**Minutes of the Meeting of Thrandeston Parish Council held on 10th April 2019.**

**Present:**

Councillors Andrew Colchester, Sharon Colchester, Jerry Cotter, and Alison Murton.

Philip Freeman – Parish Clerk.

Five representatives of the Highways Department of Suffolk County Council.

Three members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence.

* None.

1. Chairman’s opening remarks

* The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests from members on any agenda item. To consider any requests for dispensations.

* None.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th March 2019. (Attached)

* The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

1. Matters arising from the minutes:

**Action Points:**

* Ask local contractors for quotations for cutting the grass verges in Parish. The Clerk and Councillor A Colchester will meet to discuss the work to be undertaken**. Action: The Clerk and Councillor A Colchester.** This will be completed before the next meeting.
* Apply for grit bins once funding confirmed by Councillor Fleming. **Action: The Clerk.**
* Report fly tipping by low arch. **Action: The Clerk.** Completed.
* Litter pick on 6th April 2019 – litter pickers, bags and gloves. **Action: The Clerk.** Completed.
* Contact 2 of the contractors to clarify quantities and type of materials for the work to repair the track. **Action: The Clerk.** Completed.
* Respond to email about the planning application for roundabouts on the A140. **Action: The Clerk.** Completed.
* Details of application DC/19/00657 to Councillors. **Action: The Clerk.** Completed.

1. Notification of any urgent business.

* None.

**Public Forum.**

Meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Report by County Councillor Fleming:

**New Parking Order -** Suffolk Co Co has (on 1st April) published a new map-based Parking Order for Mid Suffolk, it shows all current on-street parking, loading and waiting restrictions. See: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/traffic-management-and-road-safety/waiting-and-loading-restrictions/>

**Roadside Vegetation Trimming Guidance –** If a town/parish council would like to undertake hedge or tree noticing there is now a registration mechanism with Suffolk Highways, mindful that special requirements apply to work during bird nesting season - 1st March to 31st July. Request details of this process from [customer.service@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:customer.service@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)

**Grass Cutting** – Plans and improvements to this year’s programme include:

* Recruiting new contractors to work with Suffolk Highways to undertake the works.
* Assigning the County into two areas covered by two distinct contractors, rather than one
* Publishing the programme earlier to enable planning for additional cuts if needed.

The grass cutting programme is published online at [grass cutting webpages](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/trees-grass-and-weeds/grass-cutting/#tab2). It includes 2 cuts on the A & B network and a single cut on C & U roads, some flexibility is inbuilt for seasonal variation.

**A140 Roundabouts –** the planning application for two roundabouts on the A140 at Yaxley and Thrandeston/ Brome will be determined by the County Council planning committee on 30th April. Construction is anticipated this summer. Refer to: <http://suffolk.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display?applicationNumber=SCC/0110/18MS>

**Women’s OVO Cycle Race** -.On Monday June 10th the first stage of Britain’s longest-running professional UCI Women’s World Tour series race will pass through Yaxley, Thornham & Walsham en route to Stowmarket. Download the [**Stage 1 map from Beccles to Stowmarket**](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/council-news/2019-OVO-Energy-Womens-Tour-Stage-1-Beccles-to-Stowmarket-map.pdf) (PDF, 734KB).

**Energy Grants** - A range of energy and environmental funding for community projects can be found at; <http://www.greensuffolk.org/green-communities/grants-and-funding-opportunities/>

For village halls: [Applicants can apply for grants by following this link.](http://acre.org.uk/our-work/rural-hall-improvement-fund.php)

**Extended Hours at Recycling Centres** - Suffolk County Council’s 11 centres are open from 9am to 5pm every day (including Sundays, but NOT Wednesdays) from Monday 1 April to September. On Thursdays from May to August, all sites will be open until 7pm.

The following points were made in the discussion of the proposal for Full Planning Application - Change of use of land and conversion of former equine outbuilding to agricultural/commercial herb processing unit. Improvements to site vehicular access and installation of sewage treatment unit.

Location:Land Adjacent Kiln Farm, Mellis Road, Thrandeston, Diss Suffolk IP21 4BD

* The application is to set up a business to grow herbs.
* Solar panels may be used to generate electricity.
* Water will be supplied from a bore hole. It was agreed that this should not affect the water supply for Kiln Farm and the bore hole should be at a depth to ensure that this does not happen.
* The change of use will be from a paddock for horses to agricultural.
* It was agreed that it would be unlikely that there would be a successful application to build a dwelling on the site.

Meeting reopened at 7.45 p.m.

1. Planning:
   1. Applications:
      1. A140 Roundabouts and Link Road improvement scheme – response by Suffolk County Council.

The following points arose during the discussion with the representatives of the Highways Department of Suffolk County Council:

* The plan is to open up Eye Airfield, but it was felt that this could be at the expense of some local villages as a result of the plan for the Northern Roundabout.
* There was concern about the time it will take to join the A140 when turning south from Thrandeston Road.
* The Parish Council also raised the difficulty of vehicles turning into Thrandeston Road and was concerned about the impact of the rerouting of vehicles through Mellis and Yaxley that would previously join the A140 at the Thrandeston Road junction because of the impact on:
  + Mellis Primary School particularly at the beginning and end of the school day and the increase in emissions.
  + Pedestrians.
  + Horse riders.
  + Cyclists.
  + Farms.

It was felt that due to the likely increase in traffic on the single-track road through Thrandeston there will be deterioration in the quality of life for the people of the village as a result of this application.

* The project will cost £5.4 million.
* It will not be ideal to use the.
* The situation at the junction of the Thrandeston Road where it joins the A140 will not improve in the future.

The Parish Council agreed the following response to the planning application:

1. The Parish Council felt that the expense of sending 5 members of the project team to the meeting was excessive, because it was not a consultation, but to tell Parish Councillors that the project will go ahead regardless of their comments.
2. There is no objection to the overall scheme of 2 roundabouts to improve the situation on the A140, but the objection is to the site of the Northern Roundabout and the lack of a direct link from the Thrandeston Road onto the roundabout.
3. There was obviously a lack of knowledge of the local area amongst the members of the project team and no understanding of how a largely agricultural area will operate. In particular, the need for access to farms in Thrandeston from the A140 and how the plan will affect them.
4. The data used to guide the planning is questioned for its accuracy and relevance.
5. The project team were casual in their comments about how traffic would reroute itself to avoid joining the A140 from the Thrandeston Road because of the difficulties caused by the significant increase in vehicles in future years and the positioning of the Northern Roundabout. The team members did not appear to be aware of the problems experienced by vehicles passing Mellis Primary School which will no doubt increase because of the current design for the project. There was a recent visit by Councillor Evans to look at the problems caused by the large number of vehicles parking on the road by the school at the beginning and end of the school day and the bend in the road which restricts the view of the traffic coming towards vehicles overtaking the parked cars. The problem is particularly bad in the afternoon when parents arrive as early as 2:30 p.m. and wait for up to an hour to pick up their children. The length of the queue of parked vehicles can extend to approximately half a mile. There are no passing places and the difficulties are exacerbated by large vehicles which frequently use this road when going to and from local farms and other businesses. There was a very casual attitude from the team to the safety of the pupils from the vehicles passing the school but also no consideration had been given to an increase in emissions by slow-moving vehicles passing the school.
6. The original plan had Thrandeston Road joining directly to the Northern Roundabout and to reinstate this design is the only acceptable solution to the Parish Council’s objection to this planning application. It appears that the landowner who would be affected if the Northern Roundabout is situated to allow a direct access from Thrandeston Road to it has not been approached to see if he/she would be prepared to sell the land to allow this to happen. The relatively small increase in overall cost has not been considered.
7. The team seemed more concerned with the problem they would have amending the plan than the impact on local people, not only in Thrandeston, but also Mellis and Yaxley, and in particular, to the children of Mellis who would face a significantly increased risk to their health and safety by the increase in traffic and emissions.

Response to the points raised by Highways in the Response made to Thrandeston Parish Council are highlighted in yellow. The paragraph numbers are shown.

**Traffic backing up on the A140:**

2.3.4 …. the applicant does not anticipate traffic backing up along the A140. The transport modelling predicts the longest queues at the Northern Roundabout on the A140 southbound approach to be in the region of 2 vehicles (AM peak, 2035).

2.3.5 Thrandeston Road junction is predicted to be affected in the future by queues from the Northern Roundabout. By 2035 the A140 at Thrandeston is anticipated to facilitate up to 1,500 vehicles per hour which equates to approximately one vehicle every 2.4 seconds, compared to 1 vehicle every 4.5 seconds in 2017. Gaps are not enough for vehicles exiting the Thrandeston Road to access the major arm which results in significant levels of delay being predicted on Thrandeston Road. The delay on Thrandeston Road is predicted to be caused by the high level of flows on the A140 not from queues blocking back from the Northern Roundabout. The queues will occur whatever the cause.

2.3.6 despite being overcapacity the low level of demand on minor arm means that queues are not predicted to increase greatly whilst delay per vehicle does increase. In 2035 queue lengths on Thrandeston Road are predicted to increase from less than one vehicle to 6/7 vehicles (AM peak) and 11/15 vehicles (PM peak). It is overcapacity, and there are no plans to make the position sustainable in the future and we experience most days what it is like to use the junction and the model is inaccurate.

2.3.7 …. the level of delay on the Thrandeston Road arm is also predicted to be significantly higher by 2035 but this is likely to be a longer-term issue as delays are not predicted to increase upon opening of the scheme in 2020. This ultimately leads to difficulty pulling out of Thrandeston Road for the small number of vehicles using this route. It is already difficult, I spent nearly 5 minutes waiting for a break in the traffic on the morning of 10th April 2019 at 09 20.

2.3.8 Delays on the Thrandeston Road approach are predicted to be in the region of 6/7 minutes in the AM peak and 25 minutes in the PM peak with the scheme in 2035. These delays are indefensible.

2.3.10 …. in reality driver behaviour will change in reaction to congestion and motorists are likely to re-route to avoid excessive waiting. This will force traffic to go through Mellis and Yaxley where there is already a significant problem caused by Mellis Primary School at the beginning and the end of the school day. Yaxley Parish Council had a meeting with Councillor Evans earlier this year about the problem of parking at Mellis Primary School and the effect on traffic flow. Any additional vehicles passing the school will increase emissions significantly and will present a health hazard to pupils. The school building is very close to the road and the increase in emissions from vehicles will be

affecting the children all day.

**Creation of a gridlock situation at Thrandeston junction**

2.3.13 The Lane is signposted, at both ends that it is unsuitable for HGVs. The road narrows to single track with passing place further along. It is inevitable that a long vehicle will have difficulties and farm vehicles that have to access fields by the junction will encounter conflict at times. What about HGVs going to farms, which will enter and exit the Thrandeston Road?

**Central Island:**

2.3.16 it appears that there is no understanding of the area of Thrandeston where agriculture is the main, if not the only, industry. HGVs will need to access the roads and will not use it as a shortcut. Does Highways use Google Street View from 7 years ago to guide its planning?

**Accident Black Spot Thrandeston Road and re-routing the Thrandeston Road to enter the A140 directly onto the roundabout.**

2.3.19 However, there is no better scheme configurations that is safe and affordable. What would the extra cost be? …. many other junctions on the A140 share the same problems due to the constant flow of traffic. They are not close to a roundabout where vehicles are likely to be accelerating following slowing down for the roundabout.

2.3.20 ‘Rat running’. Rat running will also be caused by people living in Thrandeston going through Mellis and Yaxley to join the A140 at the Southern Roundabout, and as stated above causing additional problems with traffic at Mellis Primary School.

This was reconsidered and eliminated as the land take required will be greater and the link road would effectively cut the field to the east in half, thereby severely affecting development opportunities on the Eye Airfield Site. As a result the location of the Northern Roundabout was moved south of Thrandeston Road. I can only conclude that development opportunities are more important than the people living in Thrandeston and the children attending Mellis Primary School. This also seems to contradict the other reasons given as it may be important to the planners of this project.

* + 1. Application No. DC/19/01563

Proposal:Full Planning Application - Change of use of land and conversion of former equine outbuilding to agricultural/commercial herb processing unit. Improvements to site vehicular access and installation of sewage treatment unit.

Location:Land Adjacent Kiln Farm, Mellis Road, Thrandeston, Diss Suffolk IP21 4BD

* See the discussion above under the Public Forum and It was agreed not to object to the application but to comment on the possible problems which could result from the need for a water supply and the potential impact on Kiln Farm and query the source of the electricity supply. **Action: The Clerk.**

1. Cutting of grass verges – Community Self-Help Scheme: Highway Contractor Consent Form.

* It was agreed that the Clerk and Councillor A Colchester would meet to discuss how to proceed with this project by asking local contractors for quotations for cutting the grass verges in the Parish. **Action: The Clerk and Councillor A Colchester.**

1. Environmental Stewardship claim form.

* Councillor A Colchester offered to check the form.

1. AOB - Any items raised earlier but not for an extended discussion or decisions and items for inclusion at the meeting on Thursday 16th May 2019.

* None.

Meeting closed at 8:58 p.m.