

HAXEY PARISH COUNCIL

Public Meeting – proposals for the Development of the Duke William

Notes of Meeting

Present: Approximately 230 residents.
NLC Leader Rob Waltham
Ward Cllrs – Ron Allcock & David Rose.
Planning Consultant – Mark Simmonds
Duke William owner – Paul Chapman
Epworth Bells Journalist.
Deb Hotson – Parish Clerk

Venue: Haxey Memorial Hall
Date: 21st February, 2018
Time: 7:30pm.
Chair: Cllr David Knowles.

Cllr Knowles introduced himself and the Clerk to those in attendance.

Cllr Knowles stated that the aim of the meeting was to discuss the potential development of the Duke William. An application had been submitted to the local authority PA/2018/104 but had subsequently been withdrawn. The application was to demolish the public house and build 9 houses on the site.

A new planning application is expected in due course.

The aim of the Parish Council, Ward Cllrs and Leader of the Council is to gather information in preparation for the new application which will be validated by the local authority and placed on to the website for residents to comment along with the Parish Council who will discuss the application at the meeting following receipt of the new application. There can be no pre-determination from the Parish Council.

Cllr Knowles asked if the discussions can be kept respectful.

Mr Mark Simmonds addressed the meeting stating that the initial application was to demolish the public house and build 9 houses on the site but after discussions with the local authority and taking onboard the comments on the website the application has been withdrawn.

The applicant respects the Haxey Hood but due to the lack of viability of the public house it could not stay open for the sake of one annual event. A marquee could be used to house the Hood and the Loco public house is still open and this one event should not be a determining factor.

Mr Simmonds went on to say that the Kings Arms is currently waiting for a Tenant.

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The land adjacent to the Duke William is a brown field site, in the village, sustainable and the local authority has a shortage of houses. The local authority has not met their 5-year housing allocation and based on the local authorities planning policies this development meets all criteria.

Mr Simmonds stated that the Duke William is a historical building and is part of the street scene and therefore a redesign of the application was being addressed retaining the public house building and removing some of the modern parts of the property and converting it into a house with an adjacent new build house and 7 further new builds to the rear.

Tanya Woodlife representing “We live here”, Haxey Group addressed the Council.

The group is concerned about the redevelopment of the site and they would like objective discussions about the proposals. There are no vendettas against any individuals and some comments that have been placed on social media are not endorsed by the group.

The loss of the public house would be a loss of a public amenity, which hosts informal gatherings, sports teams, accommodation, a base for larger gatherings and the restaurant is used by the elderly socially, stopping insolation. Those with mobility issues use regularly.

The public house is valuable and needs preserving and is a key part of the village and if it closes will have an overall adverse effect on the parish.

The Duke parking at present accommodates 20-30 cars and as the Loco public house has no parking it is currently utilised by their patrons. There is traffic congestion on Church Street already and to lose the Duke parking facility would further impact on this problem.

Ms Woodlife went on to say that the group is uncomfortable with restricting free enterprise, but to lose the public house in favour of residential properties is disproportionate.

The Haxey Hood puts the village on the map and brings the village together – this would be jeopardised by the loss of the Public House.

A questionnaire/survey will be distributed to Haxey Parish residents in due course to ask for views and comments and this will hopefully lead to a meaningful discussion on the development.

Doc Rowe – Folk Law Heritage representative introduced himself to the meeting stating he had attended the Haxey Hood over the last 40 years. The Duke being the unofficial head quarters of the event and central to the tradition. He sympathised with the owner; however, he commented that this was the sign of the times. He further commented: could

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the public house be run by the community, where was the public house advertised for sale and was the public house just being run down?

There was reference within the previous planning application to debt, but several years ago the pub was reportedly working well.

The Duke William is the largest venue in the parish and is at the heart of the village.

Paul Hainsworth introduced himself as a representative from CAMRA and as well as promoting real ales they also campaign for saving public houses and he had been involved in many campaigns to save public houses. Where communities are committed, the campaigns are normally successful and the public houses then go on to flourish.

He commented: If the public house is in the right hands then it will be viable.

Mr Hainsworth went on to say that the best ally for the village is the planning system, which has policies to protect community facilities. Owners of public houses are custodians of community facilities/assets.

Planning Policies are legal and protect public houses. From May 2017, planning permission is now required to knock a public house down or change its use. North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) has a good policy, which states that the demolition of a public house and replacing with houses will not be supported.

Mr Hainsworth suggested that residents objected to the application when it was submitted and hoped that the local authority will take notice and CAMRA will support this too.

Questions and Answers –

Mr David Ryan asked if the Duke William was a failing business then when and why was the lease taken on for the adjoining public house too.

Mr Paul Chapman the owner of the Duke William stated that the business was adjacent to his current business and if someone had taken on the lease this would have been a rival business.

Ian Dawes stated that 2-3 public houses had been saved in other areas and could the public house not remain open and the car park be developed.

Mr Chapman stated that he wanted to develop all the land.

Mrs Alison Hunt-Siwy who stated she lived in the Grade 2 listed cottage adjacent to the Duke William and was detached by 2inches – 2ft with 5 main blocks that stabilised both gable ends had concerns about any works.

Mr Simmonds stated that her property was protected and the impact on it would be from zero to taking off the rear projection on the opposite side to her property and this work would be controlled under the planning permission regulations if granted.

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Mr Simmonds stated that the comment made by Mr Hainsworth with regard to the NLC Planning Policy stating that they would not support the demolishing of a public house was incorrect in as far as if the application met criteria with regard to viability and other public houses available in the area NLC could consider demolition.

A resident asked why had the original application been to demolish the public house to which Mr Simmonds stated that the comments on the website and speaking with NLC had convinced the applicant to withdraw and to consider redesigning the application.

David Dawes stated that Epworth with 4,500 residents had 5 thriving public house and 11 thriving restaurants - why was the 2 public houses and 1 restaurant in Haxey with the same number of residents not viable.

Mr Chapman stated if people used the facilities it would be a viable business.

Kate Bilmore asked why was the application including land outside the development boundary line as she had been told she could not build on land she owned as it was outside this land.

Mr Simmonds stated that individual applications are subjective, and that the local authority was not meeting the National Planning Policy quota of housing supply and therefore the development line could not be relied upon as being sufficient to refuse an application.

Gary Man – a Boggin asked how much the public house was up for sale for, had there been an offer and would the owner sell at a loss.

Mr Chapman stated that the value of the building and land was £1.1m and it had been for sale for 3 years from 2011-2013 inclusive with no offers/enquiries.

Martin Hall stated that he supports the Duke William and that when NLC levelled the site on Hallcroft OAP housing was not viable and the replacement buildings are very nice, but why was it such a fight to get these properties and then struggle to fill them. Why is more housing stock required, the schools are full and people's attitudes have to change.

Mr Chapman stated that 15 pubs had closed in the area and on average 34 public houses are closing each week.

Phil Coggan stated that with regard to the comment 'the hood will adapt' – a licence to place a marquee on land opposite to the Kings Arms was refused by NLC and that the atmosphere that builds within the Duke William on the day of the Haxey Hood could not be replaced or replicated in a tent.

Cllr Knowles stated that the Parish Council had not seen any application to erect a marquee.

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Cllr Booth stated in her personal capacity that the proposed development is on a brown field site and there were 16 houses currently for sale in the village and the village didn't need anymore.

Parking is limited on Church Street with current congestion and traffic issues. Cllr Booth said she has used the restaurant recently and it was full, but prior to that on a separate occasion there was only one customer.

Mr Chapman stated that each house legally has to have 2 parking places.

Tanya Woodlife asked about the parking requirements of the Loco to which Mr Chapman stated this had nothing to do with the Duke William as when planning had been granted to extend the Loco in the past no parking was allocated and this was approved by NLC.

Mrs Neill of the Heritage Group suggested that there was an element of greed with regard to the number of houses proposed for the site.

David Spink asked why it had been off the market since 2013 to which Mr Chapman stated it had been taken off the market in 2013 and his own money had been invested in the business and due to the poor viability, a decision to put in a planning application was taken. The property had since be revalued in 2017 at £1.3m.

Carl Parkin said there was a pressure on NLC for new homes, but what about the oversubscribed schools and facilities including the Doctors surgery.

Rob Waltham – NLC Leader said as a result of the meeting tonight he would arrange, with the Ward Cllrs, for a consultation. Cllr Waltham has spoken with MP Andrew Percy who was in full support.

With regard to the planning policy – law is law, but a large part of planning relates to public opinion.

With regard to the school – shouldn't develop if not sustainable.

The Hallcroft development was lead by Ongo and not NLC and it is not NLC role to dictate to villages.

Cllr Waltham stated he is an elected represented who will work with the Ward Cllrs and Parish Council to assist were possible. There is a Community Grant available to assist in enabling other activities to take place to keep the Duke viable.

With regard to a policy to put more houses in Haxey this is not true and personally he believed that a public house, a community asset, should be protected.

Tanya Woodlife asked if a proposal to purchase the public house was put forward would this be considered to which Mr Chapman said it would.

Cllr Knowles informed the meeting that an application to register the Duke William as a Community Asset had been submitted to NLC for consideration.

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A resident asked if the application was refused would the value of the property remain the same to which Mr Chapman said it would.

Cllr Waltham stated that with the approval of the Landlord, he would engage the District Valuer at a cost to NLC to value the Duke William.

Mr Stephen Jones stated he was indifferent whether the public house closed or not but asked how many residents used the Duke William to which 1/3 of those present raised hands.

Mr David Dawes stated directly to Mr Jones – Invest, passion, work at it, runs a business and makes it viable.

Lewis Man – a Boggin, stated it was not feasible to have a marquee as a substitute building as it was not gentle in the middle of the sway and needed a sturdy building to support the sway on entry – a marquee would not suffice.

Trevor Bland thought it was NLC policy not to build in gardens to which Cllr Waltham stated it was, but this did not stop applications being considered.

Gary Man asked if a business provides a living with community support how much more money is needed?

A resident asked if a show of hands is sufficient for the Parish Council to use when submitting comments on the next planning application once submitted, to which the meeting was told all objections/comments should be placed directly to NLC on their website or by letter.

A resident asked for a show of hands to support saving the Duke William – the majority of those present raised their hands.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm