

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee
held on 8th April 2024 in Charvil Village Hall at 8.10pm**

Present Rob Jones (acting Chair), Pat Sutlieff, Stephen Lucas, and Lee Cripps. Councillor Harding also attended as an observer.

Apologies

Absent Narinder Ryatt

24/277 **OPEN FORUM** – One resident attended, who was concerned about application number 240802, application for proposed construction of an outbuilding (retrospective). Her concerns included that the application suggested the building was an existing one just being repurposed, when in fact it had only been installed in January; it is overbearing, blocks light, adversely affects their amenity and is out of keeping. It is contrary to CP3, as any building of this type should be in keeping with the main dwelling. There are also other inaccuracies in the application regarding the height of the building, which is higher than permitted development would allow, and is too close to the boundary given its height. The Chair thanked the resident, who stayed until the application was discussed.

24/278 **To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2024**

These were approved and signed.

24/279 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CLERK** – There were no interests declared.

24/280 **Highways**

To note the Speed Indicator Device data from Old Bath Road

This item was deferred as the clerk had not had time to download the data.

To hear an update on Speed watch

Councillor Sutlieff had been in contact with PC Lee Turnham, and there is now a named group. She needs to do the online training before then joining up the other volunteers. The clerk reported that the Speed watch signs have been put up as directed, by Wokingham Borough Council.

To note the broken barrier on the A4 that remains unrepaired after many months and to decide whether it is worth contacting Highways to see if there is likely to be a repair

The clerk was asked to report it and to see when it is likely to be repaired.

To note that Waingels Road will be closed for four months to finally install mains sewerage in the road, after an original application was submitted in 2008, and that there will be public meetings for residents to attend in late May to find out more

The clerk explained that some houses at the far end of Waingels Road were added to the mains sewer quite recently, but the main group of houses had been waiting for years for an agreement with Waingels College to be reached for a pumping station to be placed on their land, and in the interim, have had to have their septic tanks emptied very regularly by Thames Water. It is hoped that this summer, they will finally be added to the mains sewer, and that inconvenienced drivers will be understanding. The closure, and reason, will be advertised, as will the meetings on 31st May.

An update on whether a white line could be painted at Pennine Way to warn cyclists to stop

The clerk had relayed this suggestion to Councillor Akhtar, who is trying to see whether this could be done.

24/281

Environment

To note that the Litter Pick was successful

The event was attended by over twenty residents, and they collected over thirty bags of rubbish from all over the village. Their presence and efforts are much appreciated by the Council.

To consider whether it is worth asking the village warden to paint over the graffiti on the bridge on the Old Bath Road

It was agreed to ask the Village Warden to do so.

24/282

Planning

a)
232704

To consider the following planning applications (284)

Outline application for the proposed erection of up to 75 dwellings with only access to be considered via Park Lane. All other matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be reserved) on land west of Park Lane

The clerk was asked to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council would like to add the following comments in response to the Sustainability and Energy Statement, and the Geological report.

Regarding the Sustainability and Energy statement, we acknowledge that the design of the dwellings will be energy efficient, but it fails to address the need for providing as much carbon-free energy as efficiently as possible, the need for rainwater harvesting as the climate becomes increasingly unstable, and the need to reduce the car dependency of Charvil, which is a serious problem for any new development in this area.

It is far easier to provide the local infrastructure for efficient renewable energy at the building and design stage, and it is disappointing that this report is so unambitious in this regard; air source heat pumps are so much less efficient than ground source ones and are also noisy; the arguments against installation of ground source pumps are weak.

The failure to install solar panels is also disappointing; however energy efficient a building is, the occupiers are still going to need electricity for everyday living, and again, installation of panels at this stage would be most economical. The argument that they would be over-dominant is spurious and unhelpful.

A feature of our future appears to be an unstable climate, and so the failure to even consider extensive rainwater and grey water harvesting is also a missed opportunity, particularly in a development in the south-east of England.

Regarding the Geological report, this document does little to instil confidence in the belief that the authors understand the underlying geology of the area, and how the development of the site could potentially impact on the public amenity on the east side of Park Lane, particularly in the light of the recent sinkhole and the increasingly unstable weather. As some of the dwellings are proposed close to the bottom of the field, it would seem prudent to undertake further geological surveys to ensure that the ground is suitable for development, and is not going to either compromise these homes, or any other area nearby.

240802

Householder application for proposed construction of an outbuilding for habitable accommodation (retrospective) at 129, The Hawthorns

The clerk was asked to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council would like to object to this application for the following reasons:

- 1. The outbuilding has the appearance of a shipping container and is out of keeping with a garden setting. This is contrary to CP3, which states that development needs to be in keeping with existing development.*
- 2. The building is overbearing to the neighbouring property in that it runs along nearly the full depth of its garden, and as the building is to the south of this property, it is*

causing a loss of light to the garden and to part of their dwelling. It is within a metre of the boundary and has been measured at between 2.7 and 2.8 metres tall, which is higher than would normally be allowed for such an outbuilding so close to the boundary. The effect is exacerbated by the fact that the homes are built on a slope, with 127 lying lower than 129.

3. *There are various discrepancies in the application; the building is not an existing one being repurposed but was rather, erected without planning permission earlier in the year as a mobile home. The ground levels on the applicant's land have also been raised so that they can argue the height is not as great as was measured in January.*

Overall, the Parish Council feels this building is detrimental to the area, and sets a dangerous precedent for other homes within The Hawthorns if allowed.

b)
240170

The following Planning refusal was noted

Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the stationing of a mobile home for residential use incidental to the main dwelling at 129, The Hawthorns

Councillor Jones informed the committee that he intended to attend the Borough Planning meeting regarding 20, Old Bath Road

The meeting closed at 8.55pm