

ARLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Arlington Parish Council held on 21st March 2019 at 7.30pm in Arlington Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllr J Parsons (Acting Chairman), P Stenning, J Robinson-Sivyer, J Sellars and N Kinghorn.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor N Bennett, A Stevens (Clerk) Barry Ling and David Campion (Bedes) and ten members of the public were also present.

129. PUBLIC SESSION

The Clerk read out District Councillor White's Report which said;

'I regret that I am unable to be at the meeting this evening.

I do in fact have little to report. There has been no meeting of Full Council since your last Parish Meeting and only one meeting of Planning Committee South when the Bedes application for the new boarding accommodation was approved. I did raise at the meeting the confusing letter that you had been sent informing you of that the Bedes application had been recommended for a deferral. The officers agreed that this was misleading and that the application had been recommended for approval but that the issuing of the decision would be deferred pending completion of a planning agreement to secure a mitigation payment, as now required under Policy AF2 of the emerging Local Plan.

A planning inspector has been appointed to examine the new Local Plan. She has set a timetable for the examination in public that is to take place in hearings at the East Sussex National Hotel, Little Horsted, Uckfield, the first, for two weeks, starting on 20 May, with a second hearing later in the year.

The formal notice for the District Council elections on May 2 has now been published. In future Hellingly and Arlington will be in different District Wards each electing one District Councillor and it is not my intention to stand for re-election for Arlington. I will however attend the next meeting of your Council in April and if requested will be happy to provide a District Councillors report for your Annual Assembly.'

Councillor Bennett had nothing new to report on this occasion.

Residents asked the Parish Council to object to the Bede's Application (WD/2018/2556/MAJ) because;

- It means 23 mature oaks will be felled, which are irreplaceable.
- The felling is at odds with the students who are currently campaigning for climate change.
- The trees form a nature reserve and are therefore are an important source of food for many species.
- New saplings will not mitigate for the oak trees because they are over 100 years old and will take generations to catch up.
- The existing trees have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them and the TPOs must be respected.
- The historic hedgerows mark property boundaries and therefore need to stay.
- Bede's has alternative sites it can use which will not involve removing these trees.
- Bede's have allegedly reneged on other agreements.
- Lighting is also an issue.

In answer to resident's questions Mr Ling and Mr Campion from Bede's said;

- New planting will mean the loss of trees will not be forever.
- Bede's takes all the resident's concerns very seriously.
- New lower level less intense lights will replace the floodlights.
- Pre-application talks have taken place with Wealden and other sites were considered but Wealden said this is the only one they will recommend.

Mr Hitchen from Dicker Cricket Club said last year's long hot summer has left the recreation ground with lots of big cracks which are potentially dangerous, there is also a lot of moss and the grass is in a very poor state. The Club has therefore commissioned a report from a local specialist to see what needs to be done. The Parish Council agreed to consider the report at the next Full Council Meeting. Mr Hitchen will send a copy of it to the Clerk once he has it.

130. APOLOGES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors V Radtke and M Garner and were accepted by those present.

District Councillor David White also sent apologies for his absence.

131. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of interest nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

132. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2019.

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 21st February 2019 were amended to show the Planning Committee South Meeting took place on the 28th February and not the 28th January. The Minutes were then approved by all and signed by the Acting Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

133. PLANNING

a. Planning Applications:

WD/2019/0361/F - Parkwood Farm, High Barn Road, Upper Dicker, BN27 3QL - Agricultural dwelling – Arlington Parish Council has no objections to this application because;

- There is an important need for more than one person to be on duty at a time on a dairy farm of this size.
- There are no trees or hedgerows on site.
- The building is some 42 feet away from numbers 1 and 2 Parkwood Farm Cottages and there are no other dwellings in close proximity.

WD/2019/0446/FA - Shermans Oak, Coldharbour Road, Upper Dicker, BN27 3QJ - Minor to material amendment to removal of Condition 3 (provision of the new footway) of Planning Permission WD/2015/0854/O (2 no. pairs of semi-detached houses, 1 no. detached house and 1 no. bungalow.) – Arlington Parish Council objects to this application. Condition 3 needs to stay because;

- High Barn Road is a fast busy road in both directions. There will be parents taking and collecting their small children to/from the nearby Park Mead School, and walking them to the recreation ground and the village shop.
- With the original bungalow 'Sherman's Oak', then six new dwellings this will be a very dangerous footway eastwards to the crossroads.
- There is no footpath on either side of the road until east of 'The Plough'. The grass verge is a very rough and uneven tripping hazard.
- This path could now be worked in with the Bede's traffic calming proposals.

WD/2018/2556/MAJ - Bedes Senior School, Camberlot Road, Upper Dicker BN27 3QH - Construction of one astro turf hockey pitch adjacent to existing; Revision of the layout of sports pitches approved under WD/2015/0418/MAJ; and the making of a minor footpath diversion – Whilst Councillors agree they want to see the school flourish, they object to this application because;

- it involves the removal of 23 mature oaks, the majority of which have been assessed by the Applicants' Arboricultural Report to be in good condition.
- This does not take account of other trees on the boundary of the proposed artificial pitch whose roots will be disturbed in the works and are unlikely to survive.
- Wealden's Policy EN12 states 'The Council will seek to retain and enhance the contribution of trees and woodland areas to the landscape character of the District...'
- National Planning Policy Framework 2018, Paragraph 175 states that 'development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons'. A further artificial sports pitch is our opinion is not in our opinion 'wholly exceptional'.
- The proposed plan for planting mitigating oaks is not realistic. At least 8 of the trees shown on the plan will either fail to thrive because of the proximity to the artificial surface or they will compromise the surface and in a few years will be removed. Most oak roots lie only 18 inches, 460mm under the

soil and may spread to occupy a space 4-7 times the width of the tree's crown. In order for the roots to survive, oxygen must be available in the soil immediately surrounding them – an artificial pitch surface does not allow this.

- It will take over 100 years for the trees which do survive to begin to provide the amenity value of those which are inconvenient to the development.
- The School's own Arboricultural Report attached to the application states; 'As far as possible, the mature oaks situated in the two lines dividing the fields should be retained.'
- There will be a major loss of biodiversity.
- If the application is allowed it would be a severe blow to the character and amenity of Upper Dicker, particularly to those whose homes overlook the site and whose amenity value will be irreversibly changed.

If the application has to proceed they would ask that;

- there is no amplified sound outdoors or artificial light after 8pm.
- Any replacement trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- No sports fixture should be scheduled to finish after 8pm.
- All sports activities should be in accordance with the '17 clause agreement'.
- During construction, HGVs and any heavy plant should avoid movement on the highway during school (Bedes and Park Mead County Primary School) arrival and departure times (unless the work can be carried out during a holiday period) and they should avoid Camberlot and Michel Priory Road.

b. Approved Planning Applications – The following planning application has been approved by Wealden District Council;

WD/2019/0069/F - 2 Plough Cottages, Coldharbour Road, Upper Dicker, BN27 3QB - Proposed extension to side elevation and associated alterations - alternative to approved design under WD/2017/1269/F.

c. Planning Matters – No other planning matters were discussed at this meeting.

134. FINANCE.

To approve list of payments – Councillors resolved to accept and approve the list of payments to the 21st March 2019 which totalled £2034.57

1951	Jakk – Gravel Boards	£ 528.00
1952	Mass Media - Website	£ 50.40
1953	Recycling Partnership – Bin Emptying	£ 25.96
1954	Wealden DC – Bin Emptying	£ 150.00
1955	A Stevens – Salary	£ 569.10
1956	ESCC – Pension	£ 210.39
1957	HMRC – Inland Revenue PAYE	£ 478.82
1958	Arlington Village Hall – Hall Hire	£ 22.00

b. To approve the accounts to date – Councillors **resolved** to approve the accounts to 28th February 2019. It was noted that the office computer has been replaced because it stopped working at a meeting and it was also noted that Wealden District Council will no longer be accepting cheques from April so the Parish Council is making arrangements to pay any future invoices by direct debit.

135. HIGHWAYS –

i: SLR Update – The minutes of the SLR meeting held on 12th March 2019 were adopted by the Parish Council. It was also noted that the tree cutting issue at Camberlot Road is back with ESCC.

ii: A27 Update – Maria Caulfield MP has confirmed the A27 Reference Group is expected to meet after Central Government has made a decision on its funding bid. Councillors Garner, Stenning and the Clerk will continue to attend any update meetings arranged by SSALC.

Councillor Parsons attended a Public Information Exhibition held at Berwick Village Hall on 15th March about upgrading the A27 planned between the Cophall roundabout, Drusillas roundabout and the Beddingham roundabout.

He said the Scheme is divided into three Regional Investment Schemes. RIS 1 covers a scheme between Cophall roundabout at Polegate and Drusillas roundabout at Berwick. RIS 2 covers the Drusillas roundabout to the Beddingham roundabout and RIS 3 is the complete upgrade scheme. RIS 1 will cover mainly junction and crossing improvements and a 'shared use' path, and is scheduled to start in March 2020-2025.

Highways England is a Government organisation. Its role is to deliver the schemes with their consultants.

They are looking at the Cophall roundabout to the Drusillas roundabout at present under RIS 1, to be followed by the Drusillas roundabout to the Beddingham roundabout. The much bigger RIS 3 A27 Upgrade Scheme is separate and ongoing, with a likely date of 2025-2030 if it goes ahead.

A decision has already been taken to proceed with RIS 1, and the purpose of the exhibition was to provide an update on the progress of its implementation.

The decision on the much bigger and more involved RIS 3 will be taken by the Roads Minister following further high level consultation and discussion during 2019, with a result hopefully at the end of the year. Further information is available from Highways England at info@highwaysengland.co.uk

Councillor Kinghorn said in 2016 a new dual carriageway A27 between Beddingham and the Cophall roundabout was rejected by the Department of Transport as being too expensive at £450m, poor value for money and bad for the environment.

Since then the A27 Reference Group, chaired by Lewes MP Maria Caulfield and including Leaders of Lewes and Wealden District Councils, Eastbourne Borough Council, the Leader of East Sussex County Council and our MP Nus Ghani has been working on resurrecting the plan. She confirmed a business case now sits with the Secretary of State for Transport for a decision on funding (RIS 3).

She said there are three potential routes, all north of the A27. The northernmost route runs just south of Ripe and Chalvington, north of Arlington reservoir and through Arlington village. It will have no access or exit between Lewes and Polegate.

The potential effects on Ripe, Chalvington and Arlington are sadly obvious. Upper Dicker, which lies in the direction of the prevailing wind from the proposed road, will also be blighted by noise and pollution and the character of this area will be fundamentally changed.

There has been no study of alternative methods of transport, or modelling which takes account of expected 21st century vehicle technology and use.

She said our MP, Nus Ghani told her last week that she fully supports this plan, which is required infrastructure for the planned new houses in the area, and will be of economic benefit. She (Nis Ghani MP) says that she has only received letters of support. She claims, however that the plans are nothing to do with her. She had no comment on the proposed destruction of ancient villages and landscapes in her constituency.

Councillor Kinghorn concluded by saying that there are many who do not think it will happen but stranger things have happened and the potential consequences for our lives and the area are so great that, in her opinion, it would be foolish to ignore the possibility.

The minutes of the A27 Reference Group are available on the ESCC website.

136. RISK ASSESSMENTS –

Councillors resolved to accept the price dated 21st March 2019 for the works agreed at the previous meeting.

Councillors considered and noted the risk assessment of the telephone kiosk, defibrillator, fingerpost and noticeboard (in Arlington) for February 2019.

137. ALLOTMENTS – The majority of allotments holders have now paid their rent, and reminders will be sent to those who have not, shortly.

- 138. VILLAGE GREEN PROJECT** – The gravel boards have now been fitted and Councillors agreed the Village Green is looking good.
- 139. PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER** – Councillors resolved that Councillor Stenning will distribute the newsletter to Arlington residents and Councillors Robinson Sivyer, Kinghorn and Sellars will deliver it to Upper Dicker residents.
- 140. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS** – Councillor Stenning reported there has been some industrial fly tipping at the ELC Site. The Co-operative has now padlocked the site and will have to remove it.
- 141. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA** – Recreation Ground.
- 142. DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - The next meetings will be the Parish Assembly and the Full Council Meeting and they will take place on Thursday 11th April 2019 at 7.00pm at Upper Dicker Village Hall.

There being no further business, this meeting closed at 9:15pm.