

At a Meeting of Whittington Parish Council held at Whittington Village Hall on Tuesday 9th October 2012 at 19:30 Hrs.

Democratic Period/ Question Time: The Chairman welcomed all present and invited comments relating to parochial matters, indicating the nature of the main business of the evening.

The neighbour in respect of planning application W/12/01946/PN spoke at length on the proposed development indicating (amongst others) the concerns he felt regarding its proximity to his home, the size of the building, the possible use and nuisance arising therefrom. He was also concerned about the effect on nearby Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area, and the traffic and parking issues relating to its possible use. He criticised the lack of consultation and the way in which the applicants and their advisors had proceeded indicating that he had engaged professional advisors in support of his views, and that he and they considered the application flawed in many aspects and not fit for consideration.

A representative of the applicants spoke subsequently, outlining the process by which the application before the Council had been arrived at, and the reasons for the proposed siting and construction of the building. As to use it was stated that no "social club" use was proposed and that its primary function would be to provide a safe environment for children during church services, to host church related meetings and school liaison visits.

The Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee expressed concern that the uses indicated by the applicants' representative might result in conflict with the use of the Village Hall, to the detriment of the Hall which had for many years been a focus of the village. The applicants had made no effort to liaise with the VHMCC with regard to the possible impact of the enlarged building upon the lettings of the Village Hall. He was concerned too about the parking problems likely to be engendered by increased use, and noted the failure of the church in the past to negotiate with others to resolve the problem, and had also been unable to persuade attendees to park considerately.

The wife of the neighbour mentioned above indicated that she considered the proposed building to be unnecessary as there were so few children attending church, that she considered the building to be a facility for a small clique of church members, and that she had been advised that for the cost of the original "Jubilee Room" an adequate alternative facility could have been provided adjoining the church.

There being no other contributors the Chairman closed this session and opened the Council Meeting proper.

2012.115 Attendance.

Present: S.L. Brooker, J.E. Chamberlain, S. MacLeod, C.A. Smith, P.J. Wood.

In Attendance: P.S. Roe, Clerk; District & County Councillor R.C. Adams.

2012.116 Declarations of Interest and Ethical Matters.

- a. There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on this Agenda.
- b. There were no declarations of Other Disclosable Interests in items on this Agenda.
- c. Ethical Matters. The Chairman reminded Members of their personal responsibility to keep their Register of Interest entries up to date.

2012.117 Minutes of Previous Meetings of the Council.

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11th September 2012 having been previously distributed were taken as read, and unanimously adopted (SLB/CS) without amendment.

2012.118 Planning.

a. New and Unresolved Planning Applications:

Application Number: W/12/01946/PN - Non-householder planning application

Proposal: Removal of temporary building providing meeting room and WC facilities; erection of single storey building to provide meeting room, store and WC.

Location: St Philip and St James Church, Church Lane, Whittington, Worcester, WR52RQ

Applicant: Whittington DCC

Response: Members, having all been present throughout the Democratic Period and having heard the remarks of all the speakers considered the application which they had all been able to access on line, or view prior to the meeting.

The Chairman reviewed the Council's comments to an earlier, similar, application, and invited Councillors to comment in turn, before putting forward his own view of the situation, which took into account comments made to him by parishioners and comments which had appeared on the WDC website prior to this meeting.

The following areas of concern were raised:

Proximity to Whittington Lodge, a Grade 2 Listed Building.

Location in the Conservation Area

Increased size of new building compared to the existing (temporary) Jubilee Room leading to potential for greater activity, and possible range of uses.

No change to existing parking provision, generally considered to be inadequate.

Lack of consultation with Village Hall Management Committee and other bodies in the village.

After further discussion it was agreed (SM/PJW) that the Clerk respond to the Planning Authority along the following lines:

That the Council acknowledged the need for the replacement of the existing (temporary) "Jubilee Room", but was concerned at the proximity of the building to the neighbouring property, Whittington Lodge, and the size of the replacement building.

The Council considered that the new facility had potential to detract from the Village Centre being promoted in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, and could potentially conflict with the existing &/or new Village Hall. The building proposed offered potential for occupation by up to 25 adults or 30 children, yet no provision had been made for improved parking facilities.

In order to protect the amenity of the neighbouring property and to reduce the likelihood of conflict with the Village Hall the Council felt that the use of the building should be carefully restricted to church related activities and that it should not be used for social functions such as receptions, parties and the like.

The Parish Council felt that the sensitivity of the site (Conservation Area / Listed Buildings / trees) was such that the application should be determined by the Planning Committee and not be delegated to an Officer.

Members agreed with the District Councillor that the application merited a site visit by the Planning Committee prior to determination.

At this point the Chairman adjourned item 2012.118 and dealt with item 2012.122 which was also of major public interest. That item is reported in numerical sequence

Application Number: W/12/02045/PN - Non-householder planning application

Proposal: Erection of 256 dwellings including a proportion of affordable housing, new vehicular access off Walkers Lane and Spetchley Road, provision of public open space including an equipped area of play and community allotments, internal estate roads and associated works

Location: Land Adjacent Kilbury Drive off, Spetchley Road, Spetchley.

Applicant: Bloor Homes Ltd

Comment: The Chairman informed Members that the application had only just been received and that due to its size & complexity, and the Clerk's advice about the need to allow proper voicing of public concern about the development, he did not propose to consider the application in detail this evening. Members concurred with this view. The Clerk explained the deadlines imposed by WDC but was requested to seek the extension of the time for response (which could then be taken into account in negotiations with developers) beyond the end of the Month, whilst noting that the final deadline of 14th November already agreed would not allow time for the Council's response to be negotiated with the developers.

It was agreed that Members should meet informally the following week to review the plans received by the Clerk prior to a possible public meeting later in the month which would precede the Council's formal deliberations at a Parish Council Meeting to be arranged.

b. Previous consultations:

Application No.: W/12/01886/PP-Householder planning

Proposal: Single garage within front garden

Location: Elms Close, Old Road, Whittington, Worcester, WR52RL

Applicant: Mr R Lander

Response: No objection, no comment.

c. Planning Decisions: To receive reports of Planning decisions and Appeal decisions notified to the Council.

Planning Application: W/12/01886/PP; Elms Close, Old Road, Whittington; Single Garage within front garden; for Mr R. Lander. Approved STC - time, materials restricted usage, water management.

Appeal Ref: APP/H1840/A/12/2177124

Planning Application W/11/02349/OU: 17 Houses on land at Walkers Lane, Whittington, Worcester. WR5 2NN by Antringham Developments Ltd.

The outline application was approved but with a condition requiring applications in respect of reserved matters to be submitted within 6 months and development to commence within 12 months after the last reserved matters were approved. The appellants sought extension of this time limit. The appeal was upheld and the periods were extended to 18 months and two years respectively.

d. Other Planning Consultations: None.

e. Other Planning Matters: None.

2012.119 Urgent Progress Reports/Updates on Matters Previously Resolved.

None.

2012.120 Finance.

The Clerk reported as follows: -

- a. Receipts: since the last meeting: WCC re. Lengthsman - £138.60 re August, 2012; WDC Second half Precept £3287; HSBC Interest c21p/month;
- b. Payments: a list of invoices and requests for payment totalling £435.07 was submitted. Payment was approved (SLB/CS) unanimously.
- c. Proposals for Expenditure. There were no proposals for expenditure.
- d. Other Finance Matters:

Audit: The Clerk reported a "Clean Sheet" audit and drew Members' attention to a query during the audit requiring submission of a revised Accounts Reconciliation as the original one (preceding amendment of account to take into account a missed cheque) was erroneously included in the papers sent to Clement Keys. Notice of completion of the audit had been publicised in accordance with legal requirements.

Quarterly Accounts report to 30/9/2012 This had been sent out to Members electronically that day and would be included for approval on the agenda of the November meeting.

High Interest Deposit Bond: As this matured on 18th October the Clerk sought instruction. With the receipt of the second half precept it was agreed (SLB/CS) to increase the deposit from £15k to £18k and “roll it over” for a further 6 months.

2012.121 Highways & Byways.

a. Highways Matters:

General: None

Swan Roundabout Improvements:

WCC had agreed to a Meeting to be held “post audit” if required. Nothing further had been heard and the Clerk was to remind the Highway Authority appropriately.

Councillors had received many complaints about the new arrangement, and remarked on extensive adverse press coverage.

M5 Noise: None

Maintenance:

Previous Matters:

B 4084/M5 Motorway J7 roundabout - there had been no progress with repair of the footway

New Matters:

Overgrowing hedges on Walkers Lane and on Old Road opposite the Swan were reported - the Clerk to action appropriately.

Traffic Management:

Previous Matters:

M5 Motorway J7 roundabout: WCC had agreed to reduce the speed limit to 40 m.p.h. and were to initiate consultation as part of the process.

WCC had agreed in principle to provide white lining to denote a pedestrian/cycle route over the island and was to initiate the necessary consultation

Speed enforcement B4084; Nothing further reported.

Village Gatings: These were ordered and installation awaited. At the request of the County Councillor the Clerk clarified that payment arrangements were to be as follows:-

Walkers Lane: Highway Authority 50%, Parish Council proportion (50%) to be met from County Councillor’s Discretionary grant.

Swan Access Road: To be funded as part of Swan Roundabout Improvement initiative

Enforcement of Access Only Order: No further development reported

Yellow box junction markings at Swan Roundabout: no response from WCC - see “Swan Roundabout Improvements” above.

Response by Chairman to WCC in criticism of negative attitude. A response from the Director of WCC Environmental Services - P. Blake - suggested a meeting be held. The Chairman had agreed. Councillor Adams agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

New Matters: None.

DFS: Latest report in Circulation file

b. Byways Matters:

General: None

Bridleways:

RoW 523 The Chairman reported that he had spoken with the WCC Countryside Access Maintenance & Improvement Officer (Central) who had agreed to liaise with the landowner to seek improvement of the path surface in the affected area.

Footpaths:

RoW 503 The Chairman reported that he had informed the WCC Countryside Access Maintenance & Improvement Officer (Central) of an obstruction on this footpath.

2012.122 Neighbourhood Planning.

The chairman explained that the developer’s consultant, Mike Brown had sought the opportunity to brief the Parish on the latest proposals/developments in respect of Pond Farm, Whittington. The Chairman invited M. Brown to make his presentation which he did, explaining the proposed layout and provision of affordable (rented) housing on the existing Village Hall site and low cost commercial housing on the Pond Farm site. The proposal involved the refurbishment of the existing after school club building to form a new Village Hall and changing area, an enhanced parking facility for multiple users, a Village Green, a nature trail, a secure children’s play area, playing fields, and allotments. With the Council’s agreement, he sought feedback regarding the proposals from those present, either at this meeting or afterward, one parishioner complimented the developer on his public spirited attitude; a query was raised as to funding, which the Chairman addressed indicating that there were potential sources of funding but none were yet quantified; and a query was raised about the impact of increased traffic serving the development. The developers had consulted with the highway Authority and it was their view that the traffic load would be lighter than that of the existing buildings when the cheese factory was operating.

2012.123 Date of Next Meeting.

The date of the next Meeting of the Council will be Tuesday 13th November 2012, at Whittington Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at 22:06 Hrs.