

ALCONBURY WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.alconburywestonparish-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Louise Clowery – Tel: 07368 271 251

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Minutes of the Alconbury Weston Parish Council meeting held on Monday 25th March 2024 at Alconbury Sports & Social Club, Alconbury PE28 4EX at 7.00 pm.

Councillors Present: Councillor A.Stone, Councillor J.Baker, Councillor P. Baker, Councillor N. Morton, Councillor M. Waring, Councillor M.Mobius.

Also Present: Mrs. L. Clowery (Clerk), Members of the Public: 0

Public Question Time

158.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillor I. Gardener (Holiday), Councillor D. Wheatley (Holiday)

159.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests, as set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the nature of those interests relating to any Agenda item. – **Councillor P. Baker and Councillor J. Baker for planning application 24/80341/COND being their application.**

160.0 PLANNING

160.1 To resolve to submit comments on applications where appropriate:

- **REF:** 23/02503/REM
- **Proposal:** Reserved matters for appearance, landscape, layout and scale following outline permission 21/02027/OUT for up to 15 dwellings, including details reserved by conditions no.5 (drainage) no.6 (floor levels) no.7 (cycle parking) no.8 (EV charging) no.9 (LEMP) no.10 (tree survey) no.15 (offsite highways works) no.23 (foul drainage) no.25 (Part M standards).
- **Address:** Land North of Butchers Close Alconbury Weston

Comments: Alconbury Weston PC object to planning application 23/02503/REM on 4 specific points. If the points are addressed by the developer, then we will have no further objections.

1. The surface water run-off solution appears to be insufficient for the development. However, if the developer amends his plans to be in-line with the requirements of The Alconbury Brook Flood Group, then we will have no further objection on this point.
2. The property that is planned to be closest to the mature tree that is located in the rear Garden of Larch House would appear to have insufficient clearance to ensure that either, the tree is harmed during digging of foundations, or that in the future the roots of this tree could cause damage to the foundations of this property. If there is an assessment by a suitably qualified specialist that there is likely to be no future issue, then we will have no further objection on this point.
3. The tree that is proposed to be planted adjacent to the access of 7 Vinegar Hill has the potential to impede access to this property and should be removed from the tree planting plan. If the tree planting plan is amended then we have no further objection to this point.
4. We note that Anglian Water have reviewed the foul drainage plans and have recommended that Condition 23 can be discharged. We strongly disagree with this assessment. Residents of Butcher's Close have regularly required Anglian Water to clear the foul water drains, and they have consistently failed to identify the cause of the overflow from the drain. Within the last 2 weeks, AW were called out due to sewerage overflowing onto Hamerton Road, and while the overflow was cleaned up, we are not aware of any preventative measures being taken to address the current issue. We do not know how AW can approve the plan to connect an additional 15 houses to the drains in this area when the current solution is not working.

This was a unanimous vote

- **REF:** 23/02390/FUL
- **Proposal:** Change of use from agricultural to storage of vehicles and containers (use class B8) Erection of a 1.8m high steel open mesh fence (part retrospective)
- **Address:** Land East of 1-4 Hill Top Cottage, Alconbury Hill, Alconbury Weston

Comments: We recommend refusal of planning application 23/02390/FUL as the application fails to meet the requirements of Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 policies LP10, LP18, and LP19.

LP 10 states that any development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities provided for in other policies of the Local Plan. As the application does not meet the requirements of LP18 and LP19, it therefore will not satisfy LP10.

LP 18 states that a proposal for business development (class 'B') will be supported on land within an Established Employment Area or on land immediately adjoining and capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area. This application argues that the site is 'in close proximity' to the Cross Ways Distribution Centre, an Established Employment Area. It is not adjoining the area and is located on the western side of both the A1(M) and B1043 from the Cross Ways Distribution Centre Established Employment area. The major roads are a clearly defined boundary of the current distribution centre and we do not believe that expanding the Established Employment area to the West of these major roads can be approved through this application. As well as the major roads identified, there would be countryside between the proposed site and the Cross Ways Distribution Centre. We believe that there are vacant units in the Cross Ways Distribution Centre and that these units should be used before expanding the site. The Parish Council would expect that any expansion to the Cross Ways Distribution Centre would occur to the North East or East of the Cross Ways Distribution Centre where it would be adjoining and capable of being integrated into the Cross Ways Distribution Centre. A second business centre located to the West of the A1(M) and B1043 which would affect Alconbury Hill is not in accordance with LP18.

LP 19 says that: 'A proposal for business uses (class 'B') will be supported where it:

- a. is within a defined Established Employment Area.
- b. immediately adjoins and is capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area.
- c. involves the reuse of land in use or last used for business uses (class 'B'); or
- d. involves the reuse or replacement of existing buildings as set out in policy LP 33 'Rural Buildings.'

This application does not meet any of these criteria and instead refers to NPPF Paragraphs 84 and paragraph 85, to justify its case. We believe that the applicant meant to use Paragraphs 88 and 89. Para 88 is about growing current businesses or the development and diversification of agricultural or land-based businesses; this application satisfies neither of these criteria. Para 89 says that previously developed land should be used. This land has no previous development history and is open farmland.

While the applicant refers to the policies above in his application and he says that his application meets these policies, but he does not provide a meaningful explanation as to how his application satisfies these policies.

The justification for the application mentions the expansion of an existing business. The business may be an established business, but it is not an established business at the location of this application. The application states that a 'rural business is one which has a legitimate reason for being located in the countryside', but the application fails to explain what the legitimate reason is for locating this business in the countryside. We do not believe that this application meets the requirements of LP19.

In addition, we have the following observations:

If there was a change of use for the agricultural land that is the subject of this application, which is open countryside, to Class B8, the residents of Alconbury Hill will suffer significant loss of amenity. Currently, they overlook open countryside and are not subject to the HGV traffic that would be entering and leaving the premises of this site 6 days a week. We believe that the solution suggested does not adequately provide for access to this site and will result in HGVs and other vehicles driving across and potentially parking on the public footpath that adjoins this site. This will seriously affect the amenity, not only of the residents of Alconbury Hill, but also recreational walkers who regularly use this footpath.

This application says that the location of the site for this application is adjacent to an established business. The business that this application refers to is operating without planning approval and is currently the subject of a request from Alconbury Weston Parish Council to Huntingdonshire District Council for planning enforcement. This business is operating from an agricultural building that had planning approval on the basis that the building would be removed if no longer required for agricultural purposes. We are not aware of any application to regularise the use of this agricultural building for other business purposes. We do not believe this to be a justification for planning application 23/02390/FUL to be approved.

We are aware that have been significant archaeological items have been discovered during current excavations on this site and note that this site is close to a registered heritage asset located at Alconbury Hill. Local residents have confirmed that this site could have considerable archaeological value.

There is a considerable issue with surface water run-off from Alconbury Hill which discharges onto Vinegar Hill below Alconbury Hill. Investigations are ongoing as to what is causing this run-off, which has become more noticeable during the last 12 months. Conversion of this area to hardstanding will only increase the initial rate of this run-off without an appropriate surface water run-off solution.

Also, we note:

- Car Parking – the application claims that there are no car parking requirements, but how will the 2-5 employees working full/part time on the site commute to and from work. If the site is to be locked, as claimed, outside of opening hours, where will early/late arrival HGV vehicles park? The site is located just over the brow from the bridge over the A1 and is on a blind bend for vehicles heading into Alconbury Weston. We consider this to be a potentially dangerous situation if vehicles are parked on the verge of the road.
- The submitted Policy Guidance checklist has identified that the application does not need to provide detail against any of the Policies on the checklist. We question if this is correct and Alconbury Weston Parish Council would want to see submissions on:
 - Flood risk
 - Waste water Management
 - Surface Water
 - Established Employment Areas
 - Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerow
 - Heritage Assets and their settings

This was a unanimous vote

- **REF:** 24/80341/COND
- **Proposal:** Discharge of condition 5 (written scheme of investigation) for 22/02468/FUL
- **Address:** Sallows Farm, 86 Hamerton Road, Alconbury Weston, Huntingdon, PE28 4JD

Comments: We support planning application 24/80341/COND on the basis that the speedy completion of the Flood Alleviation Pond at Sallow Farm will contribute to the reduction in the risk of future flooding from Alconbury Brook downstream from this pond.

Decision: Councillor P. Baker & Councillor J. Baker abstained from this application due to a pecuniary interest. The remaining councillors were all in agreement to support this application.

160.2 To receive an update on previous applications:

- 24/00386/CLED – Lawful development certificate – The response of the Parish council is as follows: We have read application 24/00386/CLED in detail and while we are not qualified to comment on the legalities, we note that there would appear to be differing views/evidence submitted to support this application to what was included with previous applications. This was a unanimous decision.

160.3 Planning enforcement Issues

- Buckworth Road, previously Shires Horse Pasture Field – Enlarged entrance etc. This has been passed to Highways who in turn have passed this to HDC Planning Enforcement. No update yet received.

161.0 MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on:

- 26th February 2024

Proposer: Councillor J. Baker **Seconder:** Councillor N. Morton

162.0 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR – None received. Councillor Stone informed the councillors that Councillor Gardener may now attend every other meeting due to his heavy schedule.

163.0 THE ALCONBURY BROOK FLOOD GROUP (TABFG)

163.1 Water Gardens - Hydro Planters –Vinegar Hill – These are due to be installed soon, but due to the location this road needs to be closed. The relevant paperwork has been submitted for this to happen. The plants are still to be purchased once Councillor Stone has decided on which plants to plant.

163.2 To receive and resolve any other matters – The bulletin has been sent today to all councillors. This will be added to the website and our facebook page.

164.0 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES AND RESOLVE ANY ACTIONS IDENTIFIED

164.1 Highways, Speedwatch and SID – Cllrs Stone, Morton

- SID Block graph data – Councillor Stone The mobile SID is now collecting data of vehicles travelling through the village simultaneously with the solar SID which is collecting data coming into the village.
- LHI Bid progress report – We are awaiting the decision of our application to be released which the Clerk believes to be May.

164.2 Play area – Review Quote regarding extension to circular seat. The Clerk has been unable to locate the previous invoice and asked for confirmation of date. This was around the time of the King's Coronation.

Councillor J. Baker kindly offered to locate the company who made the Coronation Bench and address and make the necessary enquiries.

164.3 Play Park land – Councillor Morton has been talking to Copleys about next steps. He has also obtained the invoices for the grass cutting and maintenance which he retrieved from archiving with Councillor Stone.

164.4 Parish Trees – Councillor Morton has no updates this month.

164.5 Village Maintenance

- Monument at the top of Alconbury Hill – Councillor P. Baker has assessed the monument since the last meeting and felt that this was in good condition but could benefit from the grass being cut and some plants being planted.
- Notice Boards Village Green – The handyman has removed one of these so that he can begin the restoration work on it. The materials are more expensive than he first anticipated.
- Pump Surround (Hamerton Road) – The handyman has assessed and determined on further inspection that all of the wood ~~now~~ needs replacing, therefore this is a more costly task than first anticipated. It was agreed that Councillor Stone would ask the handyman to provide a formal quote which would be presented to the parish council for approval before works commence.
- Church way footpath – Wooden bench which requires cleaning and treating. It was agreed that Councillor Stone would assess and determine if this is a voluntary project or one for the handyman.

164.6 Communication with parishioners – Cllr Stone, Wheatley

- Facebook page update
- Website update - Policies are being updated by the Clerk in readiness for the May AGM.

165.0 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) PAYMENT

Options for CIL payment projects – Updates/Progress

- Lectern
- Social Prescriber
- Astro turf
- Telephone Box

This item was deferred until the next meeting due to the absence of Councillor Wheatley

166.0 ALCONBURY WESTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Environmental Policy – Councillor Waring asked for help to draft this policy. The Clerk offered to do this.
- Discussion regarding funding for final compilation of Neighbourhood Plan in its entirety. This is mainly complete in draft form. He would like to seek approval to have someone create a master document with the formatting set so that any changes to the layout and numbering would automatically update.
- Enquiries to be made to locate help with this. It was suggested for Cllr Neil Morton to speak to ASK IT and enquire if this is something he would be able to do.

To receive progress update and resolve actions

167.0 ORDERS FOR PAYMENT - Resolve March 2024 payments:

L. Clowery	Clerk's salary – February 2024	£217.20
HMRC	Clerk's Tax – February 2024	£144.80
L.Clowery	Clerk's expenses	£28.28
Wicksteed Leisure	Playpark Inspection	£158.40
ASK I.T. SERVICES	Antivirus subscription	£35.00
ASK I.T. SERVICES	Website annual hosting subscription	£264.00
CAPALC	Affiliation & DPO Fees	£411.85

Proposer: Councillor J. Baker Seconder: Councillor N. Morton

168.0 FINANCE

168.1 Monies received and bank reconciliation. No monies received, the clerk has chased for the last two grass cutting grants.

168.2 Internal Audit – update - The Clerk informed the councillors that she has received the AGAR forms, she will complete the forms where necessary and issue to the internal auditor to complete the audit in readiness for the April/May meeting for sign off.

169.0 COMMUNITY RESILIENCE WORKING GROUP – Cllrs Morton & Stone

• **Notes from Workshop**

AWPC have been asked along with Alconbury and St. Ives Town Council to pilot a Resilience plan. This would need to be drafted by a volunteer in the village and a team of volunteers would need to be recruited should this ever need to be implemented.

This was met with mixed reviews amongst the councillors as this is a large project that would need dedication to the draft.

There are further workshops to be held which Councillors Morton & Stone will report back on.

170.0 To accept notices and matters for the next agenda

Please note that no decisions can lawfully be made under this item. LGA 1972 s12 10(2) (b) states that the business must be specified.

Councillor Waring notified the Parish that his wife will be planting some bulbs around the village that were surplus to her personal stock.

Councillor Stone confirmed with Councillor J. Baker that she will be representing the Parish Council at the Sports and Social Club meetings in the future.

171.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 22nd April 2024, Alconbury Sports and Social Club

Meeting finished at 20.50pm