

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee held on
30th November 2020 via Zoom

Present Jane Hartley (Chair), Claire Andersen, Narinder Ryatt, Mike Heath and Roanna Collis

Apologies

Absent

150/20 OPEN FORUM - There were no residents present

151/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CLERK - There were no interests declared

152/20 The Minutes of the Meeting on 2nd November 2020 were approved.

153/20 Highways

It was noted that the clerk had been in contact with Robert Curtis, Transport Planning Team Manager at WBC, regarding the state of the cycle track, and he said he would ensure the work would be done. He also said he would bring up the Council's concerns about the proposed driveway at 1a, Milestone Crescent. Cllr. Andersen had brought this to the attention of Alex of Reading Cycle Campaign, and he has objected. The clerk reported the latest data from the Speed Indicator Device, that the volume of traffic had been lower than before the Pandemic, but that the maximum speeds are still worryingly high, at 75mph. It was noted that the tarmacking of Milestone Avenue was to take place in the week commencing 7th Dec, after the WBC Rights of Way officer had balloted all the households on the road to see whether they were in favour. A small majority were, so the decision has been taken to go ahead.

154/20 Environment

The clerk reported that she had met Ian Gough, WBC's Energy Manager with Cllr. Andersen and the Amenities Manager at the Village Hall to discuss how the energy efficiency of the building could be improved. He said that the best way to increase heating efficiency in the hall was to install infra-red heating, which heats people not the whole room – he suggested that maybe we could look at it in another hall where it has already been installed so we can give it due consideration. He has also offered to get his contractors to install LED lighting where we have not yet done so, and to check the cavity wall and loft insulation, and get this done, if necessary. He said that the alternative way of getting away completely from gas, was to install air source heat pumps, but that these are noisy and unlikely to get planning permission. There would be some sense in installing solar panels and storage batteries and he would advise how many would be sensible as there is little to be gained from selling energy back to the grid. It would make more sense to take the decarbonisation of the building step by step as to try to do it in one go would cost around £60,000.

It was noted that the elm application had been successful.

The clerk reported that she had been in touch with WBC about the Community orchard idea and that it was probably time to try to get local support and volunteers for the project. If this could be done, and we can show that residents of The Hawthorns are happy, then this would go a long way in our efforts to get this idea going.

155/20 Planning

a) **The following Applications were discussed (246)**

202975 Application to vary condition 2-6-7-10 of planning consent 152510 for the Full application for the proposed erection of a four-bedroom, two storey dwelling. Condition 2 refers to approved conditions, Condition 6 Landscaping scheme. Condition 7 Parking Provision. Condition 10 Garage to be retained as such and the variation is to remove conditions 2-6-7-and 10, (Retrospective) at 1a Milestone Crescent – The clerk was asked to object as follows

This application is to vary the conditions laid down when 152510 was approved in November 2015

Charvil Parish Council would like to object to all the variations and removal of conditions for the following reasons.

1. *This site has a long history of applications, and the previous application, F/2014/2679 was refused on several grounds, but when taken to appeal, the one issue that concerned the inspector was parking. The report stated “The site lies close to a junction where on-street parking should be discouraged in the interests of highways safety.....{and} highway safety is likely to be harmed, contrary to the provisions of CS policy CP6 requiring development schemes to provide appropriate vehicular parking and not to cause highway problems”. The approved plan for 152510 was approved because it had a driveway away from the junction, and it was deemed that with the garage and the smaller porch, there was ample off road parking to satisfy the concerns of the inspector. Conditions 7 and 10 of this application was to ensure that the parking provision could not be removed.*

2. *What was actually built was not in accordance with conditions 2, 7 or 10, as the porch was much bigger than the plan allowed for, and the garage was replaced by habitable accommodation, making it hard to park two cars comfortably off the street. The Parish Council see the problems that the new application seeks to resolve by varying these three conditions, plus condition 6 regarding the landscaping as entirely of the applicant’s making, with no regard to road safety, or the environmental concerns behind the Landscaping scheme.*

3. *While the alternative garage that has been erected is not part of this application, the proposed new driveway to allow this garage to be usable as such, is unacceptable as it is on a bend and very close to the junction, close to a tree of considerable amenity value, the roots of which would very likely be damaged by a new driveway, and would create a serious hazard for cyclists using National Cycle Route 4. Visibility would be very poor from the right as the tree would be in the sight line, and vehicles and cyclists approaching from the left would not be clearly visible either, as there is a great deal of on-road parking on Milestone Crescent. We accept the driveway is not a planning issue in itself, but if the Landscaping condition is varied, it would be to the detriment of other residents and road users potentially, if Highways were minded to allow a new driveway across their land.*

Consequently, the Parish Council object to all four conditions being varied or removed.

203111 Householder application for the proposed part conversion of existing detached garage to rear of dwelling to create habitable accommodation at 1 Edward Road – no Parish Council comment

b) **The following Planning Application Approvals were noted**

202502 Householder application for the proposed erection of a two-storey front extension, part single storey, part two storey side/rear extension, single storey side extension to create garage, plus the insertion of 7no. roof lights, following demolition of existing garage, dining room and family room at 3, Strathmore Drive

202604 Application for the proposed extension of existing dropped kerb at 111 Old Bath Road

202642 Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension at 7, Charvil House Road

c) **The following TPO works approvals were noted**

202881 APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO PROTECTED TREE(S) TPO 275/1984, T2
T1, Oak - Crown lift to approximately 5m on all sides by removing secondary growth
only where possible; prune to give a minimum of 3m clearance to the house at Land
West of Park Lane, south of 7, The Hawthorns

Any other Planning business at the discretion of the Chairman

Items for Consideration

156/20 Update on the Pavilion Plan

Cllr. Heath shared his draft business plan to gauge opinion and explained that Cllr. Ryatt was working on the costs of the project but he wanted to share this now to make sure he was on the right track. It was agreed that there needed to be risk assessments done regarding CIL payments, and clearly by building something that relies on CIL repayments means we are tacitly accepting that the village is going to grow. It was also generally accepted that any decision should be led by what the building is for and what we are trying to do, rather than looking at what funds we already have, and stick within those parameters, otherwise we will end up in the same position as we are now, with a substandard building that needs replacing in a few years. The next step is to get the finances as accurate as possible and out as quickly as possible

157/20 To consider and changes to the Objectives Document – There was nothing to add for this meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.16pm