

**Minutes of the Feering Parish Council Planning committee meeting held on
Tuesday 3rd. May 2016 at 9.15am in the Parish Office**

Present: Cllr M. Lakin (Chairman), Cllr M. Bonner, Cllr K. Evans, Cllr M. Eddolls and Kevin Money (Clerk)

Members of the public attending: None

30/2016 Welcome & Apologies

Cllr M. Lakin welcomed everyone to the meeting

31/2016 Declarations of Interest

Cllr M. Bonner declared a non-pecuniary interest in the planning application 16/00569/OUT

32/2016 Agreement of Minutes of Previous Meeting

To Agree the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th. April 2016

Cllr K. Evans proposed and Cllr M. Bonner seconded that the minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting. **This was carried unanimously**

33/2016 Questions from members of the Public

As no members of the public were present there were no questions

34/2016 Consideration of the following Planning Applications

16/00569/OUT – Inworth Road / London Road Feering – Crown Estates

Outline planning application to include up to 165 dwellings (C3), vehicular access from London Road, public open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure, drainage works and ancillary works. Detailed approval is sought for access arrangements from London Road, with all other matters reserved

FPC Decision: Feering Parish Council OBJECTS to this Outline planning application at this present time as the BDC local plan is not finalised and so which development sites and where has not been decided upon. The site is currently greenfield (arable) and is outside the village envelope. Crown Estates assessment is that 22% of the area is grade 3a, good quality land and 62% is 3b, moderate quality. The best & most versatile land is defined as Grades 1, 2 & 3a. However, DEFRA data classifies the land as Grade 2. No comparative land quality data is presented for the other land owned by Crown Estates in Feering.

1. Infrastructure, A12 and traffic. Whilst in theory Kelvedon with Feering and hence the Crown Estate sites in Feering have good connectivity, in practice the roads and rail systems are already overloaded and lack capacity. Highways England plan to widen the A12 to three lanes between Chelmsford and Marks Tey in the road period 2015-2020. This includes the stretch of the A12 around Feering and Kelvedon. Highways England has requested that this application “be not determined before 31 May 2106” as Highways England need to “fully consider the application in light of the A12 widening proposals”. **FPC request that a decision on this Crown Estate application be postponed until is it clearer how the A12 plans will affect land around the Feering North junction.**

In October 2014, Crown Estates submitted a “call for sites” document covering all 3 Crown Estates sites and envisaging 950 dwellings. This document included a link road from Inworth Road to the north end of London Road / the Feering north A12 slip; roads from this site also fed into this link road. This link road is not included in the current OUT application. **FPC ask that this application is refused unless and until the road infrastructure is improved.**

The increasing volume of traffic feeding through Feering and Kelvedon, both local traffic and traffic from Tiptree and Coggeshall, to access the limited A12 junctions at Kelvedon south and Feering North is of concern to local residents, as evidenced by the 2012 Feering Village Plan, the responses to the Crown Estates consultation in November 2015 and the number of objections on the BDC website. Each new development, including developments in Tiptree, increases the traffic although each on its own is only assessed as an “incremental” increase that can be absorbed.

There are also already traffic issues on Inworth Road and through Kelvedon High Street, a conservation area.

Inworth Road junction: The queues on Inworth Road (B1023) are confirmed by Crown Estates ... *“the junction has been evidenced as currently operating at capacity with large queues and delays along Inworth Road”*. The traffic count data is flawed as there are count errors (0 vehicles for several hours) on 2 of the 4 days.

Feering PC and local residents have long requested the evaluation of a mini-roundabout at this junction. The “Manual for Streets 2” states that mini roundabouts can be fitted into junctions with an overall diameter of around 12 metres or less. In Part 1 of the TA, the comment is made that ECC may be implementing a mini-roundabout scheme. **FPC are unaware of any such intention and request that a mini-roundabout is evaluated** and not just traffic lights.

Proposed site entrance: The Transport Assessment documents with this OUT application include data on traffic counts in July 2015, just before the start of the state school holidays. The counts show a two-way flow on London Road (B1024) of about **770 vehicles per hour – 12 every minute** – past the proposed site entrance during the morning peak periods. The evening peak counts, cresting at 5-6pm, along London Road were slightly higher than the morning counts going northbound onto the A12. The October 2014, Crown Estates “call for sites” document gave a two-way peak traffic count of **1100-1200 vehicles / hour** along London Road – a higher figure than recorded in July 2015. These vehicle flows lead to queues at the Inworth Road junction now –there will therefore inevitably be queues at the site junction.

Right turns across the B1024 traffic flow: Vehicles turning right into Inworth Road from the B1024, Feering Hill have a limited central waiting area. This prevents too much of a back-up of vehicles on Feering Hill. No turning-lane provision appears to be envisaged at the proposed site entrance which could lead to traffic backing-up along London Road.

Trip generation: Part 1 of the TA assumes the following trip levels from the proposed 165 dwellings:

Table 5.2: Total Assumed Trip Generation

Commercial	Time Period	Arrivals	Departures	Two Way
Privately Owned Houses	08:00 – 09:00	21	68	90
	17:00 – 18:00	65	32	97

The assumption that only 68 cars -41% of households - will be driving out of the development during the morning “rush” seems an underestimate. Similarly the assumption that only 65 cars - -41% of households - will be driving into the development during in the evening “rush” also seems an underestimate. In the 2012 Feering Village Plan survey, 57% travelled to work or education – this is from an established mixed community. It seems improbable therefore that a lower % will be traveling to work from a new development.

A more likely estimate is that one car per dwelling would leave the development each morning and return each evening **i.e. 165 trips /hour**, which is almost 3 trips per minute. The trips would be to travel to work – as there is negligible employment in Kelvedon or Feering - and to take children to Kelvedon primary academy – 1.6-2km away – as there is very limited capacity at the closer Feering primary school.

Railway: There are already capacity issues in the railway car park and on the commuter trains which extra development in Kelvedon or Feering will only exacerbate. Extra people driving to the station will also only exacerbate the existing peak hour traffic issues along London Road, Feering Hill and the turn into Station Road. The erratic half-hourly 71 bus service for 3 stops is unlikely to encourage people to not use cars.

2. Connectivity: Walking & footways / pavements

Railway station: The station serves both Kelvedon & Feering – people also drive to the station from Coggeshall & Tiptree. As stated by Crown Estates, it is about 1200 metres /1.2 km from

the proposed site entrance on London Road to the station. However the estimated distance to the southern end of the site is about another 300-500 metres, making a total walking distance to the station of about 1500-1700 metres /1.5-1.7km. This is about 20 minutes walking time for an adult from the far end of the site. 800 metres is cited as the traditional cut-off distance for walking to a railway station in “*Planning for Walking*” (www.ciht.org.uk CIHT 2015 – a more recent source than “*Providing for Journeys on Foot*” 2000). Therefore it cannot be assumed that people will walk to the station.

Facilities: There are very limited facilities in Feering. The facilities in Kelvedon have declined (no bank, fewer shops); it is difficult to get appointments at the GP surgeries. The facilities in Kelvedon are 1.5km or further away from the proposed site. Whilst people are encouraged to walk for distances of up to 2km, research indicates that the cut-off is 400-800 metres. As such it is likely that people will drive to the facilities in Kelvedon exacerbating the traffic problems along Kelvedon High Street which is narrow and in a conservation area. Traffic regularly has to take “turns” to pass along the High Street, so it is not cycle friendly.

London Road (B1024) footway: The proposed new southern footway width of 1.8 metres along London Road (B1024), a main distributor road, is not in keeping with the Essex Design Guide (page 127). Feering PC request that the footway width be increased to at least the **minimum required width of 2 metres** including the section with the electrical pole pinch points. This is the proposed walking route to Feering primary school route which can therefore expect to be accommodating adults with children in hand and/or siblings in buggies.

London Road (B1024) & Coggeshall Road: FPC consider that the proposed courtesy crossing across London Road (B1024) to connect with the pavement on the west side of Coggeshall Road, which leads to the school and community centre, is inadequate and a potential safety issue in view of the volume of traffic along London Road.

As noted by Crown Estates, there is only a footway on the west side of Coggeshall Road. The site lines when walking from Coggeshall Road to cross London Road or turn north along London Road in the direction of the proposed site entrance are poor. **FPC would wish to see visibility improvements proposed for the junction of Coggeshall Road and London Road** for both pedestrians and drivers.

3. Schools – capacity and walking distances

Feering Primary school and Feering Community centre, on Coggeshall Road, are about 300/350 metres from the proposed entrance to the site on London Road. However the estimated distance to the southern end of the site is about another 300-500 metres, making a total walking to school distance of about 600-850 metres, 8-10 minutes walking time for an adult. This is on the limit of the distance that people are generally prepared to walk before going by car.

ECC have advised that Feering primary school is forecast to only have 8 surplus places by 2019/20 but ECC estimate that 50 primary places will likely be required (Table 10.1 Planning Statement). This number of spaces cannot be generated at Feering primary school unless it expands into the community centre space.

Kelvedon primary academy is considerably further away being 1.6 km / 1600 metres from the proposed entrance to the site on London Road, a 16-20 minutes walking time for an adult. However the estimated distance to the southern end of the site is about another 300-500 metres, giving a total distance of about 1900 – 2100 meters /about 2km. Crown Estates assess Kelvedon primary academy as being within walking distance – but 800 metres, a 10 minute walk, is the normal cut-off point after which people go by car – especially with primary school children in tow.

ECC have advised that Kelvedon primary academy is forecast to have 75 surplus places by 2019/20 (Table 10.1 Planning Statement). Depending on what other development sites are supported in the BDC Local Plan for Kelvedon with Feering, there would appear to be sufficient places at Kelvedon Primary academy but FPC consider that parents would be likely **to drive to Kelvedon** rather than walk which would exacerbate the car parking situation at school start and end times, which is already difficult.

There are no secondary schools in the villages but there are public buses and school transport.

4. Proposed development – layout / illustrative masterplan

Housing numbers and mix

Outline planning permission is requested for 165 C3 dwellings, approximately 400 people, based on an average of 2.4 persons per dwelling (2011 Braintree District census data). The OUT application form proposes 99 market housing units, 46 social rented housing units (28%) and 20 intermediate housing units. It is not clear how these application form figures correspond with the figure of 40% affordable housing quoted elsewhere (e.g. Table 10.1 Planning Statement). The actual outturn of built social housing in developments is generally less due to (non)-economic viability arguments.

Car Parking and turning space

Feering Parish Council shares the concerns expressed in the Urban Design consultation response regarding the insufficiency of car parking space in the illustrative BDC RLP56 & the ECC Parking Standards Guidelines adopted by BDC, require 2 parking spaces per 2+bedroom dwelling and 0.25 visitor parking spaces per dwelling. The Essex Design Guide indicates 3 spaces for a 4-bedroom dwelling and a minimum size of a parking space of 4.8m x 2.4m, larger if the space is bounded by walls / hard structures. Parking spaces in-front of dwellings should not intrude into footways. It is not clear to FPC where these parking spaces will be. **FPC request that an updated masterplan is produced clearly showing roads, footways and car parking spaces / garages.**

The link into the public footpath 18 which is at the south / SE end of the site is welcome as the 2012 Feering Village Plan highlighted the value people placed on footpaths. This footpath also provides access to the Threshelfords Business Park which is immediately adjacent to the SE corner of the site.

It is known, and referenced by Crown Estates in their October 2014 BDC Call for Sites document page 37, that there is an insufficiency of car parking space on the Threshelfords Business Park. **Feering PC are concerned that this overflow car parking will move onto the estate roads of the development, specifically at the south end of the proposed dead-end spine road.** The suggestion that business park car users will switch to public transport and walking or cycling using the connection afforded through the proposed development is not credible as the bus stops on London Road and Inworth Road are already within walking distance of the business park.

There are issues with roadside & estate parking by commuters in Feering and Kelvedon which has led to 1 hour no parking restrictions in several places in Feering (e.g. Feering Hill, Sherwood Mount estate, Millers Mead estate). **FPC therefore feels that the provision of sufficient (off-road) residents parking is vital** in case similar 1 hour no parking restrictions have to be enacted in this development.

The long spine road in the illustrative masterplan is a dead-end road with cul-de-sacs / courtyards off it. **FPC are concerned that there are insufficient turning spaces** in the illustrative masterplan for refuse collection vehicles and delivery vehicles in the cul-de-sacs and at the southern end of the spine road.

4. IN CONCLUSION:

The BDC Local Plan Committee are currently evaluating sites submitted for the new Local Plan. Kelvedon with Feering has been identified as an area for development. A decision on WHICH sites to support is expected to be made around the end of May. **Feering PC OBJECT to this proposed development of 165 dwellings and request that a decision on this Crown Estate application be postponed until after all the proposed sites in Kelvedon with Feering have been evaluated.** FPC do not wish to see piecemeal development of 50-100-150 house sites each only being deemed “incremental” with no consequent serious infrastructure improvements. We would wish to see development considered as a whole and assessed as a whole phased development with commensurate infrastructure in terms of roads, primary school places, playing fields, medical facilities, etc. in place as development proceeds rather than at the end or not at all.

35/2016 Decisions made by Braintree District Council

16/00132/FUL – Prested Hall Prested Hall Chase Feering CO5 9EE
Erection of extension to health and leisure club to form two new padel tennis courts and replacement weights room – **APPLICATION GRANTED**

16/00037/TPO - Feering Vicarage 11 Feering Hill Feering Essex CO5 9NL
Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order 6/02 - Three Sycamores behind 31 Marshall Close reduce in height by 5 metres and thin by 20% and Three Sycamores behind 33 Marshall Close reduce in height by 7 metres (or to bring in line with trees behind 31) and thin by 20% - **APPLICATION GRANTED**

36/2016 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Crown Estates application update

37/2016 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

MONDAY 31st MAY 2016 at 9.30am in the Parish Office

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.25am and thanked everyone for attending the meeting

Signed.....31st. May 2016
M. Lakin