Parish Council of Waresley-cum-Tetworth

Draft Minutes of Meeting Thursday 3 September 2020

Held at online via Zoom 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Eleanor Jack, Jonathan Lawton John Archer, Richard Jerman & Malcolm Gordon.

In attendance: District Councillor Richard West, Richard Price, Gilly Bakewell, Gerry Sugars, Ann Dugdale, Cameron Lees, Lorraine Joss, Doug & Margaret Scott, Christopher Skey, Kevin Jones & Stephen Scurfield and one unnamed iPad user.

Minutes: Rod Kerr (Clerk)

Apologies for absence: County Councillor Julie Wisson

Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests. Councillor Lawton declared a prejudicial interest with regards to the planning application for a dwelling to the rear of the Village Hall as it is next to his property.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 14/05/20 and the planning meetings of 18/06/20 & 28/07/20 had been read and agreed by the councillors prior to the meeting and the Chairman signed them all as true & correct records.

Matters Arising: The Wildlife Trust has been written to repeatedly about the closure of the car park at Gamlingay Wood but no further response has been received. It is possible that land may be donated to provide a car park in the future.

The litter pick took place on 30 August and was very successful.

County Broadband - bringing full fibre Broadband to Waresley: Cameron Lees from County Broadband gave a brief presentation with slides about plans to bring full fibre Broadband to the village and surrounding area. He explained the County Broadband would be fully funding the project and they require 39 pre orders from the parish to proceed and have 12 so far – they are confident of reaching the target in Waresley and also from neighbouring parishes.

Report from District Councillor Richard West: Councillor West said he had taken part in a Zoom meeting with East-West Rail and obtained some useful contact details. The minor amendments to the A428 improvement plans do not affect the village. The White Paper on changes to the planning system contains 24 different proposals. He is frustrated with the inconsistencies in the current planning system and hopes this will go some way to addressing them.

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Planning Application 20/01232/FUL Erection of a detached dwelling with car port/cycle shed and access drive - Land to the rear of Waresley Village Hall Eltisley Road, Waresley:

Councillor Lawton did not participate in this discussion. Councillor Jack opened up the meeting to take comments before the councillors discussed the application. A number of comments had been submitted to the District Council and copied to the Parish Council – none of these supported the application. Ann Dugdale, secretary to the Trustees of the Village Hall, noted the Planning & Heritage Statement was absent from the online documentation and there were some inaccuracies in the application in general. Gilly Bakewell thought the application to be detrimental to the Village, the Village hall and the conservation area. She said 6.10 of the Planning & Heritage Statement said there was an existing arrangement with the Old School House over the driveway – this has never been the case.

Councillor Jack commented that the site does not have road frontage and is a distance from the highway. It is in a very rural location and surrounded by open countryside. Councillor Archer had similar concerns and worried it may open the door to further development. There are inaccuracies in the plans and the access issue is a genuine concern. Councillor Gordon agreed that the access issues were crucial and could not see any evidence that there had ever been a vehicular access to the plot. The access does not meet the Highways minimum width of 5 metres (it is 4.9m). He also said the sewerage pipes shown on the application do not follow the correct line and he cannot see a wayleave mentioned on it. Councillor Jack said it was not up to the applicant to tell the village hall how many parking spaces they could have, but it is included in the application. Councillor Jerman thought the application would be dangerous for village hall users and impinge on the neighbouring properties.

After further discussion, the Councillors took a vote and agreed to **REFUSE** the application by 4-0.

The reasons given were:

- The site is set *back* in a rural part of the conservation area that cannot be considered to be within the "Built-up area" of the village.
  The outlying properties the Black Barn & Chester's Courtyard, which the applicant cites as justification for his own proposed development are recent conversions from agricultural buildings which are not regarded as a precedent for back land development.
- The site impinges on the gardens of neighbouring properties.
- The site does not have a road frontage.
- There are serious concerns over the access issues. W-c-T PC is aware that the Village Hall committee and trustees dispute the access and that the suggestions vis a vis parking made by the applicant are outside his remit.

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- Access to a dwelling on this site would have a detrimental effect on the functioning of the Village Hall, which contrary to the applicant's statement is in frequent use, apart from temporary closure during the COVID19 lockdown.
- Previous applications have been refused on the basis that they would be detrimental to the conservation area.
- There are inaccuracies in the Design & Access statement
- In the Aerial view:
- The land to the North of the site is incorrectly labelled "Chester's amenity area" when it is in fact a nature area entirely unconnected with Chester's Court.
- The site outlined in red includes part of the village hall car park, which does not belong to the applicant and should not be part of the application and which misleadingly makes it appear that the site has a road frontage. This error also appears in the plans.
- The proposed access impedes the Village Hall fire escapes.
- The stated plot size of 875 sq. metres includes the Village Hall access way of 125 sq. metres.
- The stated footprint of the house therefore is in excess of the 16% stated in the Planning Application.
- The Village Hall access way at its narrowest point (from the kerb to the fire exit steps) is 4.9 metres. This does not meet the minimum of 5 metres wide as sited by the Highways Development Management 18-08

Consultations & Procedures:

a) **Planning for the future consultation to reform the Planning system:** A lot of information about this has been circulated to the councillors with deadlines for responses by 1, 29 and 30 October October. Councillor Jack has read through it and picked out some points. The proposals are to radically reform the planning laws – this would override the local plan that recently took 8 years to agree. The county could be divided up in to different areas – if you live in a protected area, you will have the same protection as now but if you are deemed to be in a development area, it will be easier to get plans through. It was agreed that Councillor Jack will go through the proposals and circulate a draft to the other councillors – she thought its aims were laudable but it could make things much worse.

b) **EWR Consultation**: Councillor Jack sat in on a briefing. There had been concerns that surveyors from the East-West Railway project have been carrying out tests on land not originally included in the proposed area of the new line. EWR said they carry out tests on adjoining land to check for bat activity and other wildlife reasons but would not confirm or deny the land concerned could be included in the future.

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c) **A428 Update**: There have been some slight amendments to the published plans but these are very minor and do not affect the route or impinge on the village.

Jubilee Lamp Repairs – update: it seems unlikely that there will be any grants available in the near future to fund the repairs and some were concerned that it may not be appropriate to spend a large part of the precept on this in the current climate. It was agreed that the clerk would approach Memorial Makeovers to see if we they can carry out actions to protect the lettering on the monument over the winter months.

Consideration of requesting a weight limit on the B1040 through the village: Kevin Jones & Stephen Scurfield, both of Gamlingay Road, had contacted the Parish Council to ask if anything can be done to reduce the amount of heavy lorries going through the village. On one morning, they had counted 30 large vehicles coming through the village in the space of an hour and were surprised this was allowed. Councillor Archer said it would be hard to convince the Highways Department to implement any alterations as we are on a B road and a recognised thoroughfare. Also, there are many local businesses that have no alternative but to use it. Councillor Jack said that Hilton Parish Council had similar concerns in 2011 and were told they had to do a survey to log all traffic coming through the village – contact all the companies involved to ask if they needed to come via that route or could use smaller lorries and then present the evidence to Highways. At the end of the exercise, they were granted a ban on HGVs but only between the hours of 11pm and 7am for non-local traffic.

It was suggested that a 20 mph speed limit could be requested – the two sharp S-bends are conducive to that. Another suggestion was average speed cameras or to encourage residents of Gamlingay Road to park on the road to slow the traffic down. Councillors Jack & Archer cold not recommend this as it could be very dangerous and cause accidents.

It was also suggested that the situation may improve when the new A428 dual carriage way is completed.

Before anything can be considered, evidence needs to be gathered to passed on to Highways.

Consideration of future Parish Council Meetings being held in the Village Hall: The Village Hall is hoping to reopen at the end of this month and it is hoped the Parish Council will be able to hold meetings there again shortly. A meeting was provisionally booked for Thursday 8 October if the regulations permit.

Finance - Payment – E.Jack for litter picking equipment - £114.00
This was proposed by Councillor Archer & seconded by Councillor Jerman and approved.

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AOB

Richard Price was pleased to note that his in his dealings with EWR, they were now much more responsive than before.

Date of Next Meeting

8th October.

The Meeting was declared closed at 9.24pm

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