

Denby Parish Community Action Group

The Combined Community Association of Denby, Birdsedge and High Flatts

Minutes of the Steering Committee
Tuesday 30th October 2007 at 19:30
At The Friends Meeting House High Flatts

Opening:

The meeting of the Denby Parish Community Action Group was called to order at 19:30 on Tuesday 30th October 2007 in Friends Meeting House High Flatts by the Chairman, David Cook.

Present:

David Cook [Chair], John Cook, Sue Daws, Roy Malkin (KMC PRoW), Stephen Slater, Andrew Brown, Paul Clarke, John Perry, David Smith

A. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Alan Fish, Jane Fish, Joe Price, Dawn Smith, Andy Asher & Guy Ellis.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous steering committee meeting on 25th September 2007 were unanimously approved after minor corrections to road names.

C. Matters Arising

1. Footpath 77

Paul Clarke reported that he had been complaining about this footpath for several years. He informed the group that, normally, if a path has been blocked, it has to be open and used for 12 months before a diversion can be applied for; this is the norm elsewhere in the country, but KMC does not adhere to this policy. The diversion to FP77 which has been applied for goes around the whole house and land, not merely the greenhouse by-pass which was accomplished when the path was recently reopened. It was the feeling of the group that we do not actually object to the diversion around the house, but there is a principal involved here, that the path has not been reopened on its original route but on an unauthorised diversion route. The general public have not had the possibility of walking the unblocked original route in order to determine if the diversion would be an improvement worth supporting.

Action: Sue Daws to write to KMC objecting to the Footpath 77 diversion, use email for speed, and send directly to Jackie Gedman with copies to our elected representatives on KMC.

2. Denby Delf

Councillor Jim Dodds reported to David Cook that he had written to Neil Windett asking for clarification on the current position. Mark Barnes has written to the Treasury Solicitor and received an indication that the Treasury Solicitor has received nothing from Garganey Trust. Mr Barnes was about to write again to the TS requesting that they give the lease instead to KMC.

Mrs Lucas has presented her bill to the group for the botanical survey of Denby Delf and it was proposed and agreed to pay the bill out of funds.

3. Jordan Bridge

The group welcomed Roy Malkin to the meeting. He reported that he had canvassed local residents who were using the footpath leading to Jordan Bridge and received overwhelming support for the stone clapper design as opposed to the wooden design. He also reported that it is not within the abilities of the PRow to build a stone bridge, and that the work would be given to Design & Construction, although this would mean that it would have to be delayed until next spring. There had been a meeting on site 10 days ago where the idea had been floated of a culvert to channel the stream allowing tractors to cross the stream instead of through the ford alongside the bridge. The chairman David Cook declared an interest in the matter as he represented the landowner.

PRow have been considering the options, and Roy presented 5 ideas to the group:

1. A stone bridge with two full culvert pipes. This would allow light traffic only, and would take some time to build. For this design it would be necessary to know vehicle use – would it be used by a tractor daily or only rarely?
2. A bridge culvert with three large-bore pipes carrying the stream and a stone bridge over; this design was thought to be inappropriate because it would block with twigs in the winter.
3. A clapper bridge but using cut stone instead of mortared piers; the rangers would be able to accomplish this
4. A wooden bridge as originally proposed by PRow; not acceptable to either the group or the users of the footpath.
5. A clapper bridge as designed by the Structures department; this would be costly and time consuming and could only be built by Structures; also not acceptable as it would not be completed until next year.

If volunteers can be found, the weir could be rebuilt and the ford could be reformed to make it suitable for farm vehicles; some edging and widening to the ford would be required to reinstate it; then the clapper bridge could be built at an estimated £1500 – 1800 for materials to be paid for by Structures and not PRow. It was unanimously agreed that the third option, the clapper bridge on cut stone pillars, would be the best option. Roy assured the group that he would make it happen. Construction of the bridge is urgent and should be started as soon as possible; the ford and weir could be left to next Spring.

4. Denby Dale Countryside Project

Emails from the KMC Freedom of Information department regarding the accounts and report were read out.

5. Sellars Field Birdsedge Lane

Sue Daws reported back that, as far as can be determined, Mr Sellars has permission only for the shelter and WC block; none of his applications for a warden's house have been accepted.

6. Local Planning Applications

Paul Wood, planning enforcement officer, had emailed a reply to our previous email pointing out various potential planning irregularities and asking for information, and this was read out. It was felt that the email, telling us that letters from groups would not be considered and only individual complaints would be investigated, could not go unanswered.

The application concerning Dale View Farm was also considered. There are a number of barns and sheds on the land which were erected with no planning permission, and the current application relates to yet another building.

Action: Sue Daws to write to the planning officer objecting to the application for Dale View Farm on the grounds that it is in the green belt. Sue Daws to send the email from Paul Wood to our legal representatives asking if it is now Council policy that information from groups would no longer be acted upon.

7. Community Plan

Another meeting, solely on the plan, will be held in two weeks time, on 13th November.

D. Issues

1. Non-Invited Trader Zone

John Cook showed the group a letter which has been mailed to residents in some areas of Kirklees.

2. Smithy Hill, Denby

One of the planning conditions placed upon the owners was to remove a wall, cut down a number of trees, build a short section of footpath, and reinstate the wall. Local people do not want this to happen, nor does the owner, who is considering writing to KMC requesting a variation on the planning conditions. The matter to be revisited by the group when it becomes clear that the request for a variation has been sent, as the group would like to support the application.

3. Speeding

David Smith reported that KMC have placed traffic counters along the A629 at strategic points and have agreed to send reports to Dawn Smith on the findings.

4. Village Green

Paul Clarke also raised the possibility of registering the recreation ground in Upper Denby as a village green in order to protect it from potential development.

Action: Sue Daws to request relevant forms from KMC.

E. Any Other Business

None.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 21:15 by the Chairman. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 27th November 2007 at 19:30 at the Friends Meeting House, High Flatts. There will be an intermediate Community Plan Meeting on Tuesday 13th November at 19:30 at the Friends Meeting House, High Flatts.

Minutes submitted by: Sue Daws [Secretary]
Approved by: David Cook [Chairman]