



Laxfield Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting



20 January 2026 at 6:00 pm in the Guildhall Parish Room

MINUTES

Attendees: R. Sutton (Chair), C. Baldry, D Alchin, P Lowe (clerk)

Iain Jamie (*Director of Beauly Homes*), Ben Whiting (Director of Beauly Homes) and David Barker (*Director of Evolution Town Planning Ltd*) attended the meeting.

A member of the public also attended.

1. Apologies and approval of absences

D Martindale, S Ellis.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Bickers Hill development proposal by Beauly Homes

In October 2025, Beauly Homes discussed draft proposals to build 17 new homes (including 6 social/affordable homes) on a site East of Bickers Hill Road in Laxfield.

Beauly Homes feel that this development would support the Government's agenda to build more homes, which currently includes a target to build 131 additional homes in/or around Laxfield.



The planning committee highlighted four key areas of concern relating to drainage/surface water run off; sewage management; ecology of the path and surrounding hedges; and site access in terms of the safety for walking and the impact of a site entrance splay. To address some of these concerns, Beauly Homes have revised the site layout to build 15 Homes (including 5 social/affordable homes) and also provided details of the proposed drainage and sewage plans. These are available on the Parish Council Website. They also said that they would be willing to carry out village consultation about the development, if required.

Key points at note:

- *Surface Water run-off and sewage management:* The revised layout includes 2 large attenuation basins at the front of the development. These are not meant to hold water permanently and are only for water capture when there is excessive rain. Dye testing has been done to check where the water will flow down to and via the bridge at the bottom of

Bickers Hill. By having a development, the excess water flow will be controlled and less water will flow above the road. Beaulieu Home would be willing to further discuss water management at the bottom of the hill, to support current arrangements for flood mitigation. The proposal for foul water would be to connect into the main sewage pipe that runs down Bickers Hill Road, and Anglian Water have said that there is available capacity. The committee reiterated the concern that new developments are now causing an overload issue for the village infrastructure and the Laxfield Sewage Works, which is regularly releasing raw sewage into the Blyth river.

- *Site access and safety:* The site entrance splay will be set back 2.4m from the road and shrubs will be planted to ensure good visibility. Beaulieu Home proposed developing a footpath, separated by road lining, down the east side of Bickers Hill. Red chip tarmac will be used to delineate between the path and road. The committee also discussed options to make this area a 20mph zone if the development was built, as traffic volume is fairly low in this area.
- *Ecology:* Beaulieu Homes own the ground that the hedge is on at the front of the development, and Suffolk County Council currently maintain the hedge. Previous landowners gave the rights for part of the front hedge to be taken down for an entrance. Committee members asked for technical drawings to see what would happen to the hedge. The remaining hedge to the north side of the site is Hawthorne and would be trimmed back, as part of regular hedge management.
- *Community Infrastructure Levy:* A levy will apply to this site and the Parish Council will get 25%, as per the Neighbourhood Plan threshold guidelines.
- *Property price and affordability:* The range of prices for properties on the development are currently estimated at between £320,000 and £550,000. However, this is subject to change depending on market variations and when the development is built. Committee members asked that rental in perpetuity be considered for the 5 social housing properties, rather than shared ownership, if the development got approval.

4. Planning

a. The following applications as requested by MSDC, were discussed:

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/26/00067

Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 Prunus – to reduce the crown by approx 2 - 3 metres. *Location:* 2 Old School, Church Walk, Laxfield, Woodbridge IP13 8DL.

Application received: 8 January 2026.

Comments: After consultation with the Laxfield Tree Warden, there are no objections to this application.

5. The following point was discussed without any need for approval:

- *Path between Blacksmith's Way and Mill Close:* The MSDC Tenancy Management team held a site meeting with the Parish Council on 9 January to discuss whether a section of the garden between the Close and the Grove can be used to complete the path, and whether Suffolk County Council would be willing to fund the works. Regulations on the height of the recently erected fencing is also being checked.

Meeting closed at 7:15 pm.

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