

FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Planning Committee

held in the Church Centre, Fenstanton Tuesday 14th 2026

Present: Cllr M Hewitt, Cllr R McGee, Cllr A Mustill, Cllr J Purkiss, Cllr A Puntambekar and Cllr T Yates (Chair)
In attendance: Ali Watchman assistant to the Clerk, 14 members of the public.

Minutes

1. **To receive any apologies of absence and any declarations of interest.**

Comments and observations from members of the public (NB comments should be relevant to items on this agenda only)
Apologies – Cllr A Janocka and Cllr S King.
Declarations of interest- Cllr T Yates -Item 3
Cllr R McGee proposed Cllr M Hewitt as Chair for this meeting. **Cllr A Mustill 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED Cllr M Hewitt is Chair for this meeting.**

Meeting closed ; 19.03.

Parishioner 1 stated that a gate had been installed on the bridleway without planning permission and without permission for vehicle access. As the only bridleway in Fenstanton, used by around 3,500 residents, its loss as a safe, vehicle-free route was a major concern. Handouts showed the hedge removal and gate installation occurred before the full application was submitted.

Parishioner 2 highlighted that the bridleway narrows to approximately 3.5 m, making it unsafe for cars to pass walkers, cyclists or horse riders. Blind bends already result in daily near-misses, and the route lacks passing places, lighting and signage. Additional dwellings would increase both resident and heavy-vehicle traffic, with construction posing particular safety risks.

Parishioner 3 noted that the Fen's surface historically deteriorates badly in winter and residents already struggle with maintenance. Increased traffic would worsen conditions, and with the parish now responsible for upkeep, the financial impact was a concern. Construction vehicles would add disruption and risk blocking emergency access. They stressed the need to consider cumulative impact, as a third dwelling may still come forward, and noted residents were not notified of the earlier in-principle application.

Parishioner 4 reiterated the lack of site notices for the earlier application. They drew attention to a restrictive covenant allowing only stables or non-commercial agricultural buildings, reflecting long-standing intent to preserve the rural character. The Fen is valued for recreation and access to the guided bus, and development risks eroding its landscape. They warned that approving one or two dwellings could set a precedent, making future protection harder.

Parishioner 5 raised concerns about poor drainage, with no gullies or soak aways, meaning extra properties would push water toward existing homes and neighbouring land. Parking capacity was insufficient, likely causing overspill onto the Fen. Emergency access to the guided busway must remain clear, yet construction vehicles could obstruct the narrow lane and worsen the deteriorating surface.

Parishioner 6 stated that the flood risk assessment was not policy-compliant, using a 20% climate-change allowance instead of the required 35–70% for the Great Ouse catchment. This understated future flood levels and weakened the conclusions. The FRA also contained caveats about accuracy and should be rerun with correct allowances, revised modelling and a proven drainage strategy.

Parishioner 7 referred to the British Geological Survey, noting they could produce a site-specific hydrogeological report within 20 working days for a fee, and confirmed willingness to fund this.

Parishioner 8 identified errors in the application documents, including Highways referring to the bridleway as a private road and appearing unaware of definitive map restrictions. A temporary traffic regulation order would not be feasible due to agricultural access needs. They noted that self-build status exempts the proposal from mandatory biodiversity net gain. The ecology report was considered inadequate, missing nearby protected areas and evidence of badger activity. Soil described as sand was actually imported sand. Concerns were raised about drainage changes if the former manège were covered, increasing runoff and flood risk. Past flooding at lower gates took two days to clear. They also referenced the Planning Inspectorate's decision on 10 Honey Hill, which found development outside the village boundary contrary to Local Plan Policies 2, 8 and 10.

Parishioner 9 expressed concern that pressure to meet housing targets could influence decisions. They felt the proposal did not meet local housing needs, such as affordable or family homes, and would instead create expensive, exclusive properties.

Meeting opened 19.26

2. **To approve the minutes of the Planning meeting held on Thursday 9th July 2026.**
Defer to next planning meeting as believe there may have been an abstention on the proposal.

3. **PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 26/00950/FUL**
Erection of 2 No. residential self-build dwellings pursuant to 25/00865/PIP
Land North Of The New House The Fen Fenstanton.
Cllr R McGee Proposed the planning committee send this response recommending the application for refusal - The Parish Council has carefully considered this application for the erection of two dwellings and requests that Huntingdonshire District Council gives particular regard to the cumulative impact of this proposal, both in its own right and in conjunction with the adjacent proposal for a further dwelling on the site of former barns. Whilst the application relates to only two dwellings, the Council considers that the cumulative effects of the proposed developments should be fully assessed before a decision is reached.
The Parish Council therefore asks the Local Planning Authority to give particular consideration to the following matters
Flood Risk and Drainage – The application site lies adjacent to areas identified as being at risk of flooding. The Parish Council requests that the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that an appropriate Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy demonstrate that the development will not increase flood risk either within the site or elsewhere, either individually or cumulatively with nearby development.
Highway Safety and Access – Access to the site is via an existing rough tarmac-surfaced bridleway that also serves residential properties. The surface has previously required repairs funded by the Parish Council. The Council requests that the Local Planning Authority carefully considers whether the access is suitable to accommodate the cumulative increase in residential and construction traffic associated with this proposal and neighbouring development, together with the implications for the condition, maintenance and safe use of the bridleway by pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.
Cumulative Development – Whilst each proposal may be relatively modest when considered independently, the Parish Council considers that the combined effect of three additional dwellings represents a more significant extension of development at the edge of the settlement. The cumulative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside should therefore be fully assessed.
Environmental Impact – The Council requests that due consideration is given to the cumulative effects on biodiversity, landscape character, trees and hedgerows, and surface water management, with appropriate mitigation secured where necessary. The Parish Council respectfully requests that Huntingdonshire District Council is satisfied that the cumulative impacts of this development, together with the adjacent proposed dwelling, have been comprehensively assessed before determining the application. Where permission is granted, the Council asks that appropriate

planning conditions are imposed to secure effective drainage, protect biodiversity, and ensure that any impacts arising from construction traffic and the long-term use of the access are appropriately managed. **Cllr A Puntambekar 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED to send recommendation of refusal to HDC.**

Meeting closed 19.39

Signed Cllr M Hewitt (Temporary Chair) …….