

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2016/17

Local Plan

The first draft of the revised Local Plan emerged in the late spring of 2016. Significant changes from the previous version included the removal of so called “safeguarded land”, the re-allocation of the preferred site for new housing from that near to the Cranbrooks/Valley View to one just to the east of the Industrial Estate the extensions to which had also been changed.

The Parish Council submitted comments which included concerns about the scale of the proposed housing development in relation to the available infrastructure and the proposed location of part of the industrial estate extension located near to the main village gateway.

Later in 2016 the timetable for the Plan was deferred as a result of the Government announcements on the future closure of the military barracks at Fulford and Strensall each of which has potential for significant housing development. A revised draft plan is expected to be issued during the next few months. The Wheldrake Ward Councillor (Suzie Mercer) is a member of the City Council Local Plan Working Group.

Village Hall

The second phase of the upgrading was substantially completed by the end of August in time for the planned hand over date and enabled the main users to return. Further financial and material support was agreed at the Parish Council budget meeting in December to be raised as part of the precept via Council Tax. The remaining works include the fitting out of the shower rooms and the rendering of the external walls of the complete building.

Community Assets

Of the assets proposed to City of York Council. The Pub., Shop and Wheldrake Woods were approved but White Rose House was not following formal opposition from the Girl Guides organisation.

Wheldrake Play Park

The installation of equipment having been completed further work has been carried out to improve drainage and provide a surfaced footpath through the park from the access gate. Some residual funds are available for additional works or upgrading.

Highways and Speeding

No action has been taken to date on the proposed improvements to the village gateways at the east and west ends of the village. The proposals for the west end to narrow the gateway and relocate the 30 mph signs have been formally listed in the schedule of proposed works. Speed checks are carried out by the police at intervals using their vehicle mounted equipment.

Dog Fouling

There are still a minority of dog walkers who do not clean up more especially in the winter period. The Ward Councillor has negotiated the funding for additional waste/dog bins one of which is now located on Back Lane South.

Planning Approvals

The Parish Council has not objected to the majority of applications although in some cases have requested safeguards to protect amenity for adjacent properties or the village tree-scape. Where objections have been submitted these have been where scale and massing have been an issue or the infilling of narrow gaps not in keeping with the Village Design Statement.

Developments have been resisted that are located within the Green Belt especially those that have a significant effect on its openness. This has been exemplified by the approved construction of the egg production unit to the west of Broad Highway. This and other smaller Green Belt developments have been approved under the National Planning Framework because of the agricultural exemption to the “special case” requirements and/or cases being made for the support of economic diversity. A legal notice has been issued by the owners for the continuation of the approval for the former North Selby Mine the consent for which expired in March.

Policing and Crime

The level of crime has continued to be low. It is hoped that this will remain the case now that there will be a less proactive PCSO service for Wheldrake.

A PCSO from the local team will attend if requested to deal with specific incidents or concerns.

Christmas Lights

The Parish Council was again very appreciative of the work done by David Dick and his team in erecting and dismantling the lights and of the support given by York Linings, Bill Agar and James Myers in providing the electrical power.

It is hoped that sponsorship can be agreed for the placing of lit Christmas trees at or near the village gateways as well as near to the existing site at the junction of North Lane and Broad Highway.

Rights of Way

There has been no further progress on the addition of the path from North Lane to Sparrow Hall Farm although requests have been made to be advised of any progress.

Oil and Gas Exploration

There have been no further communications on proposals for the licenced areas since the time of the last annual report.

Village Maintenance

After a competitive tender process the contract was awarded to Toby H Johnson starting from April this year.

Parish Council Website

The dedicated Parish Council website was approved and commissioned during last year.

Local History Society Dissolution

In accordance with the constitution of the Society the residual funds will be passed to the Parish Council who have decided to allocate the money to the WRA which is a charitable trust. This arrangement is subject to a formal WRA agreement to manage the history archive in a good state of conservation. The archive will remain in Church Cottage by Permission of the Parochial Church Council.

David Randon,
Chairman Wheldrake Parish Council, 10 May 2017