



Elsenham Parish Council Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting with Bloor Homes

**Land east of Elsenham, to the north of the B1051,
Henham Road, Elsenham**

**350 New Dwellings
and
'Phase 2', up to 200 new dwellings**

**Meeting held on Wednesday 4 October 2023 at 7.00pm
in Old Franks, Elsenham**

Present:

Elsenham Parish Council (EPC)

Cllr. G Mott (Chairman, GM), Cllr. G Bentley (GB),
Cllr. F Lambert (FL), Cllr. J Minor (JM) and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk LJ)

Henham Parish Council

Cllr. P Franklin (PF)

Representing Bloor Homes (BH)

Mr. A Clark (Design and Technical Director, AC)

Members of the public:

Mr A Hathaway (AH)

1. Apologies for absence. Cllr. R Franklin, Cllr. S Waite and Cllr. A Mowbray.
2. Declaration of Interests. None

UTT/21/3269/DFO 350 new dwellings.

3. Report by Bloor Homes on progress.

AC said this was the fourth meeting he had attended with EPC.

There are now two construction sites on either side of the main road through the site, a red team and a blue team. The open spaces are all set out plus a coppice. The landscaping will be completed this planting season.

A contract for the affordable housing has been agreed with the East Light housing association.

The building of the football pavilion and pitches are out to tender, these will not be built by BH, the plans will be agreed by UDC.

Once the football pitches are complete, they cannot be used for a period of one year. BH will maintain them for that year and hand them over to EPC when they are ready to be played on. This will be approximately September 2025.

The house sales have slowed down by less than 10%.

The crocuses are being planted the week beginning 9 October 2023 and will therefore be flowering in Spring 2024.

4. **Elsenham News funding;** although sympathetic to the crisis the Elsenham News finds itself in, BH cannot support a publication financially. However, they will give £300 per year for advertising, for the next 2 years.

5. **Fencing around football pitches and pavilion.**

The fencing around the football pitches on the northern and western boundaries have been increased in height to 4.5metres, in view of the adjacent areas of housing and an attenuation pond. BH has also added a gate on the southern boundary to help when retrieving footballs that have been kicked over the fence.

6. **Henham Road flower box.**

AC confirmed that the commitment remains to install a flower box to match the one on the other side of Henham Road. It was agreed to discuss the position of the flowerbox once the new 30mph sign had been installed.

7. **Moving of 30mph limit to the east of the development.**

The 30mph limit has now been approved. An article will be published in the paper announcing the new speed limit. The speed limit will become live on 19 October 2023, when the new signs are installed. The sign will be the national standard height.

AC is writing to all the contractors saying anyone going over the speed limit will be given a warning and on the third warning will be told to leave.

The speed limit on the site is 20mph. At the junction leading onto Henham Road there is a sign denoting that vehicles are entering a residential area on a 30mph road.

AC finished by saying what BH said they would do, they have done.

8. **Questions by members of the Parish Councils.**

FL asked if there are any speed bumps on the site?

AC said that Essex Highways do not like speed bumps, so buildouts have been installed and these control the speed of vehicles on the site.

FL asked how many houses have been sold?

AC said about 37 with 12 houses now occupied.

JM asked if EPC would be able to see a plan of what play equipment is being installed.

AC said there is a plan of the play area on UDC's website.

The play area will be offered to EPC but there is no monetary payment included in the section 106 agreement. However, there is an £60,000 payment for the football pavilion and pitches.

GB said in the S106 agreement it stated that on the first occupation BH would make a payment to local transport of £1.5 million. Some residents would rather have some, or all, of this money going towards repairing all the potholes in the village, many of which have been made by the construction traffic. Even though developers are making payments to local transport, the 7 and 7A buses are at risk. In 2 years, the contract is being reviewed and Elsenham could lose the bus services completely. AC said this was outside of BH's hands.

GM asked about the walkway and cycle path to the station, this should be delivered before the 80th house is occupied.

AC said this is to start the week of 9 October and by Christmas pedestrians should be able to walk all the way around the site. There were some issues with Network Rail, as to where the path came out, but these have now been resolved, the path starts between the station car park and the level crossing in Old Mead Road.

GM asked about the attenuation basin on the eastern side of the site. It must already be in use, but the bank around the basin has not been constructed.

AC said a headwall drainage outlet will be built which will prevent the flow of water from eroding the pipe or the surrounding region. Headwalls will also offer support for the bank. Residents will be able to walk around the top. All excess earth is now staying on the site and will be used to construct the earth bank.

AH spoke as Chair of Elsenham Community Association, which has overall responsibility for the village magazine, *Elsenham News*.

With all the new development in the village the magazine is currently running at a shortfall of £300 per month. BH offer of £600 over 2 years will not help sustain it and the village will lose its magazine.

AC said it was not BH responsibility to fund it. AH thanked AC for trying.

AC said all financial contributions must be in the Section 106 agreement. BH cannot back charitable donations. Many District Councils no longer use Section 106s, they use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). In AC's opinion this was better for Parish Councils as they could apply for up to one third of the contribution.

UTT/23/2063/DFO Phase 2, up to 200 new dwellings.

9. Report by Bloor Homes on detailed application.

A meeting is to be arranged with UDC to address all the statutory consultees comments. There was a mistake in the application which EPC pointed out.

Flats by the station will not have gardens only balconies, however the balconies do look over green open spaces. GM said he did not think this was adequate.

AC said one further bungalow has been added as 5% of 200 is 10 not 9, as EPC pointed out. There will be a new application showing this amendment on the portal around mid-November and a public consultation will be held.

A LAP and LEAP will be included. There is a conditional discharge allowing the Parish to agree, or not, for them to be transferred over to the Parish Council.

There will be walking routes on the development with low traffic flow, majority will be cycle and footpaths. The footpaths will be adopted by highways and will always be accessible to the public.

The drainage basin will not be fenced off. It will be dry 99% of the time. If RoSPA report suggest that a knee-high fence is installed around the water basin, then BH will install one. The surface water is directed to the large attenuation tanks. The water will be stored and then released into the ground at a controlled rate by a flow-control chamber. The attenuation tanks will be designed to hold far more than the maximum capacity required. It also allows a 40% margin for climate change. The attenuation tanks will help to stop the flooding in Old Mead Road.

GM said UDC had a new Urban Design Statement. Every third house must have a bird box, a tree in every garden and every house must have solar panels. AC said he had not been able to find the Urban Design Officer feedback on UDC's website, GM said it was an appendix on the Statement of Community Involvement AC said after 25 June all houses must have air source heat pumps and electrical charging points. There will be a hedgehog highway and bee bricks in every 3rd garage. GM said he could only count 49 visiting spaces. AC said there are 50 visiting spaces spread around the edges of the development following Essex Parking Standards plus the garages are large enough for all makes of cars.

10. Community Centre funding.

AC said the money for the new Community centre will be available 3 months after the purchase of the land; BH does not purchase the land until they have planning permission.

11. Questions by members of the Parish Councils.

FL asked how many of the bungalows are private for residents to purchase.

AC said 6 were private bungalows. There were a number of small units for first time buyers with 40% of the houses being affordable.

FL asked as the housing market was falling will BH be pulling out of this development.

AC said no, BH is a privately owned company and therefore the slump in the market does not affect BH as much as other companies.

GM said the colour code on the accommodation schedule did not make sense, AC could not explain it.

GM said the Thames Water had raised some issues regarding the connection for foul water.

AC said Thames Water had a legal obligation to give BH a connection.

JM said he had asked AC at the last meeting if BH had any plans for a phase 2 and AC had answered no. So, will BH be taking over all the old Fairfield site, where up to 12,000 houses were proposed?

AC said that BH have no further plans at the present time, but he did not know what the future will hold. However, BH do have some proposals in the draft Local Plan but they are not in Elsenham or Henham.

PR asked about the contribution to the NHS.

AC said the pro-rata contribution to the NHS for 200 houses is £79,000, which is the amount that BH submitted on the Section 106 agreement.

BH knew that the Elsenham Surgery had asked for £250,000 and was surprised when neither UDC nor the Inspector asked for the contribution to be increased. UDC signed off the Section 106 with just £79,000 to the NHS leaving a serious shortfall for Elsenham Surgery.

PF explained that Elsenham Surgery is in serious financial trouble and without the extra funding would not be able to maintain adequate patient care and services not only for Bloor's new residents but for all the existing Elsenham and Henham residents.

AC said he would give an update by the end of October. But there was no legal process for BH to increase the payment now that the Section 106 had been signed by both parties.

The meeting finished at 9.10pm