

Martlesham Parish Council

Development Environment and Transport Committee (DETC) Report

2021/22

The DETC has considered and ratified responses to just over a hundred planning applications between 1st April 2021 and 1st April 2022. I would particularly like to highlight the successful work of the Advisory Planning Working Group whose members carry out site visits and meet fortnightly to understand and consider planning applications for amendments, extensions and new development within the Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan Policies continue to be an important reference source. One application this year, recently went to the East Suffolk Council (ESC) planning committee who subsequently allowed the proposed extension on the grounds that ESC would have more control over the proposals than if the applicant went ahead under permitted development rights.

Of more concern, is that ESC have disagreed with Martlesham Parish Council (MPC) by permitting some development on Martlesham Heath this year, where permitted development rights do not apply. The DETC feels one or two such applications have been out of keeping with the internationally admired original well integrated village model, vision for the heath, and theme of individuality running through each hamlet. We will be raising this with senior planners at ESC during one of our regular meetings.

Many applications over the last year, have also concerned the discharge of conditions or variations to applications for the major infrastructure projects at Blacktiles (47dwellings), the 41 retirement apartments for the elderly at The Square, Martlesham Heath, and the Brightwell Lakes Development with planning permission for up to 2000 dwellings. Members of the DETC have represented the Parish Council on the Brightwell Lakes Forum which meets with the developers Taylor Wimpey and neighbouring Parish Councils. We continue to question and influence developers as much as we can. The DETC's Brightwell Lakes Working Group has carefully considered and responded to the first reserved matters applications covering the first phases of this development and the 'McCarthy Stone Carpark Working Group' has considered and influenced each amendment to plans for the proposed Runway Carpark following meetings with the Architect, McCarthy Stone Directors, and ESC Case Officer. In March, the Parish Council agreed the wording for the proposed heritage plaque to inform future visitors to the area.

In addition to planning applications the DETC has reviewed and/or responded to the following ESC Supplementary Planning Documents, reviews and strategies:

Historic Environment SPD

Draft Affordable Housing SPD

Coastal Adaptation SPD

Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy

Review of the Local Validation List

Draft Sustainable Construction SPD

We have recently been briefed on the proposed ESC SPD 'Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside' which we expect to respond to this summer.

We are keeping a close eye on the proposals to develop land at Martlesham Police Headquarters, and are regularly in touch with the ESC Case Officer and Senior Planning Management Team.

Transport issues continue to affect the Parish. My thanks go to the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) working group who successfully produced a comprehensive set of data for the first six weeks of their project. This has been considered by the Parish Council and sent on to the East Suffolk Council Community Partnership Road Safety Forum for further consideration.

We continue to pass residents' concerns regarding speeding, road safety, cycling, and pedestrian issues on local roads, to Suffolk County Council Highways Department, and are keeping residents updated and informed where possible, regarding any proposed local roadworks and the proposed improvements to the A12 and A14. We send a Parish Council representative to Sizewell C meetings and bring important matters to the Parish Council for further consideration if necessary. We recently sent a representative to the National Highways presentation on the proposed Copdock Interchange improvements.

The DETC works closely with the Martlesham Climate Action Group and keeps abreast of environmental issues such as air quality monitoring information. The DETC regularly supports the Repair Café and other projects undertaken by this group.

In 2021/22, the DETC has worked closely with the Parish Council Tree Wardens who have undertaken site visits and provided expertise when Tree Preservation Order (TPO) applications are being considered or when trees are threatened by development. The Parish Council was recently successful in suggesting to ESC that a planning condition should be attached to an application to fell a mature tree. As a result, the applicant must plant a 1.8m replacement tree of similar mature stature in accordance with best horticultural practice.

Members of the DETC have attended training related to the recently published Government 'Levelling Up' White Paper, the Forestry Commission's 'Inspiring Woodland Creation' and the Suffolk Tree Warden Network's training on 'Trees and the Law'.

My thanks go to our Parish Clerk, Diane Linsley, Council Officer, Debbie Chappell, Finance Officer, Susan Robertson, and Administration Officer, Linda Woodhouse, who support all aspects of the vast amount of work covered by the DETC. The work is relentless and voluminous but made infinitely manageable and enjoyable because of their hard work and conscientious support.

Jane Hall

Chairman

Development Environment and Transport Committee