



Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 25 April 2019 at 7.00pm in Elton Community Centre

**PRESENT:** Councillors Maureen Wilson (Chair), Colin Crispin (Vice Chair), Margaret Lockhart, Steve Serna, Nigel Goodliffe, Martin Dickinson and Pauline O'Reilly

**19.66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Ian Miller, Ruth Ackroyd and Ron Reading

**19.67 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**19.68 ENCIRC PLANNING APPLICATION 19/00969/FUL – THE ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT 3 METRE HIGH ACCOUNSTIC MITIGATION BARRIER ALONG THE FULL LENGTH OF ASH ROAD, ELTON**

The Chair introduced herself and gave a brief introduction on the reason for calling this extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council and the aim was to get the views of residents before submitting a comment on the Planning Application.

It was noted that as of this evening's meeting there were 27 comments on this Planning Application on Cheshire West & Chester's Planning Portal and only 1 was in favour.

Members of the public raised their concerns in relation to all 3 recent Planning Applications by Encirc Glass Ltd; 19/00623/FUL Demolition of the existing loading canopy and erection of a two-storey extension to the production hall, Planning Application 18/04948/S73 for Variation of Condition 4 (HCV movements) of Planning Permission 17/01820/S73 to remove the requirement to reduce movements over time and Planning Permission 19/00969/FUL the erection of a replacement 3 metre high acoustic mitigation barrier along Ash Road. Residents felt that all 3 of these applications should be looked at as a whole rather than as individual applications and residents requested that the Parish Council write to Cheshire West & Chester Council on their behalf to request that they do consider all 3 applications as a whole. The Chair confirmed that the Clerk would contact Cheshire West & Chester Council on behalf of residents and request this.

Residents' main concerns in relation to all 3 Planning Applications were:

- Loss of amenity in relation to the 3 metre high barrier along the full length of Ash Road – the visual impact and obscured views looking across

towards Helsby Hill and surrounding countryside, feeling as though they are being penned in by an intrusive and unsightly barrier. The green space on entering the Village has an open and welcoming appearance which will be lost if there is an unsightly barrier obstructing this green space. The visual impact of a 3 metre high barrier as you enter the Village would have a huge impact on residents' amenity and anyone visiting the Village. The current 2 metre high barrier was installed approximately 10 years ago. It has taken that time for the greenery planted 10 years ago to disguise the current barrier and it has only just started to blend in with its surroundings. This greenery would have to be ripped up to install the proposed new 3 metre barrier. Greenery to cover the proposed 3 metre barrier would take considerably longer than the 10 years it took to disguise the 2 metre barrier. Residents fear they would have to live with an unsightly barrier until the greenery regrows. Residents also feared in the meantime the barrier would be vulnerable to graffiti/vandalism during the years it took the greenery to grow. Residents raised concerns at the pot holes, erosion of the roadway around manhole covers which rattled as HGV's drove over them, ruts in the road surface and constant disrepair/roadworks along Ash Road which they felt was due to the HGVs using this road which was unsuitable for such heavy usage.

- Noise – Residents felt that the current barrier did not adequately reduce the impact of noise with the current level of HGV movements along Ash Road. They felt that this was acknowledged within Encirc's own noise assessment in their Planning Application. It was also noted that Encirc's own noise assessment acknowledges that even with the proposed 3 metre barrier this would not mitigate noise levels below moderate to parts of the Village during certain time periods and would have a negligible effect on noise levels. Residents stated they felt that the noise from not only the road but also the Encirc Factory at weekends had a huge effect on their ability to relax. One resident said that she had raised the issue with Cheshire West & Chester Council that she felt the noise at weekends was particularly intrusive and noise exceeded levels because managers were not there to monitor/control this.
- Pollution/Diesel Emissions/Impact on Health/Traffic – UK Central Government acknowledges the harmful effects of diesel emissions and has a policy in place to reduce these by 2040. How does Encirc's proposals of increasing the HGV movements by the proposed amount in its Planning Application 18/04948/S73 fit in with Government Policies to reduce harmful diesel emissions? Central Government is also advocating a multimodal transport policy moving freight away from the roadways and onto alternative modes of transport so how does Encirc's Planning Application 18/04948/S73 fit into this policy? Residents don't feel that Encirc have explored the use of alternative routes of transport or that if they have, then they have chosen the cheapest route (ie; road). Residents feel that Encirc is putting the economics of its business first. Residents expressed that they feel Encirc could and should use other alternative transport methods and alternative routes to its factory. Residents feel that the growth of Encirc should not be at the detriment of residents' loss of amenity or health, safety and wellbeing. It must also not be underestimated the impact on the emotional and mental health of residents that having a "barrier" built at the entrance of the Village will have together with the effect of "penning" in residents and obstructing their

amenity.

- Health & Safety – Ash Road is a single carriageway and residents felt it unsuitable for Encirc's proposed amount of HGV movements. Residents expressed their concerns at the current level of HGV movements and their concerns for resident's safety due to HGV drivers getting lost, driving on the wrong side of the road and taking incorrect routes.
- Environmental Impact – Residents felt the overall environmental impact of the proposed barrier and the proposed increase to HGV movements would have a huge environmental impact. They requested that the Parish Council write to Cheshire West & Chester and request that an environmental impact study be carried out, as part of their duty of care, on the overall effect of all three recent Encirc Planning Applications as they felt that the overall impact of these applications would have a detrimental impact. The Chair agreed that the Clerk would do this.
- Suitability of Access – the main entrance into the Village off the A5117 onto Ince Lane is a single carriageway. The current access into the Village is already overloaded. Turning off Ince Lane onto Ash Road and off Ash Road onto Ince Lane to exit the Village is already hazardous and residents consider it unsuitable even at the current levels of HGV movements. The only access to one of the main housing estates in Elton is off/onto Ash Road and residents already feel the impacts of this when entering/exiting the estate. Residents expressed concern at the constant disrepair of Ash Road. Even when repairs are made, they don't last long before the areas surrounding the manhole covers are crumbling again and the drains rattle as HGVs drive across them.
- Unauthorised stopping/parking of HGVs along Ash Road and Orchard Park Lane whilst waiting their timeslot to access the Encirc site or parking up overnight on both these roads to avoid paying to do so at Chester Services on M56.
- HGVs taking unauthorised access routes through the Village or getting lost and driving on unsuitable roads for HGVs, making 180 degree turns on residential streets within the Village, which is dangerous, blocks roads and creates a build up of traffic and happens quite frequently. This also happens frequently at night and in the early hours and the reversing warnings wake residents.

Overall residents felt that the diverting traffic via an alternative route to access the Encirc site was the solution and that Encirc had were taking the most economical option at the detriment to the Village and its residents. Residents felt Encirc should be made to make alternative access arrangements for the incoming and outgoing of materials/products if it wished to grow its business and that residents should not be made to suffer because Encirc wanted to maximise profits.

The Clerk advised that Ward Councillor Smith had requested Encirc's Planning Applications be called into Committee. As yet the Clerk had not received a date for this but she would keep residents advised via the Parish Council Website and Social Media.

It was agreed that the Clerk would:

- Contact Local MP Justin Madders and request his support.
- Invite the Planning Officer, Nick Smith, to the next Parish Council meeting.
- Draft a summary of residents' concerns which would be placed on the Parish Website/Facebook and could be used by residents wishing to comment on the Planning Application.

Residents were advised that there was a Facebook group where they could co-ordinate their efforts namely "Elton Planning Disputes" and a link would be put on the Parish Website and Elton Village Chat.

Residents said they would co-ordinate between themselves a peaceful protest along Ash Road and invite the press.

Residents said they would also contact Local MP Justin Madders to ask for his support.

#### **19.69 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Monday 13 May 2019 at 7.00pm in Elton Community Centre. The Chair closed the meeting at 8.15pm.