

# Extraordinary Meeting of Dunkirk Parish Council

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## Minutes of virtual meeting held via “Zoom” at 7.30pm on 6 April 2021.

### Present:

Members of Dunkirk Parish Council: Jeff Tuff (JT) Chair, Julie Coleman (JC) Vice Chair, Steve Hitch (SH), Daniel Brice (DB), Kevin Kemp (KK) and Jason Clifford (JCL) and Matthew Bullen (MB), clerk to Dunkirk Parish Council

Ward Councillor: Alistair Gould (AG)

Kent County Councillor: Andrew Bowles (AB)

Policy Planning Manager, Swale Borough Council: Jill Peet (JP)

5 members of the public

**Apologies for absence:** None received

### 1. Welcome from the Chair, Dunkirk Parish Council

JT thanked everyone for attending and, in particular, paid thanks to JP who had given up her holiday time in order to attend this meeting which was very much appreciated. It was also stated that this meeting had not been called to discuss the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan and that other opportunities would be available for members of the public to discuss that separately in due course.

### 2. Introduction to the Local Plan review (LPR) by JP

The intention of this introduction is to outline the “basics” of the LPR and matters within this that relate to Dunkirk.

The LPR is a statutory function and sets out Swale Borough Council’s “blueprint” for the area. The LPR is not solely about housing and seeks to address many other issues such as the economy and the environment and includes matters which are specifically important to the Council itself such as aiming for carbon-neutral development.

Without an LPR, local authorities would have less control over planning matters which would then defer to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the absence of one.

When preparing an LPR a local authority has demonstrate it is evidence based and that it considers both any local constraints that may apply as well as potential positive impacts such a healthier environment.

For Dunkirk, a “call for sites” would be issued to the Parish Council and developers in an effort to identify sites which are both available and deliverable within the period of the LPR.

One site at Winterbourne Fields was put forward, as well as a few other smaller pieces (which could be considered via the usual planning application route) but none have been taken forward and the LPR doesn’t include any development sites within Dunkirk itself. However, Lamberhurst Farm in the neighbouring parish of Hernhill includes strategic employment site due to its proximity to the A299 and a housing development at nearby Selling is also included.

The majority of housing developments are concentrated in South and South East Faversham, Sittingbourne and Rushenden, Sheppey. Furthermore, Teynham has been identified as an area of opportunity for 1,100 homes.

The deadline for comments is 30 April 2021 and everyone is urged to look at the LPR and be involved in the consultation. Members of the public do not have to use the forms provided, however responses must be made in writing. Swale Borough Council will then co-ordinate the responses to ensure they are considered against the appropriate areas of the LPR. The Council are also happy to talk to members of the public about any matters relating to this.

### 4. Public Open Session

JT asked JP to clarify the “4 pillars” of the process which JP advised are:

1. That it is positively prepared – it meets the needs of the area’s objectively assessed needs

2. That it is justified – it is appropriate and based on evidence
3. That it is effective – it is a plan that is deliverable
4. Consistent with National Policy – that it complies with the NPPF

A member of the public asked for clarification of the Parish Council's consultation with regards to the "call for sites"?

Another member of the public advised in response that no consultation took place between Swale Borough Council and Boughton Parish Council and AB advised that no consultation took place with Selling Parish Council either. JT advised that Dunkirk were made aware of "call for sites" but were not consulted on them.

It was discussed that individual Parish Councils, including Dunkirk would submit their own responses to the consultation and that they would also liaise with the other Councils which form the Boughton & Courtenay Ward, with the intention of submitting a joint response in addition.

A Council member asked how Swale Borough Council could be sure that proposed sites could actually be delivered?

JP advised that they would not proceed with a site unless they had certainty that it could be done and establishing confidence in that was part of the process in developing the plan. They also have a particular number of houses in mind for each development site identified.

AB queried if it was reasonable to assume that the numbers envisaged invariably change further down the line?

JP advised that the numbers set out are the minimum each site expected to deliver with two exceptions – the developments at Boughton and Selling which are both stated as being the maximum number.

A Council member asked how the Council would ensure that sites identified for employment are kept as such and not converted to housing sites at a later stage?

JP advised it is the intention to keep all employment sites as such and that this is something that would be constantly reviewed. However, it is possible that, for example, if a site became redundant due to a change in the economy, that the use of a site could change but the aim is to keep to the developments as planned.

A Council member asked if the land owned by the Duchy of Cornwall identified for housing in the Plan is to be made available to smaller developers to build rather than being offered to large contractors?

JP advised that the Duchy's preferred model is to use SME's rather than large contractors and that this approach has been welcomed as it promotes more individuality to the sites and generally better developments.

AB queried if the LPR would supersede the recently published Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan?

JT advised that the LPR could not put constraints on the Neighbourhood Plan.

JP advised that they are aware of the consultation happening with regards to the Neighbourhood Plan but regardless of this, would aim for harmonious discussions between the Council and Parish Councils and that any areas of concern could be revisited if necessary.

JT expressed his thanks to everyone attending and in particular to JP for being so willing to address any concerns, whilst expressing disappointment that not more of the residents had attended, given the importance of the LPR to the area over the coming years.

The meeting closed at 8.08pm.

Matthew Bullen  
Clerk for Dunkirk Parish Council