

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL PARISH MEETING CALLED AT THE REQUEST OF 8 ELECTORS ⁺⁺
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, ON MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 1974 at 8 p.m.

⁺⁺Fen road residents: the families of Booth, Drake, Duller & Waggett.

2459 (2458) - The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a planning application by Messrs D. Pearson & J. Wilson for "gravel extraction with a view to ultimately producing an amenity area" (from fields in Milton Fen).

/1. The Village Hall was filled to capacity by some 130 electors. Also present were members of the Parish Council, representatives of the applicants, observers from Horningsea & East Chesterton Community Assocn., Coun. Wright, Chairman of the Cam Conservators and County Councillor W. Crossman. South Cambs. District Councillor, K.P. Humphries was present as Clerk to the Meeting.

/2. Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors: Mrs. M.E. Jones, Mrs. B.C. Waterson and Mr. H.W.H. Easy.

/3. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. D. Pearson, declared his interest and asked the Vice-Chairman, Mr. L.M. Forbes to take the Chair.

/4. Mr. Forbes explained that a number of residents objecting to the proposal had exercised their right to call a Parish Meeting for a full public discussion on the application. The Parish Council Planning Committee, Mr. Forbes said, had already discussed the proposal and lodged objection with the Planning Authority. He further explained that this meeting had full power to pass Resolutions for or against the proposal for submission to the Planning Authority which would be very seriously considered.

/5. He first called upon Mr. Waggett, spokesman for the objectors, to state their case.

Mr. Waggett said he estimated that some half-million cu. yds. of gravel would have to be carted in heavy lorries over several years and the only public road apparent was Milton Fen road. This would result in considerable destruction of amenity, disturbance by noise and dirt - dust in summer, sludge in winter. Drivers who may be paid on a piece-work basis may not always exercise the requisite consideration to other road users; the dangers were twofold - to people and property. Some 70% of those attending the local school came from this side of the main road and scheduled and old buildings would suffer by being weakened. He estimated that the transport activity involved would be in the order of some 5 lorries every hour along Fen road - i.e. one every 12 minutes.

He maintained the Fen road was not structurally suitable and that the area in which extraction was proposed was a pleasant agricultural one where there was no through road and one - as many people had remarked - which was the one quiet walk in Milton, not only for Milton people but those from Cambridge coming along the haling-way. The proposal would render this a noisy and unsightly area. (Applause).

/6. The Chairman of the meeting then called on the applicants' representative to state the facts of their case - but regretted he could not allow their participation in discussion.

Mr. Philip Maton (of Messrs Cheffins Grain & Chalk) said the broad facts were that 28½ acres of land were involved. He could not confirm gravel quantities but much interest had been expressed by gravel merchants. Their estimates of likely gravel seams varied from 4 to 14 feet thick yielding medium to good MATERIAL FOR CONCRETE WORK. The background was that the County Council, acting informally for the Eastern Road Construction Unit (late Min. of Transport), were interested in the possibility of a local supply of material for the construction of the forthcoming Northern By-pass. Also, he said, the Cambs. Sports Advisory Council had made a tentative application for a Rowing Course of National Standard in the same area - this had now lapsed. He was aware the parish had objected to this proposal also. There was now a suggestion that the S. Adv. Council would obtain compulsory powers through the Local Authority and owners of land in the area were faced with obtaining a realistic valuation of their land in the event of any future compensation becoming payable. If the application is approved the owners would, naturally, wish

to profit out of it.

/7 At the request of Mrs. Waggett ~~the~~ Chairman of the meeting then read out ~~The~~ Parish Council comments which had been lodged with the Planning Authority; in summary these are given (together with additional points from this meeting - see 2459/14 below) - in 2459/16 below.

/8 During a vigorous, but good-natured, discussion Fen road, and other, residents expressed their concern at the likely heavy density of traffic past their houses and the unsuitability of Fen road - including the danger at the junction with the A.10 and the likelihood of lorry drivers using Coles road to its detriment, to avoid the junction. There was surely another place available for gravel, said one lady, which would not upset so many homes and people. Concern was expressed that the sub-standard Fen road might be upgraded to take the necessary traffic but would not obviate the resulting disturbance caused to residents.

/9. Councillor Crossman expressed the view that in the present financial climate this was most unlikely to happen. He also said, in reply to a point the applicants made, that as County Councillor for Milton he knew of ~~no~~ no County Council suggestion to invoke compulsory purchase powers either on, or not on, behalf of the Sports Adv. Council. The Rowing Course, he said, was now a completely dead issue and finding no support.

/10. Mr. Tonge, (42, High Street) made two observations based on the implication in the application that the Rowing Course would be the ultimate benefit, viz:

(i) in his opinion a rowing course of National standard needed to be orientated E/W whereas the S.Adv. Council's proposal aligned it roughly NE/SW (i.e the direction of prevailing winds). He considered it a 'redherring'.

(ii) he thought the necessary screening required would be a 'miserable prospect' and make gravel extraction uneconomic.

/11. The Chairman of the meeting called upon Coun. Wright, Chairman of the Cam Conservators.

Coun. Wright said ~~his~~ Committee had yet to discuss the proposal but, he, himself was most concerned that as the proposed gravel pits would be very close to the river and haling-way considerable seepage would take place between the already sluggish and polluted Cam and the pits. Pollution of the Cam was their present major problem and he feared such seepage would only intensify pollution. Also, he felt, the proposal would result in a very untidy area adjacent to the river - and amenity area - for many years.

/12. In response to Mr. Waggett's request, the applicants explained their present access plans. They could not eliminate the Fen road as the most likely route, but were also giving serious consideration to the use of the river but could not say what terminations were likely. They would be approaching the river Authorities.

/13. A number of speakers expressed disapproval of the use of the river by barges on amenity grounds.

/14. Mr. A.J. Sharpley (72, Fen road) then proposed that "the meeting thoroughly endorses the Parish Council comments"; this was seconded by Mr. Waggett. Discussion followed in which it was clearly evident that many electors ~~wished~~ wished objection should be made on additional grounds. By a massive and overwhelming vote, without any dissent, it was agreed that ~~the~~ the above Resolution together with comments, as below, should be forwarded to the District Planning Officer, with copies to the Milton representatives on the South Cambs. District Council, County Council and the County Planning Officer. The Parish Council were also thanked for unanimously recommending the present planning application should not be allowed. The additional objections by the Meeting were as follows:

(a) the use of river traffic (if contemplated) would be detrimental to a valuable amenity area.

(b) danger to health of the likely increase in pollution of the Cam.

2459/15 Mr. Waggett then proposed further that this Meeting recommend to the Parish Council that they endorse their policy resolved in 1950 and strongly oppose any further applications to extract sand, gravel or other minerals on the present site or anywhere else in the parish .

This was seconded by Mr.J.Drake (45 Fen road) and similarly passed by massive vote without dissent.

The Chairman of the meeting then thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed *J. Pearson* Chairman *3-9-74* Date.

2459/16 - Copy of Resolution passed at Special Parish Meeting, August 19, 1974, and sent by the Clerk of the Meeting as instructed.

Planning Application S/0547/74 - Messrs Pearson & Wilson for "gravel extraction with a view to ultimately producing an amenity area" (fields in Milton Fen).

At a Parish Meeting called at the request of 8 electors and attended by some 130 electors of the parish, the following RESOLUTION was passed without a single dissent:

"That this Meeting thoroughly endorses the Parish Council objections already lodged with the District Planning Officer (ref: letter from Clerk to P.Council, 9/8/74).

(Summary of those grounds of objection is that granting of the application would mean:

1. reversal of P.C. policy of last 25 yrs. regarding gravel digging in the parish.
2. loss of valuable farmland to which local farmers object
3. excessive heavy traffic beyond capacity of Fen road
4. violation of the only comparatively traffic-free walk in Milton
5. violation of the present natural riverside amenity area
6. that any 'ultimate amenity area' produced would add to traffic that the village will have to tolerate from the already approved 90-acre Country Park.)

In addition, the Parish Meeting:

7. deplored the spoiling of the enjoyment of the rivers area (a valuable amenity) if transport by barge were to be contemplated.
8. feared health dangers from increased pollution of the Cam by seepage between the river and gravel pits situated very close to the river and haling-way. The meeting understood the Cam Conservators, already faced with pressing pollution problems here, feared such seepage would intensify pollution."

- K.P.Humphries, Clerk to the Parish Meeting

20/8/74

To District Planning Officer,
South Cambs. Hall,
Hills Road,
Cambridge

Copies to Coun.W.H.Crossman, Coun.K.P.Humphries & County Planning Officer.