

District Councillor's Report for Westhorpe Parish Council – March 2021

<p>Planning application DC/21/00366 Westhorpe Road Finningham</p>	<p>I have today had a discussion about this application with the case officer Daniel Cameron. His initial assessment of the site is complex, I will try to summarise it here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The adjacent site was granted outline permission in 2018 when the Council could not demonstrate a 5 year land supply and many applications were being allowed as a result. However, this does establish a principle of development in that area which might make a refusal difficult to defend. 2. These two sites were put forward for development in a “call for sites” but was assessed as having poor connectivity to Finningham and therefore did not make it into the proposed JLP settlement boundary. 3. The flooding and mud problems on the road would not be a material planning consideration as this are expected to be temporary – ie associated with the construction and not long-term. 4. The Core Strategy which designated Finningham as a countryside village is now somewhat out of date, also the Joint Local Plan is not yet approved and so the National Policy Planning Framework paragraph 11 has more impact – ie the presumption in favour of sustainable development. 5. Finningham has few services and so residents will likely be dependent on the private motor car – contrary to other parts of the NPPF. 6. The impact on nearby a listed building and potentially loss of light/overlooking are material considerations. 7. The two sites together would trigger a requirement to provide affordable housing 8. In summary, an officer would likely grant outline permission with conditions unless the application is called-in.
<p>Finningham flooding</p>	<p>The flooding next to the building site on Westhorpe road has lessened with the better weather but is still not resolved: we do now have County Council Highways saying that maintenance to the gulleys was not completed correctly last year and further action is being taken.</p>
<p>2021 census</p>	<p>Residents should have received a card about the census which is being held on March 31st. Information packs are coming in the post. The census can be completed online or on paper for those unable or unwilling to do it online.</p>
<p>Covid support</p>	<p>MSDC has extended support for struggling households for another year through Local Council Tax Support (LCTS). There are a range of grants available to support businesses affected by the lockdown, details are on the Council's website and telephone help is also available.</p>
<p>Budget 2021/22</p>	<p>The administration's budget was approved at a full council meeting in February. A small increase in council tax was approved (the opposition voted against this). However, £4m was set aside for recovery projects, ideas to be developed by cross-party working groups.</p>

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