

CURBRIDGE AND LEW PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Parish Hall, Curbridge, Monday 11th April 2022, 6pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Glenn Gannon (Chair), John Courtney, Patrick Foley, Mark Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Howard Higgins (Clerk & RFO), Ben Woodruff (District Cllr.), Ted Fenton (County Cllr), 20 members of the public (including Steve Forde (SF) and Jake Collinge (JC) representing the outline planning application for 25 houses).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Phil Boddington, Angela Boddington.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2022, which had previously been circulated, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

5. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS

Ted provided an update on county council matters. There is a cycle race due to start from Chipping Norton later this year. Ted advised of the SCRAP campaign (fly-tipping).

Ted has been trying find out the future of the S1 bus service through Curbridge. There is nothing definitive to report but this is likely to become a reduced service through Curbridge due to the Windrush Place development. Ted also advised Abbeymill Homes will be responsible for the alley between Dovecote Place and Well Lane as it has not been adopted by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). RESOLVED: Ted will e-mail details to the clerk. Ted left the meeting.

Ben provided information about the £150 refund scheme applicable to properties covered by bands A to D.

The enforcement notice confirmed as issued in respect of the land South of Main Road. Appeal has been lodged by the site owner against the enforcement notice. This is with the planning inspectorate under appeal reference numbers APP/D3125/C/22/3295097 and APP/D3125/C/22/3295096.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 22/00744/OUT – Outline application for the provision of up to 25 dwellings (including affordable housing and self-build housing) and associated works with all matters reserved except the access. Land South Of Main Road, Curbridge. Long discussion and debate ensued about this application and added as an addendum to the minutes.

RESOLVED: The Parish Councillors unanimously objected to the planning application. Glenn did advise a detailed submission will be sent to the planning officer and thus published by WODC on the planning portal. Glenn pointed out the Parish Council are not professionals and need time to compile a proper response but did summarise the reasons for the objection as follows:

- ❖ The proposed development is clearly contrary to the linear of development in the village;
- ❖ The objection is consistent with the Parish Council views following a meeting with a past prospective developer for a similar proposal;

- ❖ It does not comply with the village design statement which is used as a local planning document by the Parish Council;
- ❖ There is concern over the access;
- ❖ The proposed development will clearly have a negative impact on Thatched Cottage which is a listed building;
- ❖ Not satisfied ecology issues have been properly considered;
- ❖ The Parish Council was not properly consulted before the submission of this application and has not had the chance to consider the entitlement to S106 funds should the planning application be successful.

Most people then vacated the meeting. RESOLVED: to ensure completeness the Parish Council formally approved the flyer referred to earlier in this meeting just before the closure of the meeting.

- 22/00692/HHD – Erection of a single storey rear extension. 76 Well Lane, Curbridge. RESOLVED: no comments.
- 22/00961/HHD – Two storey rear extension. 6 Dovecote Place, Curbridge. RESOLVED: no comments.

7. FINANCE

Cheques for signing: Wages additional hours (£40); PAYE (£216); printing (£31.31). Year end figures presented by the clerk. Larger than expected surplus partly due to no bill being received for the play area bark and the grass cutting costs being less than expected. Clerk confirmed the records for the year have been passed to the internal auditor.

Bank balance as at 1st April 2022 = £7,192.68.

Clerk advised compensation received from Barclays bank for their errors in dealing with the mandate changes and this used to pay for extra hours worked by clerk in dealing with those issues.

Clerk has started to address on-line banking but this will need a councillor to assist as 2 persons required to authorise on-line payments.

8. WELL LANE PLAY AREA AND PLAYING FIELD

March inspection signed by Chairman.

Glenn has obtained a quote from the fencing contractor for replacement fencing to help address rabbit problem from the neighbouring field. This includes the cost removal of the existing fence with the field. RESOLVED: quote accepted but first need to establish ownership of the fence and if approval required before instructing the contractor to proceed.

9. SUNDRY NOTICES

- Presentation given by Rachel Crouch about installing 'bus stop library' to promote reading for pleasure. This could be using a purpose built structure or perhaps an old red telephone box. RESOLVED: agreed by Parish Council subject to there being a suitable location to site the 'library'. This to be investigated.
- The developer has confirmed a new Parish noticeboard will be sited at an agreed location by the play area in Well Lane. A commemorative sign is also being considered as appropriate to mark the forthcoming Queen's Jubilee.

Next Meeting - Monday 9th May.

Cllr. Glenn Gannon, Chair of the Council
Signed 9th May 2022

Addendum (Parish Council minutes 11 April item 6 refers)

Discussion about planning application

SF invited to give his representations in respect of his planning application. He disagreed with the nature of a flyer hand posted to advising residents of the planning application. He queried why this was issued by the Parish Council and how this can be correct under the Code of Conduct. Glenn explained the Parish Council only had a very short time-frame within which to respond to the planning application notified by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). [For completeness this was sent to the Clerk by WODC on 28 March with a comment response date of 18 April. In addition the Clerk was away until 31 March. This left a short time-frame before this Parish Council meeting.] The Parish Council thought it was only fair to ensure the residents of Curbridge were made aware of this application as agreed at an informal meeting by the Parish Council. It is noted the application was considered very similar to the presentation given by Abbeymill Homes at the Parish Council meeting dated 16 September 2019 (item 58 refers) where the Parish Council view is clear. SF objected to the use of the Lord Kitchener logo on the flyer but this was dispelled by the floor who quickly pointed out this is appropriate given the name of the pub in Curbridge. SF believed the flyer to be inaccurate but again the floor did not view the flyer as being inaccurate. Glenn also believed the flyer to be correct and thus the Parish Council acted in good faith.

Apparently there had been a misunderstanding in that the owner of the triangle land will now apply for planning permission and confirmed not to be the case. This verified by Mark and the representative for the owner of that land.

It was pointed out the Parish Council was not properly included in pre-planning discussions as can be seen from past minutes.

Glenn advised of a verbal agreement with OCC to use land (adjacent to this development) for parking for the Parish Hall and access will be required. This is not evident in the plan.

SF gave some information on the nature of the planning application with further details provided by JC. JC stated the planning application takes into account WODC views and is policy compliant. They advised of a pre-planning application with WODC and the need to address the whole plot. SF advised that WODC would not consider less housing than should be met on the plot. This was subject to numerous questions and surprise this can be the case. Glenn had previously offered SF his own personal view of only a very small number of houses may be expected for this site.

The floor directed criticism at SF as to why there had not been any formal pre-planning engagement with the Parish Council and the village. The floor also pointed out there is a village design statement (VDS - this is published on the Parish Council website) that tries to match WODC policy. The floor stated it is quite apparent this was not considered when making this outline planning application otherwise it would not have been submitted. The VDS clearly refers to the linear development pattern of the village. It pointed out the mess created at the site did not help to get villagers onside with any planning application. The floor gave the view that this overall approach had lost the trust of the village.

The floor asked Ben about the usual yellow planning notification displayed for planning applications. Ben confirmed this is the responsibility of WODC to site and display this notice. Concern expressed by parties on the floor this could not be seen despite looking for it and this was shared by SF. Clerk confirmed he found the siting of the notice but it is very poorly displayed and could hardly be seen (wrapped around a street post). Ben to contact planning officer to ensure planning notice properly displayed.

Ben advised this planning application would be considered on its own merits and would not mean further development is then allowed on neighbouring land (i.e the Triangle) and thus open 'floodgates' for development on that land should this application be approved. He advised this is WODC policy. The Parish Council did not agree this would, in reality, be the case should this planning application be approved. Glenn pointed out the Parish Council minutes from 16 September 2019 and the relevant extract is reproduced for reference:

Representatives from Abbeymill asked if there any compromises to be had on the potential development of the land. General response from PC and floor is development of the brownfield area only and no development of the greenfield area and perhaps they should renegotiate with the landowner. Abbeymill advised they had not taken option on land before the installation of the gateway at the end of The Chippings. pointed out the ecology of the area included protected bee species, 31 species of bird and 10 species of bat. There was also concern over the ecological approach by Abbeymill at the Well Lane development for which Abbeymill offered apologies.

The development of the greenfield area is not in the WODC local plan. This is also contrary to the linear development of the village. Ben [Cllr. Woodruff] advised Abbeymill unlikely to get approval for greenfield development from planning officers but all aware position may change depending on the outcome of the Curbridge Triangle appeal.

The Parish Council noted the submitted application was little different from what was proposed by Abbeymill Homes. Question put to Ben about his comment then and what is different now? Ben acknowledged there is probably no change but did mention the land supply. The land supply issue was quickly addressed by the floor to say that WODC is meeting its targets as published on the WODC website.

Ben stated he had spoken to the planning officer dealing with this application for any views but the officer concerned had not yet had time to look in detail at the planning application.

The floor expressed their dissatisfaction with the state of the land and the use of it as a builders yard along with bonfires. SF advised the use of the land was established but this quickly refuted by residents who have known the area for 60 years and stated this has never been the case.

Several concerns were raised by residents about the impact of sewage from this proposed development to an already problematic system. Reference made to blockages and backing up at properties in Elmbank Court and Well Lane. Ben referred to flooding being addressed at planning but Glenn stated the issue was sewage rather than potential flooding.

Reference was made by SF and representatives about Dovecote Place development being allowed. Ben stated this was due to a loophole in planning. This was better addressed by the floor to state the Dovecote Place development only occurred due to WODC not having the local plan in place thus allowing that development to occur. The Dovecote Place development would not have happened if the local plan had been in place and that only properties along Well Lane may have been permitted.
