

Berkswell Parish Council – Extraordinary Meeting 19 April 2017

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell held in the Jordan Room, St John Baptist Church, Berkswell on 19 April 2017 at 7.15 PM.

Item	Topic	Action by
	<p>1. Evacuation Procedure – the Chairman instructed those in attendance of the evacuation procedure</p> <p>2. Jim Caffery – Cllr Burrow said a few words in light of the recent death of Jim Caffery who was a well-known and liked member of the Berkswell community. Jim had supported the PC over the years by carrying out odd jobs and he helped with the setting up the Christmas tree on the village green each year. He will be sadly missed.</p> <p>3. Attendance: Cllrs Burrow (Chair), Cambage, Lloyd, Hitchcock, Edwards, Drake & Howles. Also, Cllr K Allsop (SMBC) & Cllr D Bell (SMBC). 40 members of the public including R Cobb (Planning Consultant for the Village Farm proposal), C Fellows (Architect for the Village Farm proposal), T Wheatley-Hubbard (Village Farm Trustee) and the Parish Clerk.</p> <p>4. Apologies for Absence: None</p> <p>5. Declarations of Interest None</p> <p>6. Open Forum Parishioners of Berkswell, and others at the discretion of the Chairman, were invited to address the Council on any relevant matter for a maximum of three minutes. There were no requests to speak.</p> <p>7. Village Farm Planning Application (2017/00740 & 2017/00739) – Cllr Burrow invited Richard Cobb (Planning Consultant) and Chris Fellows (Architect) to introduce the proposals for Village Farm which are the subject of the two planning applications under consideration. Mr Fellows introduced himself and the scheme. He informed the meeting that current farm buildings will be repaired and refurbished without changing their appearance and that the plan was also to clear the site. The proposal was also to provide additional dwellings and advised the meeting that full details were on the website and that plans were available to view in the meeting. Mr Cobb then introduced himself and explained that it was necessary to renovate the listed buildings but, in order to fund the work and the removal of unsightly buildings and farm yard, some affordable housing could be provided and that any new housing would be sympathetic to the locale. He stated that the justification for building on greenbelt would be provided by Historic England who have an enabling development policy. Mr Cobb acknowledged that new housing isn't normally acceptable in greenbelt, but where approved, it must enhance the area. He believed such development would have limited impact in this case. There followed a question and answer session involving members of the public followed by questions from members of the Council. This was a wide-ranging session and was only concluded when there were no more questions.</p> <p>Cllr Burrow then went through the summary of the questionnaires received from residents at the 15th April consultation event held in the village. Cllr Burrow advised residents that the summary could be found on the Council's website.</p>	

	<p>Residents were reminded that Berkswell Parish Council’s response to the planning applications carried no more weight than any other comments submitted and residents were encouraged to comment individually to SMBC before the deadline. At this point, Cllr Burrow announced an end to public participation and asked members of the Council to state their opinions. Based on those opinions, Council agreed the following response:</p> <p>“This council feels very strongly about retaining the historic significance of the existing farm and the fields but does not object in principle to the renovation of the farm house and attached buildings providing that renovations are in keeping with the style of the original farm and that Historic England are in support of the proposed works. Furthermore, this Council does not object in principle to additional housing being built on the footprint of the original farm yard providing that such buildings are in keeping with the style of other buildings in Berkswell Village.</p> <p>However, this Council is very concerned about flooding in the area and require that any development will address the issue of run-off to avoid the flooding problem being exacerbated.</p> <p>This Council objects very strongly to proposals for new buildings on the early field system adjacent to the Farm which are part of the conservation area because of their historic significance. Council recognise that new house building has been included in this application as a way of funding the farm house renovations (although it is understood that the viability statement has not yet been completed and will not available for public scrutiny). This Council has a policy of protecting the Green Belt and are concerned about the lack of exceptional circumstances to justify building in the Green Belt. In this case, it is believed that there are other more suitable sites which would be more appropriate as opposed to building on Green Belt land within the Conservation Area and that other options have not been fully investigated.</p> <p>In conclusion, this Council believes that the current proposal should be withdrawn and a new proposal developed in line with the above comments”.</p> <p>Cllr Burrow informed residents that the Council’s response to the planning applications will be on the website.</p> <p>8. Next Meeting Annual Meeting of the Council, 18 May 2017 at 7.15pm, Jordan Room, St John Baptist Church, Berkswell.</p>	
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