

MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the planning held on Monday 11th July 2022.

Councillors present: John Derry, Doug James, Jane Horsnell, Mark Price, Tim James, David Clarke and Ryan Bragg.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), Derek McLean (Head of Estates and Facilities for Godolphin), David Fletcher (National Development and Planning Director at Strutt and Parker) and 79 members of the public.

Derek McLean (Head of Estates and Facilities for Godolphin) and David Fletcher (National Development and Planning Director at Strutt and Parker) attended the meeting on behalf of the landowner, Godolphin to discuss their site allocation in Moulton (WS143 – 4.09a).

In the absence of the chairman, John Derry chaired the meeting.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from the Chairman David Almond and Ed Chambers and the reason for absence accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda.

3. Public session

The Parish Council gave a short presentation about the Local Plan. Strutt and Parker gave a short presentation about the site Godolphin has put forward WS143 (4.09a).

The following questions/comments were made during the public session:

The River Kennett runs dry. How will the houses be made sustainable in terms of rainwater collection and heating and how will they fit in with the vernacular of the village? Will the housing be for local people?

David Fletcher said that there is a commitment from an energy efficiency perspective to make the properties sustainable, but it is too early in the process to give any specific information about the types of measures which would be included. A percentage of the housing will be affordable.

What is the identified housing need in Moulton?

The clerk, Joanne Kirk, explained that she had checked this with West Suffolk Council. Their response was as follows:

Policy NSP30 in Part Two of the plan sets out parameters for a policy on housing type and tenure which will be used to determine planning applications to ensure an appropriate mix. Part Two: Non-strategic Policies - West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 18) Preferred Options - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations (inconsult.uk)

NSP30 Housing type and tenure

6.9. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all new residential development provides the appropriate type and size of new homes to meet the current and predicted future housing requirements of the communities in West Suffolk.

Policy parameters

a. Proposals are likely to be supported where a range of house types and sizes, both market and affordable, is provided that reflects the identified housing needs shown in the latest housing needs study as set out below:

Size	Market	Affordable homes to buy	Affordable homes to rent
One bedroom	0-10%	15-25%	30-40%
Two bedrooms	25-35%	40-50%	30-40%
Three bedrooms	40-50%	25-35%	20-30%
Four bedrooms	15-25%	0-10%	0-10%

b. Deviation from the above mix may be justified when applying the mix to individual development sites, if evidence is submitted that demonstrates the nature of the site and character of the area, including the existing mix of properties and any up to-date evidence of need (such as the housing register) justify flexibility in the approach. The council will monitor the mix of housing delivered and respond accordingly so that the strategic mix requirements are closely met.

c. All new dwellings should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards or any subsequent national standard or policy.

d. All new homes must be built to building regulations M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable' standard, with 10 per cent of new market homes and 25 per cent of affordable homes are built to building regulations M4 (3) 'wheelchair user' standard.

No one seems to be looking at access to Moulton. Moulton has poor road connections with neighbouring communities. Moulton is being used as a rat run to avoid the weight restriction on the bridge in Kennett. Extra houses would mean an increase in traffic.

David Fletcher explained that West Suffolk carries out a strategic assessment of road capacity.

In the winter when it rains, the bottom of the field floods. What is the point of putting housing there if the field floods?

David Fletcher explained that there are very strict policies around flood risk in new developments. Strutt and Parker would need to liaise with Suffolk County Council and the Environment Agency. They have to ensure the site is drained to green field run off rates plus 40%. This is set out in national planning policy. Suffolk County Council is asking for a 50% improvement.

Why is Moulton categorised as a Local Service Statement? This should be challenged.

John Derry explained that West Suffolk Council carried out a Sustainable Settlements Review in 2021. Moulton Parish Council had to give details of the facilities in Moulton. West Suffolk Council made their assessment based on this information. Moulton fits the criteria for a number of reasons including the fact that it has a shop, pub and primary school.

Why has Godolphin put the site forward?

John Derry explained that West Suffolk Council put out a call for sites to landowners.

One resident gave the following specific reasons for objecting:

- The Kennett Valley is designated as a Locally Valued Landscape and as such should be protected.
- The loss of farmland. Good quality agricultural land should be protected.
- Biodiversity. The river Kennett is one of the few chalk streams in the world. West Suffolk Council should be assessing the damage to the chalk stream.

Where will people park?

David Fletcher explained that this is an issue that would be dealt with at the stage when a detailed planning application is submitted, but they recognise that they do not want people parking on Kennett Road. They would want to ensure that there is adequate parking and ample parking should be provided on the site because of the low density.

Why doesn't the Parish Council have a view about the site?

John Derry explained that the purpose of the public session was to listen to residents' views. The Parish Council will formulate its response during their meeting.

Will the Parish Council publish its response before it is submitted?

John Derry explained that the timescale might be quite tight as the deadline for submissions is 26th July and the Parish Council will need to prepare its response. He stressed the importance of individual residents submitting their own responses.

Will this site fulfil the requirement for housing in Moulton? Will any other sites be put forward?

John Derry explained that this is the only site that has been put forward in Moulton. The other sites have been discounted and are now classed as omission sites.

The indicative capacity of the site is for 30 homes. Could more be added?

The clerk explained that she had asked West Suffolk Council this question and received the following response:

Thanks for your email. The capacity of all sites have been considered in terms of where each settlement sits in the settlement hierarchy – Moulton is proposed as a local service centre where maximum scheme sizes of 100 dwellings are appropriate (see paragraph 4.48 of Part One Part One: Strategic Policies - West

Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 18) Preferred Options - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations (inconsult.uk)

The site assessment criteria can be seen in paragraph 1.11 of part three of the plan Part Three: Site Allocations - West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 18) Preferred Options - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations (inconsult.uk). In respect of allocation 4.09a (WS143) the policy parameters indicate the site will need to deliver some buffers which means a capacity of around 30 dwellings is appropriate.

Strutt and Parker also confirmed that they consider 30 dwellings appropriate for the site, accounting for its location on the edge of Moulton village.

Is the PC happy that there could be an extra 60 cars in the area? If the PC agrees with it they would need to ask for traffic calming.

John Derry explained that this would be discussed during the Parish Council's main meeting.

Will there be a need to upgrade the sewerage system?

David Fletcher explained that Anglian Water has a statutory requirement to ensure the sewerage system is adequate.

There is already a problem at the junction near the Bell Inn in Kentford and any additional traffic will make it worse.

John Derry explained that the provision of a roundabout at the Bell Inn junction is part of the Kennett Garden Village Scheme.

The development will impact on the primary school and traffic on Kennett Road is already a concern.

John Derry explained that this would be discussed during the Parish Council's main meeting.

How can we be sure the properties will not be sold for buy to let.

David Fletcher explained that it is too early to know on what basis the houses will be sold, but they would consider the concerns.

One resident explained that the land by the Primary School (WS437 (4.09b) is owned by the Moulton Charities not Godolphin).

Why was Godolphin Management Company refused a planning application for four homes?

David Fletcher suggested that the resident would need to contact West Suffolk Council about that as they are the Local Planning Authority.

There is an opportunity to tighten up the wording as to what types of homes the village would want to see.

David Fletcher explained that the proposals are still in the very early stages and it is not possible to answer a lot of the questions.

4. Planning issues

a) West Suffolk Council's Preferred Options consultation.

It was resolved that the clerk would draft a response ready for approval at the Parish Council's next meeting on 18th July with the following comments included:

Part one - Do you agree with the categorisation of Moulton as a Local Service Centre? If not, why?

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would oppose the classification of Moulton as a Local Service Centre, on the basis that Moulton has similar services to Risby which has been designated as a type A village and both are close to nearby towns. Since West Suffolk Council made the assessment, there have been cuts to the bus service making Moulton less sustainable and there are no safe connections to Newmarket and Kentford for pedestrians and cyclists.

Part two - Has West Suffolk Council identified the correct new development management policies? Is anything missing?

Moulton Parish Council believes that West Suffolk Council has identified the correct new development management policies. In particular it supports the inclusion of policies to tackle climate change. New homes should include a range of energy saving measures including solar panels, high quality insulation and air source pumps.

Moulton Parish Council supports the need for a mix of housing suitable for all age groups to allow communities to evolve and flourish. With an ageing population in West Suffolk new developments should include homes suitable for people to downsize into and cater for people with mobility needs. This should include bungalows rather than just flats.

Moulton Parish Council supports the inclusion of WS437 (4.09b) for the possible future expansion of Moulton Primary School.

Moulton Parish Council does not support the inclusion of WS143 (4.09a) for a development of 30 homes as proposed. This links in with the previous comment that Moulton Parish Council believes that Moulton should be categorised as a type A village.

Moulton Parish Council has the following specific concerns about this site:

The loss of grade 2/3a agricultural land at a time when the UK should be improving its food security and reducing its reliance on imports. National Planning Policy states that good quality farmland should be protected.

Concerns about access to the site due to its proximity to Moulton Primary School. This area is very busy at the start and end of the school day. A recent speed survey carried out by Suffolk County Council showed that speeding is a serious issue in the section near the primary school which is a school safety zone with an advisory limit of 20mph. The site is also on a bend making visibility difficult. If the site is approved for development by West Suffolk Council, there will need to be improved safety measures/traffic calming near the primary school.

There are no safe links to the site for pedestrians. Moulton Parish Council has campaigned for many years for a safe link for pedestrians and cyclists along Kennett Road to Kentford.

Moulton has been classified as a Locally Valued Landscape and the view into Moulton from Kentford needs protecting. Development should not impact on the unique character of Moulton.

Developing this site will bring no direct benefit to Moulton residents. Although 30% of the homes would be affordable, these would not be allocated to Moulton residents. If new homes are to be built in rural communities, residents need to see the benefit for their community.

The river Kennett is a rare chalk stream, one of only 200 in the world, and needs protecting.

Drainage is a concern as part of the field is prone to flood.

Should Moulton be downgraded to a type A village, it would still be expected to accommodate 20 new homes. Moulton Parish Council agreed to work with Godolphin and Strutt and Parker, whatever the outcome of the Preferred Options consultation, to achieve the best outcome for Moulton and ensure that any development adds positively to the village and local community.

There being no further business the main meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated