

Annual Parish Report 2017

Chairman

Good evening and welcome.

It is with great pleasure and sense of privilege that I am able to present the Annual Parish Report for 2016 -2017.

It has been yet another year dominated by the development of the former HMS Ganges site at Shotley Gate.

We were deeply disappointed to be unsuccessful at the Judicial Review into the decision made by Babergh District Council to give consent to the application to build 285 etc. at the former HMS Ganges site at Shotley Gate despite having an “arguable case” in a “difficult planning decision”. The Parish Council have decided that we have gone as far as we can “reasonably and legally go” in our effort to protect our village from the blight of a massive increase in traffic and loss of amenity. Work has now started on clearing and preparing the site Ganges site for development. The construction phase is expected to last for three years.

We recognised that we had just the one chance to prevent a development of this size and that has now gone. So, we have to move on.

I have been to a recent Shotley Parish Council meeting and spoke with the councillors at the invitation of Chairman, Barrie Powell.

There seem to be five important points. We need to:

1. Make sure that the development does indeed benefit the entire Peninsula as we were told repeatedly by those supporting the development
2. Protect our community from the impact of such an increase in traffic as far as is possible. We will seek to work with the Police and Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council to calm the excess speeding through our village.
3. Negotiate the best calming measures we can with the funding from the developers to mitigate the impact of such traffic increase on speed, noise, vibration, severance and pollution. We will work to find solutions to the damage caused to our Conservation Area assets through the village, like our low brick walls.
4. Work with Haylink to ensure that the planned 6,000 HGV trips and associated construction traffic over the three year period of development abides by industry guidelines for the Health and Safety of the communities through which they pass and ensure they respect our speed limits and communities.
5. Continue to work with Freston PC to achieve a safe junction at Freston crossroads

Neighbourhood Plan

We have not been able to move this forward as yet. However, now our attention can be focused on this next step, we hope to make a start in the summer.

Elsewhere in the Parish

Ipswich High School for Girls

Thank you to Ipswich High School for Girls for continuing to allow us the privilege of the use of their grounds. It is much appreciated. Thank you, too, for agreeing to host the “Battle’s Over” tribute, in November 2018, on the terraces leading to the banks of the Orwell. Furthermore, we thank Ipswich High School for their support of our new community group, “Friends of Woolverstone”.

Community Speedwatch

Speeding continues to be a real problem through the village. The Police have shown terrific support in attempting to calm traffic. Our Community Speedwatch efforts are stuttering. It is very difficult to organise groups together for the surveys and we are also losing team members when they move out of the village. We really need a Speedwatch co-ordinator to bring individuals together in a regular way.

Pollinator Patches project @ Horse Pond Green

A small group of people of villagers worked together to plant the plants given to us by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Coast and Heaths. We hope this will attract more insects and bees to the area around Horsepond’s green which will in turn benefit a range of wildlife.

Donations

We have made donations to: Home Start, Suffolk Accident and Rescue and the British Legion. We hope these small donations will help support these organisations.

We also have an annual subscriptions to the “Stour and Orwell Society”, Suffolk Preservation Society and Suffolk Association of Local Councils.

Planning

There has been an increase in planning activity this year. The Double’s Nursery development continues to draw our attention. The four houses given permission three years ago are nearly completed. However, in a recent exchange of letters the developer has made moves to discuss with Babergh further development within the Walled Garden itself. We will continue to attempt to protect the integrity if the

Walled garden and associated structures from development. Permission was originally given to build outside the village envelope specifically to protect these listed features.

A further development of note is that Babergh DC has found it no longer has a five year housing supply. Therefore, until a new Local Plan is completed, Babergh will use the NPPF to inform its decisions.

Yet another development has been the release of the information from the two calls for sites for housing and employment. Here land owners show their willingness to offer their land for these purposes. In Woolverstone there are two brownfield sites and three green field sites. Home Farm and White House Farm are the two brownfield sites. Land known as Glebe Field; land around Berners Hall; and, land between Red House and Manning's Lane have been put forward. This does not mean these areas will be developed, but they have been put forward as possible sites in the future.

Under Babergh's Core Strategy, Woolverstone is designated a hinterland village and, as such, would be required to take only a small number of houses. How the loss of 5 year housing supply will affect us is not yet known.

Villages and village life is under threat. It will be a continuing responsibility for the Parish Council to ensure any development is consistent with principles that ensure the character of our village is "preserved and enhanced". This does not mean that there will be no development in the village, but that what there is must be of consistency and quality. The approach we adopt tries to ensure fairness and transparency in all cases. However, it must also be remembered that we operate in an advisory capacity only and do not make the decisions and cannot appeal. It is Babergh Planning Committee that makes the decision.

The following applications have been granted:

Ipswich High School	Erection of electrical transformer and associated cabling
Woolverstone Marina	Vary conditions to allow caravan access 365 days a year
3 Manning's Lane	Erection of summerhouse
Cat House	Remove mixed species hedge. Refurbish existing roof
Garden House	Erection of bay to front elevation and alterations to windows
Gables	Single storey side extension
Home Farm	Internal alterations Sub-division of existing building Remove range of trees and shrubs
White House Farm	Use of redundant farm buildings for residential development

Old Barn	Remove Leylandii tree.
33 Main Road	Erection of single-storey side extension and two-storey rear extension
Red House	Removal of trees
Woolverstone Marina	Tree works associated with caravan park

“Thank you’s”

I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for the work and time that they have given in numerous ways. Thank you to people in the village who have helped in many different ways to move forward with different projects. We are losing Laurie Mayer from the Parish Council as family moves to Northamptonshire. I would like to thank him for all the time and effort he has contributed over the years to maintaining the quality of life in Woolverstone. We are also losing the expertise of Mark Bostock who has decided, reluctantly, that his commitments in London have increased to such an extent that he can no longer be part of the Parish Council we will be sad to lose his wisdom and wish him well.

Simon Pearce, Chairman Woolverstone Parish Council