

**WARRINGTON NATURE CONSERVATION FORUM
COMMITTEE MEETING 29 AUGUST 2017
GRAPPENHALL LIBRARY 7pm**

Present; Geoff Settle (Chair) (GS)
Roger Lamming (Secretary) (RL)
Paul Speake (PS)
Brian Martin (BM)
Eric Fletcher (EF)
Les Jones (LJ)

Apologies: Rob Smith, Ian Greaves, Tony Parker, Andrew Pearson.

Minutes of previous meeting

Accepted as a true record of the meeting

Matters Arising

A number of articles have now been prepared with 3 published in the Warrington Guardian. Others are ready and will be submitted to the Guardian in the hope they will be published.

Planning Matters

The Local Plan was the subject of considerable debate. WNCF will concentrate of protecting and enhancing wildlife assets particularly local wildlife sites and wildlife corridors. (*NB - see attached letter by RL to WBC re. site in Croft*).

EF offered to produce an overlay of sites to highlight potential impacts of developments. (**ACTION EF**)

GS will contact Helen Lacey to seek advice on how we could respond. (**ACTION GS**)
It should be noted that the Plan is at an early stage and in mid 2018 a draft plan of selected sites is the next stage.

Sightings

Peregrine Falcons at Mersey Gateway and Thelwall Viaduct

Black Necked Grebes at Woolston Eyes

Swifts seen flying around the tower at Chester Road but not seen entering. May take a number of years for this to occur.

To encourage wildlife, the following were discussed.

BM has met the rector at St. Elphins with a positive response to installation of 2 swift boxes each with 4 nesting chambers. They will require cabling. Cost yet unknown but it was agreed that WNCF funds could be used to help finance the installation.

Swift towers have also been raised as an option for a feature at the top of Risley restored landfill (Silver Lane Ponds).

RL reported on the suggested diversion of the footpath from the riverside to a path through Withins Hill Wood. RL has objected in his capacity of Footpath Secretary (Ramblers Assoc.) Brian Martin is to write similar objection on behalf of WNCF.

(ACTION BM)

AOB

BM reported that the bank mandate has now been finalised with he and RL as signatories.

LJ raised whether we could apply for grants for projects. All to give thought to possible projects. (ACTION All)

BM proposed Phil Jones on behalf of Stobart Forestry as a possible speaker for our AGM in December. BM to contact him (ACTION BM)

PS reported that the public were well engaged with raising funds to re-build the tower at Risley Moss following the burning by vandals.

Next Meeting

Committee - Monday 20 November Grappenhall Library

AGM - Saturday 2 December - RL to contact Fiddlers Ferry Resource Centre.

Roger Lamming
Secretary

31 August 2017

Warrington Borough Council
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
Warrington

Dear Sir

**Local Plan Review
Preferred Development Option Consultation**

I am writing in response to the Local Plan Review and would offer the following comments.

It is disappointing to learn that housing is now proposed for development on green belt land around Croft Village as I have tirelessly campaigned for many years to retain the current boundary around the village inset. However, I note that a further assessment of constrained sites is to be carried out before proposals are finalised and I would urge you to ensure that all possibilities for housing development within the Croft village inset have been fully considered. If green belt land is then required I would request that the following points be taken into account.

The scale and size of proposals should be in keeping with the size of the village. Large scale development is unsustainable as Croft lacks shops other than a gallery, has no medical facilities and only limited recreational facilities. Many access roads are country lanes, mostly without pavements and there are no cycle ways within or providing access to the village. Buses are infrequent and non existent after 7pm.

Development should therefore be sustainable and developable based on a thorough understanding of the impact on the current village inset and the remaining green belt land. Housing should be of high quality respecting the existing quality of Croft and it's environs and features in order to maintain a 'sense of place' for existing residents. In particular it should retain existing environmental features including the local wildlife site to the eastern edge of the village inset, other publicly accessible green spaces, woodland areas, existing trees, hedgerows, watercourses and heritage features within the village. These provide valuable wildlife corridors and a source of irreplaceable recreation and amenity for both residents and visitors.

Any loss of green belt land should be compensated by the inclusion of appropriate mitigation measures paying particular attention to the following:

- the local wildlife site should not only be preserved but developed to include a management plan and a footpath network linked to existing pavements (footways)
- New off road pedestrian and cycle routes should be an integral component of developments linked to existing pavements in residential areas to provide direct safer

access to facilities particularly the local primary schools.

- Croft suffers from speeding motorists particularly along the main through route where the two primary schools are located. Increasing the number of houses would add more traffic as well as increasing traffic on existing residential roads. Traffic calming measures should be installed along this route.
- Public Rights of Way should be preserved and where possible enhanced to include cycle ways and bridleways to provide safer to and from the village for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

I hope that there is an appreciation of how sensitive existing residents feel about future impacts on Croft Village. They take great pride in the village and wish to ensure this endures well into the future.

It is hoped that these comments will be given serious consideration before proposals are finalised and if there is an opportunity to provide further input then I would be pleased to assist.

I should be grateful to receive an acknowledgement to this letter.

Yours faithfully

Roger Lamming