



Drawn by Rosemary Ingram

## Ecton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting of Ecton Parish Council** held in the Village Hall, High Street, Ecton on **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026** at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Mr I Whittaker (Chair), Mrs C Adams, Mrs S Bell, Mr D Dicks, Mr J Fernley, Mr S Griesewood and Mr A Sandhu

**In Attendance:** Mrs S Wong – Parish Clerk, Umrah Madaik NNC Senior Planning Consultant, NNC Councillor Vicki Jessop and 1 Parishioner Sebastian Charles

Item No	
1167/2026	<p><b>Public Session – Parishioner Points – Lasting up to 15 minutes</b>            Parishioner Mr S Charles spoke about the updated planning application for 2 Parsons Close – Agenda Item 1186/26 and his concerns.</p>
1168/2026	<p><b>To Receive Apologies</b>            Apologies were received from Cllr N Bond and Unitary Cllr S Brown.</p>
1169/2026	<p><b>Receive any Declarations of Interest</b>            No Declarations of Interest were received</p>
1170/2026	<p><b>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>            It was <b>RESOLVED</b> the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council held on the 25<sup>th</sup> November having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair Mr I Whittaker.</p>
1171/2026	<p><b>Does the PC want to review its Neighbourhood Development Plan – Umrah Mahadik – NNC Senior Planning Consultant</b>            Umrah Mahadik – NNC Senior Planning Consultant attended the meeting to answer questions councillors may have with regard to updating the Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan. Umrah stated there is no statutory requirement to review a neighbourhood plan, but it is recommended that neighbourhood plans are reviewed every 3 to 5 years. It was Resolved to give the matter some consideration. Action: The Clerk is to email Umrah and ask that she reviews the current Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan and suggests anything that needs updating to meet any new requirements.</p>
1172/2026	<p><b>To receive a report from North Northamptonshire Councillors and to Receive any updates regarding reducing the speed limit of the old A4500, Request for Yellow Lines in Church Way &amp; Ecton Refuse Centre update</b>            Cllr Vicki Jessop reported there was no further information on the Ecton Refuse Centre at the moment.            Yellow Lines – Cllr Scott Brown is happy to support any application.            The NNC Member Empowerment Grant for another Chair Pilates programme in 2026 has been approved, the Chairman Cllr I Whittaker needs to sign the Grant Agreement paperwork.            The NNC Budget Consultation 26/27 ended on 23.1.26. The Local Plan has now had the review date pushed back to end of 2027, early 2028.</p>

	<p>NNC are asking Parish Councils to submit transport schemes for consideration for future funding under the Local Transport Grant programme.</p>
/1173/2026	<p><b>Receive updates of village walkaround with Highways from Councillor Ian Whittaker and agree the PC's next steps, does the PC want to apply for a Local Transport Grant</b></p> <p>The Clerk, Chairman Cllr I Whittaker recently had a village walkabout with Ashleigh Fluegel Community Liaison Officer (Highways) to discuss concerns in the village. These included a request for yellow lines at the junction of Church Way, the safety of the Church Way junction due to parked vehicles, parking concerns at the junction of Wellingborough Road and High Street, reducing the village speed limit to 20mph, installing a gateway on the A4500, install an island by the bus shelters on the A4500 to help with crossing, one way signage on Wellingborough Road and speed reduction on the A4500.</p> <p>Ashleigh has responded she has put in a request for 20mph throughout the village and 30mph on the A4500 to be considered by the Highways Panel at their next panel meeting. The PC are able to install a gateway on the A4500, a request needs to be made to the regulations team to add this to the PC's Section 50 Licence. <b>Action:</b> The PC will submit a request to install an island on the A4500 as part of a Local Transport scheme under the Local Transport Grant Scheme. The Chairman Cllr I Whittaker will put an scheme outline together to be submitted by the deadline of 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026.</p>
ended1174/2026	<p><b>Parish Council Vacancies – Discuss any Applications</b></p> <p>No applications of interest have been received. The Clerk will continue to advertise the Parish Councillor vacancy.</p>
1175/2026	<p><b>Receive any Police Updates from Councillor Ian Whittaker</b></p> <p>The Chairman Mr I Whittaker had no police updates to report at this time. Ian did meet with Mike Batten from the Police Injustice Team and showed areas where there was a need for tidying up and litter picking. Ian suggested they concentrate on the top of the village.</p>
1176/2026	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>CAN Champion and Parish Nature Recovery Plans – The PC do not wish to progress a Parish Nature Recovery Plan at this stage.</p> <p>WNC are to use a camera mast in the hopes to tackle fly tipping crimes.</p> <p>Potholes and road safety online survey. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to share on social media.</p>
1177/2026	<p><b>Receive an update on the updating of the Parish Website – Cllr S Grisewood</b></p> <p>Cllr S Grisewood reported that he now has complete control of the Ecton Village Website. A new website will be created using the www.ectonparishcouncil.gov.uk domain name. The PC will take over paying of the hosting in May 2026 at a cost of £190. It was <b>Resolved</b> to keep both domains .gov.uk and .org.uk for the time being so a redirection service can take place. The PC needs to have the new website fully running by the 31<sup>st</sup> March and it needs to conform to Assertion 10 regulations, the Clerk will present this information at the March PC meeting.</p>
1178/2026	<p><b>Financial Matters</b></p> <p><b>a Review of financial statement as at 27/01/26 &amp; propose payments for bank authorisation at meeting</b></p> <p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve payments to be made in January 2026 (Appendix A) via bank transfer. These payments were authorised online during the meeting via NatWest Bankline by Cllr Mr J Fernley</p> <p>The Clerk reported the Bank Balances to date as reconciled to the bank statement were as follows: <b>Current Account £50.00, Reserves Account £24,100.65 less January payments of £687.82 = £23,462.83</b></p>

	<p>This is broken down into £3,338.53 David Cross funds, -£36.48 Playing Field Funds, £51 Chair Pilates Grant and £20,797.60 Parish Council Funds.</p> <p><b>Income received since November 2025</b> Bank Interest £19.47 31.10.25 (David Cross Fund) &amp; £21.90 31.12.2025. Financial reports were received for information.</p> <p><b>b. Note the approval of the NNC Ward Member Empowerment Grant for Chair Pilate 26</b> It was noted that Cllr C Adams has had her 2<sup>nd</sup> NNC Ward Member Empowerment Grant for Chair Pilates 2026 approved. Official documentation should be received shortly.</p> <p><b>c. Discuss and agree quote to cut back shrubs at the shrine and clearing alleyway in West Street</b> It was <b>Resolved</b> to accept the quote from Hayeswood Landscapes of £380 to cut back the shrubs at either side of the shrine and to cut back and clear vegetation from the alleyway leading from West Street to High Street.</p>
1179//2026	<p><b>Village Services</b></p> <p><b>a Receive any update reports on the Playing Field – Review Annual Inspection Report</b> The Annual H&amp;S Inspection report has taken place. Cllr D Dicks examined the two pieces of equipment that were flagged needing attention in the report. A loose bearing was reported on the Spinner. David looked at the spinner and found the bearing to be tight and not loose as described. A post was reported as being loose on the climbing frame, David was unable to find the loose post.</p> <p><b>b Receive updates and discuss any village maintenance matters inc the Lower Ecton Lane fly tipping and maintenance</b> The Clerk is yet to advertise the sale of the Dog bin. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk will email all local Parish Clerks to try and sell the bin.</p> <p>The fix my street report the Clerk reported regarding the dangerous footpath on the bridge at Lower Ecton Lane being slippery when wet has been closed. It was not deemed a concern by Fix my Street. They will monitor the condition as part of their routine highway schedule.</p>
1180/2026	<p><b>Receive any reports from Parish Councillors</b> Cllr D Dicks reported that the bus shelters near the Worlds End Pub need a wash. Could the Chairman mention this to the Injustice Team and see if they are able to give them a clean when they are working in the village?</p>
1181/2026	<p><b>Discuss any planning related matters including those not yet determined Planning Applications 25/02199/FUL &amp; 25/02198/LBC at 2 Parsons Close, Ecton, NN6 0QJ – The Council have a number of objections to make on this application – Please see appendix B.</b></p> <p><b>Tree – Notification of Works in a CA:G1; 3 x Laurel stems – reduce in height by 1m, Cherry – reduce weight of northern stem by 2m. – Ecton Hall, Church Way, Ecton.</b> The PC does not need to respond to this notification of works.</p> <p><b>Green Hill Solar Farm – EN010170 – application for additional land for the Green Hill Solar Farm.</b> The PC had no comments to make at this stage.</p>
1182/2026	<p><b>Progress any Matters Arising from the previous minutes not covered by items on the agenda</b></p>

	There were no matters arising to discuss.
<b>1183/2026</b>	<b>Discuss any items to be considered for the next meeting</b> No items were suggested to be added to the March agenda at this time.
<b>1184/2026</b>	<b>Date of next meeting – Meeting of the Parish Council - Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to hold the next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 in Ecton Village Hall at 7.30pm.
	<b>Close: The meeting ended at 9.20pm</b>

Signed by .....Date .....

## Appendix A

### 1178/2026 Financial Matters

Monies must be paid out only in pursuance of statutory powers (SP) vested in the Parish Council. All paid under the General Power of Competence which was implemented in May 2025.

**RESOLVED** balances as presented are accepted. **RESOLVED** the following accounts be paid.

#### Payments to be made in January 2026

Payment Method	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details
DD	61.89	2.36	Valda Energy	Street Lighting costs 1.1.26 to 8.1.26
BT	352.42	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 27.12.25 to 26.1.26 20 hours @ LCP 27 £19.81pph Office & Broadband £35.42 Tax deductions £79.20
BT	79.20	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI Contribution £0 Tax S Wong £79.20
BT	163.80	27.30	EON	Repair of street light and replace photocell
BT	160.00	0.00	Shevolution Fitness	Hire of Pilates Teacher in January 2026

**Total value of payments £817.31**

#### Note approved payments made out of meeting in December 2025 by the Clerk using delegated powers

Payment Method	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details
BT	185.80	8.35	Valda Energy	Street Lighting costs 1.12.25 to 31.12.25
BT	368.23	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 26.11.25 to 26.12.25 21 hours @ LCP 27 £19.81 = £416.01 Office & Broadband £35.42 Tax deductions £83.20
BT	83.20	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI £0.0 Tax S Wong £83.20
BT	180.00	30.00	Seagrave Inspection Services Ltd	Annual H&S Inspection of the Play Equipment at the Play Park
BT	157.60	70.00	Eon	Repair of street light and replace driver

**Total value of payments £974.83**

3rd February 2026

Email: [planningcomments@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:planningcomments@northnorthants.gov.uk)  
Kate Skingley  
Senior Development Management Officer  
Development Management Services  
Cedar Drive  
Thrapston  
NN14 4LZ

Dear Kate

**Ecton Parish Council's Amended Response to Planning Applications 25/02199/FUL & 25/02198/LBC at 2 Parsons Close, Ecton, NN6 0QJ**

**Introduction**

Ecton Parish Council has considered the above application carefully and wishes to state at the outset that it strongly supports the redevelopment of this site and the removal of the existing derelict bungalow, which detracts from the character and appearance of this important part of the village.

The Parish Council has engaged constructively with the applicant through earlier submissions and has consistently sought to encourage an appropriate form of development that reflects the highly sensitive location of the site within the Ecton Conservation Area and adjacent to the Shrine (War Memorial). In doing so, the Council has set out clear and repeated concerns relating principally to height, scale, materials and impact on important public views, all of which are grounded in the adopted Ecton Neighbourhood Plan and the Conservation Area Appraisal.

While the current submission incorporates some changes when compared with first submissions for the site, the Parish Council is disappointed that its key concerns have not been sufficiently addressed. In particular, the proposal remains overly dominant in height and continues to rely on materials and a design approach that do not adequately respond to the distinctive character of this part of the Conservation Area.

For the reasons set out below, the Parish Council objects to the application in its current form.

**Policy 2: Dwelling Size**

Policy 2 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan states: "The provision of dwellings with 3 or fewer bedrooms will be supported. Alternative provision will only be supported where up-to-date evidence of need in Ecton is demonstrated."

The Parish Council notes that first submissions for this site proposed a substantially larger dwelling, effectively capable of accommodating four to five bedrooms. The current proposal

represents a material change in this respect and is now presented as a three-bedroom dwelling.

The Parish Council welcomes this reduction and accepts that, in terms of bedroom numbers, the proposal now aligns with the intent of Policy 2. While the dwelling remains a relatively large three-bedroom house, the Council is content with the proposed footprint and internal arrangement in principle.

However, the acceptability of the dwelling size cannot be considered in isolation from its overall scale and height. The Parish Council's remaining concerns relate not to the number of bedrooms, but to the vertical massing of the building and its impact within the Conservation Area and on important public views. These matters are addressed under Policies 7 and 10 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Accordingly, while the proposal is now broadly compliant with Policy 2 in terms of dwelling size, this does not outweigh or mitigate the conflicts identified elsewhere in the Plan.

### **Policy 7: The Conservation Area**

Policy 7 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan states:

“To be supported, development proposals, including extensions, must demonstrate consideration of the impact on the significance of the Ecton Conservation Area, in particular with respect to the following positive and locally distinctive characteristics identified in the Ecton Conservation Area Appraisal.”

The stated objective of this policy is:

“To ensure that the design of new development maintains and, where possible, enhances the historic environment of Ecton.”

The Parish Council strongly supports the redevelopment of this site and the removal of the existing derelict bungalow. However, given the prominent and sensitive location adjacent to the Shrine (War Memorial) and at the northern gateway to the High Street, the replacement building must clearly and demonstrably preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The current proposal does not do so.

### **Scale, height, orientation and massing**

Policy 7 requires explicit consideration of: “the scale, height, orientation and juxtaposition of existing buildings”.

As with first submissions for this site, the Parish Council considers that the proposed dwelling remains excessively tall and vertically dominant for this location. While the applicant has made modest reductions in height across successive submissions, the current proposal remains materially similar in overall scale and continues to read as a full two-storey building rather than a true 1.5 storey form.

The Conservation Area Appraisal makes clear that the character of the High Street is defined by broadly comparable ridge and eaves heights, creating a strong sense of visual continuity

and enclosure. The proposed dwelling would disrupt this established pattern and would be visually prominent when viewed from the Shrine and from key public viewpoints along the High Street, including views from 2 High Street.

The Parish Council's concern is not with footprint or site coverage, but with vertical massing. A material reduction in overall height, or a revised design approach that more convincingly breaks down the perceived height and bulk of the building, would be necessary to address this conflict. We suggest a genuine 1.5 story design with the eaves down to the level of the bottom of the first floor windows or the top of the ground floor windows.

### **Materials and architectural detailing**

Policy 7 further requires consideration of: "the use of traditional materials and architectural features including building and roofing materials and fenestration and chimney stack details".

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies local stone, painted timber windows and traditional detailing as defining characteristics of the area and explicitly discourages the use of modern substitute materials where they erode local distinctiveness.

The proposed use of modern facing brick (Weinerberger "Olde Autumn Antique"), while intended to appear rustic or reclaimed when viewed at close range, reads as a contemporary brick when seen at distance, including from the Shrine and along High Street. In these longer views, which are of particular importance in this location, the material does not reflect the locally distinctive stone character identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

While the Parish Council recognises that contemporary design can be acceptable in principle, the materials proposed do not respond appropriately to the architectural language of this part of the Conservation Area, particularly given the prominence and sensitivity of the site.

The Parish Council is disappointed that this issue, raised clearly in relation to earlier submissions, has not been meaningfully addressed. The continued reliance on non-heritage materials undermines the requirement of Policy 7 that development should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

### **Setting of heritage assets and design quality**

Policy 7 also requires careful consideration of: "the setting of heritage assets".

The Shrine (War Memorial) is identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a locally significant heritage asset and a focal point at the northern end of the High Street. Views from and towards the Shrine contribute materially to the character and identity of the village.

The Parish Council considers that the height and massing of the proposed dwelling would intrude into these views and would erode the visual primacy of the Shrine and its setting.

### **Policy 7 is explicit that:**

"Standard designs which fail to capture or complement the distinctive and traditional character of the Conservation Area will not be permitted."

While the Parish Council supports high-quality contemporary architecture where it responds sensitively to its context, the current proposal is generic in character and does not adequately reflect the form, scale or materiality of surrounding development. The Council further notes that some neighbouring buildings were erected prior to the extension of the Conservation Area and would be unlikely to meet current policy requirements if proposed today. These historic decisions should not be used to justify further erosion of character.

### **Conclusion on Policy 7**

For the reasons set out above, the Parish Council considers that the proposed development fails to comply with Policy 7 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, it does not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, nor does it respect the scale, height, materials or setting appropriate to this highly sensitive location.

### **Policy 10: Important Public Views and Vistas**

Policy 10 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan states:

“To be supported, development proposals must demonstrate that their layout will safeguard and, where possible, enhance the following important views, including views along High Street, including views of the War Memorial.”

The Parish Council considers the Shrine (War Memorial) at the northern end of the High Street to be one of the most important public viewpoints in the village. It marks the entrance to the Conservation Area and provides a clear and historically significant view southwards along the High Street.

As with first submissions for this site, the Parish Council remains concerned that the height and massing of the proposed dwelling would intrude into this view. Despite minor amendments between submissions, the building would remain clearly visible from the Shrine and would appear unduly prominent when read against the established roofline and built form of the High Street.

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies this northern gateway as having a more open character, with important open space around the Shrine. The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its height and proximity, would erode this openness and detract from the setting and prominence of the War Memorial.

The Parish Council does not consider that the proposal safeguards this important public view, nor does it enhance it. A materially lower building height would be required to ensure compliance with Policy 10.

Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policy 10 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Policy 12: Car Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging**

Policy 12 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan states:

“Where it is necessary to count a proposed garage as a parking space to ensure compliance with the adopted parking standards of the Highway Authority, permission will be subject to a

condition preventing its future conversion for use as an extension to a dwelling without planning permission.”

The Parish Council notes that, based on the current three-bedroom layout, the proposed parking provision is broadly acceptable in principle.

Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the application, the Parish Council considers it appropriate that a condition is imposed to ensure the garage remains available for parking use, in accordance with Policy 12, so as to safeguard long-term compliance with parking standards in this sensitive location.

### **Overall Conclusion**

The Parish Council’s objection is not to redevelopment of the site in principle, which it actively supports, but to the form and execution of the current proposal.

Taken together, the conflicts identified with Policies 7 and 10 of the Ecton Neighbourhood Plan are substantive and go to the heart of the purpose of the Conservation Area designation. Despite earlier feedback, the proposal remains excessively tall for its context, visually intrusive in key public views from the Shrine and along the High Street, and insufficiently responsive in its choice of materials and architectural detailing.

The Parish Council remains keen to see a revised scheme brought forward and believes that an acceptable solution is achievable. In particular, a material reduction in overall height, perhaps 1 to 1.5 metres, combined with the use of more appropriate, locally distinctive materials, would represent a constructive way forward and could address the concerns set out in this response.

Until such changes are made, the Parish Council considers that the application does not comply with the adopted Ecton Neighbourhood Plan and should be refused.

North Northants Council has a copy of our Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan, Please ensure you refer to this when assessing this planning application and all Ecton Applications received.

Yours faithfully  
Shirley Wong  
Clerk of the Council