

## Minutes of PCM, Wyck Rissington Parish Council

Held in the Village Hall on Monday 4th March 2024, 18:00

Councillors Present: Cllrs Cook, Ponti, Finnemore and Gorton

In attendance: 5 members of the public

- 040324/1 Cllr. Cook opened the meeting and explained that a new structure for PC meetings was being adopted that would allow members of the public to speak on each item at the time they were presented. This would replace the previous allowance for a member of the public to speak for a maximum of three minutes at the beginning of each meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved

- 040324/2 No declarations of interest were declared. Apology for absence was received for Cllr Montague, Cllr Mark Mackenzie-Charrington and Cllr. Andrew Maclean

- 040324/3 Peter Watson updated the PC on the appeal hearing for the proposed Grafters development held in Cirencester on December 12th, 2023. Peter attended and made representations with Simon Gorton, on behalf of WRPC. Hilary Ponti also attended in person and made representations in her private capacity as a local inhabitant concerned by the development.

Peter explained the Inspector has to decide whether applicable local plan policies have been complied with;

Highway safety is unfortunately no longer a barrier to development because GCC Highways have agreed the proposals;

Flood risk issue is still open because Environment Agency (late) dispute Gilder's flood risk modelling;

Timetable set for EA and Gilders to attempt reconciliation of flood risk issue which will be the subject of further hearing on 11 April 2024 if no resolution;

Inspector appreciates he has a challenge reconciling the Hotel Development with the terms on which EV Development has been permitted; and

Inspector is making a private (ie not accompanied by any of the parties or their representatives) site visit on 13 December 2023

Peter had made clear that the appeal could not be properly considered without also considering its impact on the EV Development, which was not mentioned on the agenda. The EV development conflicts with the hotel development. Peter told the Inspector in terms that he could not depart from the policies and principles applied by previous Inspectors (on the development itself and the appeal against Condition 24). If he were to do so he had to fully explain why he was doing so and support this with adequate reasons. He particularly could not escape from the fact that the Hotel Development proposed land use contrary to planning conditions already imposed and unsuccessfully challenged. Appellant position was essentially that it was clear that the EV Development would proceed in a number of phases and that not a given that all phases may be completed, the Hotel Development was complementary to the EV development and there was no problems that couldn't be sorted out by practical arrangements regarding parking spaces. what could not be done was to tear up the basis on which the EV Development was permitted because it was too difficult and substitute it with a hotel development which would have a damaging impact.

Peter had also made the arguments against the visual impact of new hotel, light and noise pollution, failure to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of

landscape, its character and special qualities of AONB plus unsympathetic design of building itself. Appellant's position was in summary that the development will largely be hidden from view from Fosse aided by great landscaping and (to paraphrase) the new build was no worse than the existing buildings on and around the site.

Peter had further argued that this was not conversion of an existing building but essentially a new build, that it did not comply with the local plan and the Transport Sustainability/Accessibility was wholly inadequate - namely that Public Footpaths were a wholly unrealistic option for site access; bus service is infrequent; no-one is going to walk to wait for a bus when they can use their car; the footpath would be unlit and an unattractive option at the best of times, especially at night; and cycling not an option. Many of these points have been accepted by Inspectors in other appeals which was countered by Appellant submitting that the new footpath changed everything.

Peter explained that he could not predict which way the inspector was going but expected a decision in the summer.

Cllr. Cook thanked Peter for all his valuable work and Simon and Hillary for their input.

The temporary repair to the parking damage at the start of the footpath to the north of the village was discussed. Following contact by the working group, Paul Phipps had kindly graded the deep ruts and provided hardcore to some of the area being used to park cars. A member of the public said that there is a water main very close to the area which had curtailed the area Paul was able to work on but that he was willing to put down more hardcore if it was felt necessary. It was also mentioned that the historically wet February plus Thames Water using the area to access the water main with large tankers had resulted in yet more damage. Cllr. Cook said that the work done had stopped further creepage and perhaps further hardcore may be required.

Cllr Gorton read out a letter from a parishioner living close to the parking area who felt the temporary repair had not been successful and that now was the time to apply to the Secretary of State to substantiate a more permanent solution using a membrane plus hardcore. The author of the letter felt the parking, if left, could become inconvenient to local residents and present a hazard to both residents and farm traffic. The author also felt consent would be given as the officer is bound under legislation to bear in mind the land is not used for grazing and that this proposal is greatly in the interests of the neighbourhood.

Cllr. Cook said we will review the situation at the next PC meeting which would allow the PC to observe the impact of dryer weather.

Cllr. Cook updated the PC on water issues. GCC will commence re-examining from April, operating under their previous mandate.

A member of the public wondered, given the very wet February that perhaps clearing the pipes taking water across the green and across the paddock opposite had already improved the drainage considerably. Cllr. Cook felt that a one in thirty year, or even a one in ten year event was still under consideration.

040324/4 A report from Cllr. Mackenzie-Charrington is available on the WRPC website.

040324/5 Cllr. Maclean is currently abroad and no report was available.

040324/6 Cllr Gorton updated the PC on planning matters. Two applications had been made to CDC in the neighbouring parish of BOTW to either create a new, or vary an

existing licence, with the former at the Coach and Horses Pub near the lights at Bourton, and the latter for the Hawkstone Brewery opposite.

Briefly, the pub was seeking to extend it's hours from 9am until 2am the following morning, on a substantial number of days. Following numerous objections, including from WRPC, they have now withdrawn the majority of the changes and will now open 'regular' pub hours.

The Brewery is seeking to change the current licence conditions to substantially increase the number of visitors and hold ten events a year increasing the current limit of 500 people attending up to a maximum of 4000.

The WRPC strongly objected to the proposed increase in visitors to the site. The location is at an already busy traffic junction, which currently suffers from long tailbacks at peak times and felt a substantial increase in the number of vehicles entering and exiting this site could not be with any degree of safety. In addition the site is an AONB and as such the increase in light and noise pollution is outside the AONB policies of dark skies and tranquility. This land is agricultural, between two principal settlements and the level of development 'creep' is completely inappropriate.

CDC had yet to make a decision on this application.

Cllr. Gorton also updated the PC on planning applications within the village. Four had been received. Tree work at Heath Lawn, change of an electric pole at Olive Hill, a new barn at Phipps and demolition and a replacement dwelling at Little Orchard.

There were no objections for Heath Lawn or Olive Hill. It was mentioned that Phipps had applied for a barn before in a different location and the PC had asked for the siting of this to be reconsidered. It was felt that this site was more appropriate and again there were no objections. It was felt that the replacement dwelling at Little Orchard was an improvement on the current house and also, given the house was outside the conservation area, there were no objections.

With the amount of building work either ongoing or proposed in the village, a member of the public pointed out that heavy lorries using the former railway bridge near the Fosse could prove problematic for the structural integrity of the bridge.

Cllr. Gorton read out a letter received by the Clerk from Mr Charlie Brooks from Health Hill Farm. Mr Brooks explained that the entrance to his farmland off Wyck Lane was proving problematic to farm machinery as the entrance was both narrow and too tight for large vehicles to enter and exit. He further explained that he would apply for permission to formalise the entrance and splay it.

A discussion followed with Cllr. Ponti saying he had already removed part of the hedgerow at the entrance and given the hedgerow would be protected, he should not have done so without first gaining permission. Cllr. Finnemore and Gorton agreed with Cllr. Ponti. Cllr. Cook said Highways would respond and wondered if it was a safe location given it's proximity to a sharp bend with limited visibility. Cllr. Cook also stated that the PC should respond to Mr Brooks and express in principle the PC has reservations subject to further information. Peter Watson agreed to write to Mr Brooks.

040324/7

Cllr. Gorton updated the PC on the Ponds and the Green. Further to a visit last year from the Environment Agency and their recommendation that the pond at the entrance to Olive Hill be dredged, Cllr. Gorton explained he had received an estimate to do this work which would be in the region of £1000. There would be an additional issue of where to dump any silt removed. If instructed, the work would be done in the Autumn. A member of the public said Paul Phipps was currently

using suitable machinery down near the river and he could approach Mr Phipps to see if he would be willing to undertake the work. If so, he kindly offered that the silt could be dumped on the Ransome's land. Cllr. Cook said that would be a good solution but if Mr Phipps was unable to undertake the work, the Clerk should continue with the present estimate.

Cllr.Gorton updated the PC on the Green. Quotes were currently being sought for essential maintenance being the tree survey and crown lifting the trees to 3m which would also facilitate cutting the grass. Cllr. Cook said the costs would exceed those budgeted.

040324/8 Cllr. Finnemore, updated the PC on finance and stated that we were well placed in terms of affordability with an improved outturn for 2023/4 and savings being made in 2024/5 as it was unlikely the salary budget would be spent, there may be savings made with the pond work and there was a contingency to draw on. Cllr. Cook said this would mean that reserves at the end of 2024/5 were not materially affected and therefore we could go ahead with work on the trees. There were no objections to this. Cllr. Cook suggested that in the event it may be possible to get additional funding to facilitate an enhanced program to restore the fabric of the green and achieve more work than was currently being proposed.

Cllr. Cook proposed an amendment to resolutions 8 b and c on the agenda "To authorise an enhanced programme of restoration for the Village Green to the extent this is possible without materially weakening the Council's financial position, with such assistance from additional external funding as the Chairman, Clerk and RFO are successful in applying for on the Council's behalf." which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Cllr.Finnemore said he had approached Simon Lanyon to act as auditor and he had agreed to do this for no costs. Cllr.Cook proposed that the PC appoint Simon Lanyon as auditor. This was seconded and unanimously approved.

040324/9 Cllr.Ponti updated the PC on the upcoming litter pick. The proposed dates would be April 6th or 13th., to be confirmed.

040324/10 No further correspondence received other than that addressed during the meeting.

040324/11 The date of the next meeting was changed from 27th May and would now be 28th May 2024

Meeting ended 7.25pm