

**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Planning Committee
held on 6 December 2023 at 7.30pm in Dodford Church, Priory Road**

Present: Cllrs Rachel Jennings (Chair), Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman), and Jonathan Shapiro

In attendance – Clerk Kay Stone

1. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Scott Fuller, Lynne Griffin, Scottie Sanderson, and Jenni Schuett

2. Declarations of interest

- i. None
- ii. None

3. To consider planning application consultation:

23/01113/FUL – Chapelgate, Warbage Lane – Erection of an agricultural building

The Parish Council objects to this application for a number of reasons:

First, it contravenes the guidance laid out in the District Council's High Quality Design SPD 6.3.9, which was adopted in June 2019, concerning the size and location of the building. The location of the proposed building, on the top of a hill in a Conservation Area, would make it clearly visible from many directions. As such, it would run counter to the guidance quoted above, which states that 'new buildings should respond to contours and the natural form of the land by fitting into folds or valley bottoms and avoiding platforms or exposed skylines or ridges'.

This impact would be worsened by the proposed height of 6.27m. that would make 'the barn' stick up above the skyline even further and make it even less acceptable to neighbours and other local residents. In addition, that height does not conform to agricultural norms, where height is rarely a determining factor; for instance, apples are usually stored in apple crates located out of doors whilst awaiting processing, and not inside buildings. Photographic evidence of such storage practice can be supplied if requested.

The reason for this extended height is not justified in any way in the application.

Second, although the application cites the development of an apple farming business as justification for the proposed 'barn', no evidence of such a business is supplied, and it would be an unusual decision to grant planning permission on such a speculative basis. Applications linked to any form of business are usually accompanied by business plans, invoices and receipts for expenses already incurred, as well as information about equipment, whose nature in this application is remarkably vague and generic.

Moreover, although the Parish Council does not profess to have formal agricultural expertise, common sense suggests that at less than three acres, the existing orchard, which would apparently form the area being farmed, would not require the erection of such a large building, nor the need for so much machinery.

If the District Council is still minded to approve such a 'barn', the Parish Council suggests that a much more appropriate plan would comprise a less tall building, built adjacent to the existing residence of Chapelgate, where the proposed apple farmers reside. Not only would this comply with the District Council's High Quality Design SPD, it would suit the stated needs more appropriately, and would fit better into the surrounding rural community.

The Parish Council would also request that in the event that the application is approved in any form, the permission should include a proviso on the following lines: 'should the structure cease

to be used for agricultural purpose, any building erected should be dismantled, and the resultant debris removed from the site, within ten years of completion'. Such a clause has previously been applied by BDC (e.g. in the case of 23/00876).

4. To consider planning appeal consultations received - None.

5. To note any planning decisions and appeal decisions received - None

6. Enforcement/Environmental issues - None

7. Any other planning issues

- i. Generic relations with BDC planning department to be put on the full Parish Council meeting for January.
- ii. The next Parish Council planning committee meeting is to be held on Monday 18 December to discuss 23/01279/FUL for the proposed demolition of two greenhouses and a potting shed. Proposed construction of new bungalow dwelling in lieu of Class Q Prior Approval (ref 21/01111/CUPRIO) and proposed extension of curtilage at Parkgate Nurseries, 169 Kidderminster Road.

The meeting closed at 8.04pm.

Signed..... Chair