more sustainable, particularly farming, which is a positive step for the UK. This is not to compromise rural life.

NLC have actions and this will take time to put in place and the Clerk will be kept up to date with these actions, inviting residents to a further meeting if and when necessary.

Resolved – the Clerk to follow up all unanswered questions and circulate all contact information as discussed.

Cllr Cave added that he has researched the company and found them to be stringent with the welfare and a diverse food business.

Cllr N Empson asked if the lane could be improved like the Bonby Recycling road had been upgraded. Cllr Waltham stated that this had been funded by the developer as part of the planning conditions and was an access and through road.

Cllr Whitfield asked if NLC could investigate the road widening of the road. This can be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Cave asked if monies from s106 could be used to repair and maintain the road. The Clerk will investigate.

2102/21 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 9th March, 2021 at 7pm – via a Zoom platform.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.