

**MINUTES OF ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2015 IN THE  
VILLAGE HALL, ASTON AT 7.30 PM**

**1. Members Ben Lings (Acting Chairman)**

**Present:** Jane Everex  
John Ordish  
Paul Sparrowhawk  
Jane West  
Phil West

**In Attendance:** Helen Sandhu – Clerk  
Steve Good, West Oxfordshire District Councillor  
Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor  
2 members of the public

**Apologies:** Richard Haines

**2. Election of Chairperson for the meeting**

Ben Lings was proposed, seconded and elected to act as Chairman for the meeting.

**3. Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**

Paul Sparrowhawk, as the applicant, the planning application for 2 Manor Close, Aston – minute 4 .

**4. PLANNING**

**New Planning applications**

15/01550/OUT Land North of Cote Road, Cote Road, Aston  
Proposed residential development for up to 44 dwellings, landscaping, public open space and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved except for access.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would object to this application for the following reasons:

- Extension of the village which is not in accordance with the policies in the existing or emerging Local Plan;
- If WODC is confident that the target delivery of 525 homes per year incorporated into the emerging Local Plan is defensible, and that it can demonstrate a five year land supply, then the Parish Council calls upon WODC to resist planning applications like this which fall outside the policies of the Local Plan;
- Sustainability issues (the importance of which is stressed in the NPPF) – there are inadequate employment opportunities in Aston and its immediate vicinity to accommodate the growth in residents, and very few amenities (particularly retail, medical, secondary school and leisure), which means that people have to travel outside of Aston to access employment and the amenities they require. The limited bus service (no evening service, no Sunday service) means that people are dependent on the private motor car, making housing growth in Aston unsustainable. The County Council is looking to reduce subsidised bus services even further;

- The housing mix – tenure and size is not sufficiently varied, which does not accord with the expectations of the NPPF;
- The proposed layout of the development which separates affordable and market housing will not create an inclusive community, as expected in the NPPF;
- There is no evidence of demand for the open space incorporated in the development, nor an indication of who would maintain it. There is already established maintained open space in Aston which is opposite this site. There is a concern that the layout of the site will make the new open space (and the adjacent land behind Foxwood) vulnerable to future development;
- The sewerage system in Aston and beyond is at capacity and will not be able to accommodate this development, this view being supported by the consultation response received from Thames Water;
- Whilst officially in an area of low flood risk, the site is known to flood (be covered with slow-draining standing water) during periods of high rainfall; there is a concern that building on the site will increase the flood risk for adjacent housing;
- Road safety concerns – additional traffic movements; residents have already reported concerns about the speed of vehicles entering Aston on Cote Road – request for consideration of installation of traffic calming measures using s106 if planning permission is granted;
- Cumulative impact on Aston of this and other developments recently granted permission (including the site between the village hall and Saxel Close) – if all are built, there would be a total of 94 additional dwellings, representing a 20% growth;
- Inadequate consultation with the community by Gladman who refused to attend public meetings and did not seek two-way dialogue.

It was also resolved that the Parish Council would request that the members of the Lowlands Planning Committee carry out a site visit before considering the application so that they can assess its impact, particularly the narrowing of the gap between Aston and Cote.

It was resolved that, notwithstanding the objection of the Parish Council to the application, the Parish Council would request that if WODC approves the application, s106 money is obtained for ultimate onward transfer to the Parish Council for investment into the community.

15/01628/HHD

2 Manor Close, Aston

Removal of existing single storey extension. Erection of two storey extension

Having previously declared an interest in this item, Paul Sparrowhawk left the meeting.

No comments.

Paul Sparrowhawk rejoined the meeting.

**PLANNING (continued)**

**New Planning applications (continued)**

15/01862/HHD 46 Saxel Close, Aston  
Part conversion of existing garage and erection of single storey rear extension to form new kitchen

No comments.

**Planning applications granted**

15/01139/LBC & The Old Chapel, North Street, Aston  
15/01136/HHD Alterations to porch, raise height of boundary wall and construct flat roof over courtyard incorporating roof lantern

- 5. Minutes of previous meetings** – on 7 May 2015 and 19 May 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.  
Proposed by Phil West, seconded by John Ordish.

**6. District and County Council matters**

Steve Good asked the Parish Council to give reasons for the requested site visit of the Lowlands Committee in relation to the application for the proposed development on Cote Road. Several reasons were outlined to him, and he said that he would explain these to his fellow members on the Committee.

Charles Mathew told the Parish Council that he had three County Council issues to highlight –

- 1) OCC is again reviewing its subsidised bus services. The number 18 bus which serves Aston is at risk again. OCC will be launching a public consultation in mid-June. The County is seeking savings of £2.75million from the subsidised bus services. Mr Mathew encouraged the Parish Council to consider what arguments it could present to protect the services in Aston and how it could inform the public of the issue.
- 2) There is no progress on the Newbridge issue.
- 3) Mr Mathew informed the Parish Council that he had recently attended a meeting within OCC for those affected by the problems of the A40. Mr Mathew expressed the view that the meeting hadn't proven particularly effective – the County Council is continuing to focus on the idea of building park and ride sites on the edge of Oxford (including one at Eynsham) as the main solution to congestion problems. However, at least 7 County Councillors at the meeting all share the view that the County Council needs to think more radically and innovatively to identify solutions to the congestion problems, even if this would require significant financial investment, which could be sought from the Government.

Phil West asked Mr Mathew about the current status of the proposal to construct a new bridge at Newbridge. Mr Mathew said that the County Council does not have the money for this.

Mr Mathew ended by saying that he is encouraging consideration of the installation of an automated payment system at Swinford toll bridge which would reduce the delays caused by the current manual system.

## **7. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

- a) *Central Aston post box*  
No updates received from Royal Mail – Clerk will chase.
- b) *Annual Parish Meeting – 19 May 2015*  
To discuss further at the July Parish Council meeting.
- c) *Invitation to nominate name for new residential court at Thistle Cottage*  
The developer has accepted the Parish Council's proposal - it will be named Wheelwright Court.

## **8. New Business**

- a) *S106 funding application for Gladman Cote Road application*  
Discussed earlier in the meeting – the Parish Council will request s106 funding to come direct to the parish if WODC approves the application. The funding will provisionally be earmarked for additional recreation facilities, given the aspirations expressed by the community in the survey carried out by the Parish Council. In its response to the planning application, the Parish Council will also suggest that some s106 funding is earmarked for traffic calming measures on the Cote Road entrance to Aston.
- b) *Donation request – Voices*  
It was resolved to give a donation of £750 to Aston Newsletter (Voices) – proposed by John Ordish, seconded by Jane West.
- c) *Request from resident of Vicarage Close for installation of a litter bin near the Vicarage Close bus stop*  
It was resolved that members of the Parish Council would review the site and the proposed bin for relocation (next to the phone box) and report to the July Parish Council meeting.

## **9. Community Trust**

The Clerk reported that the Community Trust has acknowledged receipt of the grant of £630 towards the playground maintenance sent in April, but has not yet provided any information about their maintenance plans for 2015/16 (use of the Parish Council's grant) and the longer term plans for the playgrounds.

John Ordish informed the Parish Council that the Community Trust is reconsidering ways of increasing/improving the pavilion space at the playing field, and will be discussing the potential relocation of the playground further. If the playground is relocated, the Community Trust will seek to install some new equipment. In the meantime, the current play equipment will continue to be maintained. Mr Ordish said that he hoped to provide more information at the next Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the contractor who cuts the playing field grass has written to the Parish Council expressing concern about the number of golf balls he comes across when he cuts the grass. The letter has been forwarded to the Chair of the Community Trust for consideration and action.

## **10. Parish Infrastructure**

- a) *Village maintenance*  
John Ordish said that he is concerned about the state of the gutters and gulleys in Aston which are full of decomposing leaves and weeds. In the absence of a Lengthsman, it was not clear how the Parish Council could resolve this. It was agreed that the issue should be kept under review.

