

# WEEDON PARISH COUNCIL

## Draft Minutes of the Planning Meeting of Weedon Parish Council held in the Methodist Chapel on Wednesday 3 October 2012 at 8.00pm

**PRESENT:** Cllr Rose (Chair), Cllr Sellers, Cllr Ashurst, Cllr Winnett, Cllr Kett, Cllr Measures, Cllr Jameson-Evans, District Cllr Bond, Michelle Jackson – minute secretary and approximately 80 parishioners from Weedon and Hardwick

**179. Receive Apologies:** to accept apologies for absence.

Clerk Barbara Mitchell, County Cllr Baldwin, County Cllr Hussain,  
Members of the public: George Anson, Pat Johnstone, Judy and Mike Nagele, Susanna Simpson, Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, Jonothon Holmes, Stephen Burgess, Stuart Allen, Cathy Bailey

**180. Public Meeting Open Forum Adjournment:** to allow public participation.

Cllr Rose welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the process by which Parish Council Meetings run. With regard to parishioners' comments on the planning application she advised that no personal, prejudicial or racist remarks would be tolerated during the meeting. An outline of criteria for opposing a planning application was available for parishioners to take away with them at the end of the meeting.

**Questions/comments raised by parishioners were as follows:**

Is the land agricultural at the moment and will it have to change?  
*Yes, the application states a change of use to residential.*

Why is it a designated brownfield site?

*No-one was sure on the brownfield designation, and Cllr Rose said this needed to be checked. [Subsequent information: National Planning Guidance PPS 3 says that brownfield land specifically excludes land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings.]*

Was there any specific information relating to the "very special circumstances" mentioned in the application?

*This issue had been investigated both with the planning officer Mick Denman and AVDC legal services who had advised it was not likely to be available to the public possibly due to data protection reasons. The application stated that the very special circumstances related the health of one of the children.*

How many caravans will be allowed on the site and what would happen if more are put in than permission may be given for?

*Permission was being sought for 1 static caravan and the planning application had to be assessed as it was currently presented rather than speculate on what may or may not happen in the future.*

The field is very wet and in close proximity to the sewage plant.

*This is a valid comment.*

How does the Parish Council evaluate an application and make a decision having heard the parishioners' comments? Is a poll taken?

*Parish Council listen to the comments made during open forum and discuss further during the parish meeting itself taking into consideration what comments have been made. A poll can be taken and parishioners can put a proposal forward as to how they wish the Parish Council to respond.*

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What is the timeframe for putting in a response?

*The deadline is 21 days after the yellow planning notice has been displayed so around 23/10/12-24/10/12. (Confirmed after the meeting that the notice went up on 4<sup>th</sup> October so therefore the **deadline for public comments is 25<sup>th</sup> October.**)*

What is the track record for approved 1 static sites being increased to more in future?

*Cllr Rose referred to the Tribal Report 2006 which assessed the needs of travellers in the Aylesbury Vale area from 2000 to 2011. The AVDC Local Plan (DPD) was due out early 2014 so some applicants were being granted temporary permission on a personal (family) basis pending traveller needs being properly reviewed for this development plan.*

What is the definition of "personal"? 4 people are mentioned in the application. What happens if the family extends?

*Cllr Rose believed that "Personal" permission would be for the named applicant and dependents.*

Had the parishioners/Parish Council given any consideration to putting in an offer for the land?

*There was nothing to stop parishioners getting together to see if there was enough interest in doing so.*

Was there a possibility that the land owner may sell more land in future?

*This was unknown. The previous land owner had retained land adjoining the application site on which he had permission for a ménage which had not been constructed.*

Historically permission is not usually given to change of use of land to residential. Does the fact that they are travellers take precedence?

*Yes, there is a separate area of legislation for travellers. The applicant was currently living on an existing traveller site in the Aylesbury Vale area and the application stated a need for a permanent site of their own and the child's special needs.*

If permission is granted, is there an appeal process?

*No, once permission is granted by AVDC there is no appeal process other than judicial review if AVDC were thought not to have followed due process. The applicants can appeal if permission is not granted. A case at Weston Turville was said to have gone through 7 appeals before finally being awarded permission on the 8<sup>th</sup> appeal.*

What is the definition of a gypsy site?

*It can be a site with only 1 static caravan. Little Acre, Broughton Lane only has 1 static caravan. Great Horwood has permission for 11 pitches, each pitch containing 1 static caravan, 1 touring caravan, and a utility day room per pitch.*

The plan states that footpaths would not be affected.

*Public footpaths are taken into consideration when considering a planning application as are adverse impacts on public views (not private views)*

What amenities are there on site?

*AVDC Position Statement states there must be a good site layout and design, it must have the appropriate level of open space on-site, adequate on-site facilities for parking, storage, play and residential amenity.*

What utilities are currently onsite?

*There was thought to be no electricity currently and there was a question over water, as a sub-standard supply was thought to have been put in without permission.*

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Concerns were expressed about the close proximity to a septic tank and the fact that the field becomes waterlogged.

*This is a valid comment.*

A parishioner advised that they had a photo of the field when it had flooded.

*This would be good to include in the parishioner's response to the application as local knowledge would be sought.*

A parishioner commented that there was insufficient information regarding the family to make a decision and asked if there could be a fourth option of response "OPPOSE on the basis that enough information had not been provided". It was suggested that WPC could take external advice but at a cost.

*This would be discussed during the Council Meeting.*

Does AVDC take into account sites which have previously been given temporary permission?

*Temporary permission had been given to a number of sites until 2015 pending the development plan being produced by AVDC. Some sites which had temporary permission would be coming to the end of their term in March 2013 at which time an extension could be applied for.*

It appeared that the application had been written by a professional. It was proposed that WPC look at taking expert advice. Attendees voted on this motion and a majority was in favour.

Highways issues were raised in that the road was dark and narrow with no footpath and the speed limit being 60mph.

There was a Nature Reserve which had been fenced off and there was a query over the presence of bats which are a protected species.

*The Bio-Diversity Officer had had no issues with registering the application but more information could be useful to include in responses.*

Would a template document be produced for parishioners to make their responses?

*A checklist document of AVDC's Position Statement had been provided which identified the potential areas of comment but whether a template document should be produced by the PC would be deferred for discussion during the Council Meeting.*

After parishioners had sent off individual letters, there was suggestion that an Action Group be formed and possibly donations given to the Action Group in order that it could take expert advice on how to respond to the application.

*A parishioner (Ms Simpson) who had not been able to attend the meeting had already expressed a willingness to chair such a group.*

Why was devaluation of properties not a valid comment?

*It did not meet with planning policy guidelines.*

If the child had special needs, why would the family want to live in isolation? Would they not be better off with the support of friends and family?

*This was a valid comment.*

A parishioner proposed that WPC should OPPOSE the application, request more information on the Very Special Circumstances and request an extension to the deadline in order that

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external expert advice could be sought on how best to respond (at WPC's cost).  
Parishioners voted on this motion and the vote was 79 in favour, 1 against, no abstentions.

Cllr Rose thanked people for their attendance and valuable comments and closed the Open Forum.

**181. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda:** to declare any personal or prejudicial interests.

Cllr Bond declared his interest in planning applications due to his role as District Cllr sitting on the AVDC Development Control Committee as he will review his decision at Committee based on the additional information available at the time.

**182. To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

**183. Planning**

12/02010/APP The Old Stables Cooks Hill. Change of use of land to residential caravan site including removal of two stables. Comments by 17<sup>th</sup> October.

Cllrs resolved to OPPOSE the application. Initially a response would be sent to AVDC stating that WPC would be opposing the application and requesting more information on various issues including the Very Special Circumstances and requesting an extension to the deadline in order that expert advice could be sought prior to responding formally. It was further resolved that Cllr Rose should pass the relevant paperwork to Roy Buttery, the proposed planning consultant, and request he first take a preliminary look and if appropriate give advice on how WPC should best respond at a cost of up to £300 (£150/hr for 2 hours work). Cllrs to reconvene to discuss if necessary.

It was thought to be the parishioners' decision on whether an Action Group be formed, which could give advice to those wishing to oppose the application, rather than WPC producing a template document.

Cllr Rose was thanked for the amount of time and effort she had put into researching this issue.

**184. Finance / Accounts:**

To draw cheques. The Council resolved to issue the following cheques:

Mazars	Cheque no 1100	£186.00
Lynch Garden Services	Cheque no 1101	£190.00
BALC	Cheque no 1102	£95.89

**185. To agree the date of next meeting.**

Saturday 13 October 2012 at 3pm

The meeting closed at 22.00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....