

ALDERBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Caring for Alderbury and Whaddon

**Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting
held on Thursday 8th August 2024 at 7.30pm
The Fountain Room, Alderbury Village Hall**



Present: Councillors John Fuller (JF) Chair, Mike Dent (MD), Elaine Hartford (EH), Michael Huntley (MH), Mel Lawrence (ML), Colin Roberts (CR), Barry Sloan (BS)

In attendance: Wiltshire Council councillor Richard Britton (RB), Liz Holland (Clerk) and 15 members of the public.

Public open time

- Residents impacted by the proposed development at Kiln Close came to voice their objections:
 - o Little has been resolved in the new application, reducing the number of houses from 4 to 3 is not enough
 - o All the previous listed implications to adjoining properties and neighbours on the road are the same (see February minutes)
 - o There is still no plan as to how the removal of the soil can be done logistically, no risk assessment and no plans for mitigation of any risks
 - o Run off of water since the removal of the trees is flooding the road and causing damage to the surface. With the bank itself gone, this will only be worse. There is no drainage plan.
 - o Barricades to protect the private part of the road have been torn down
 - o The soil testing was inadequate
- Residents from Oakwood Grove asked if the PC could confirm there is a covenant on the amenity land preventing building on it for 80 years. They are also concerned about a plan to plant willow trees in the area if these are anywhere near their garden (shading, extensive root growth)
- A resident pointed out that the wildflower buffer zones near hedges are being destroyed

67.24 ACCEPT reports from

- a. PC Kelvin Ramsey submitted a written report:
 - i. Highlighted the reduction in ASB in the village
 - ii. Reported 2 reported crimes – the theft of a chicken and a man seen behaving suspiciously in woodland
- b. WC Councillor Richard Britton reported:
 - i. WC's Gypsy & Traveller plan has been published for comment. In the Alderbury area there will be pitches at Petersfinger, Clarendon and East Grimstead

68.24 Absence

- a. **NOTED** the resignation of Cllr Peter Jenks. Once the official notice period is up, the clerk will advise councillors that they are free to co-opt if no-one comes forward.
- b. **ACCEPTED** apologies for absence for this meeting from Michael Considine, Kim Diprose and Alex Wilkinson.

A PROPOSAL to move item 77.24a ii up the agenda was **ACCEPTED**.

In order to maintain the integrity of the numbering this item is minuted in order of the agenda

69.24 RECEIVE Declarations of Councillors' Interests and Dispensations relating to matters on this agenda - Cllr Barry Sloan will not participate in item 79.24f

70.24 APPROVED [the minutes of the meeting on June 10th 2024](#) and **AGREED** a change to the Annual Parish Meeting minutes stating that the Great Green Bedwyn presentation is available on request from the clerk. **ACTION:clerk**

71.24 REVIEWED the action log – Cllrs Fuller and Wilkinson had completed a line-by-line review with the clerk prior to the meeting. The following points were discussed:

- a. The correspondence from the owner of the Matron's Farm pond to be acknowledged by the clerk but no further action. **ACTION: clerk**
- b. Cllr Dent reported that Vistry had been to see the unfinished play area

72.24 Finance

- a. **NOTED** the bank balances and [bank reconciliation statement at 30.6.24](#) and Cllr Fuller signed it.
- b. **NOTED** the [accounts for the quarter ending 30.6.24](#)
- c. **NOTED** [reserves at 30.6.24](#)
- d. **APPROVED** the [schedule of payments and invoices received](#)

73.24 Village maintenance issues

- a. Current issues
 - i. The hedges overgrowing the pavements on Southampton Road are in the process of being cut
 - ii. The Parish Steward is aware of the drains needing clearance at The Copse footpath
 - iii. The Parish Steward reports the barriers at Grimstead Road regularly
- b. The **PROPOSAL** to release the payment to the painter of the white railings at Old Road was **AGREED**
- c. The **PROPOSAL to ACCEPT** the [quote for the cemetery gate](#) was **AGREED** with the choice being oak. The clerk was given permission to accept at price up to £335 +VAT
- d. Pembroke Gardens play area – see above 71.24b and the clerk has been in contact with the purported management company who say they have not had it transferred yet from Vistry
- e. WC mowing at Avon Drive and Windmill Close: clerk to check if Hurdcott have the Avon Drive area on their schedule already. **ACTION: clerk**
- f. **PROPOSAL** that these areas be added to Hurdcott's schedule from 2025 was **AGREED** with an **AMENDMENT** that the path at Windmill Close will be monitored for a year before a final decision. **ACTION: clerk**
- g. The Council **CONSIDERED** requests from residents for
 - i. [less mowing](#) **REJECTED** due to visibility concerns
 - ii. [work on the ash tree at Oakwood Grove amenity area](#) – the tree wardens recommend a referral to the WC tree officer **ACTION: clerk plus quote for a tree report on the August agenda**
 - iii. [a dog poo bin at Rectory Farm](#) **REJECTED**. Councillors stated that they will not be supporting the introduction of dog poo bins anywhere in the village.

74.24 **Playground, recreation ground, The Pavilion and youth activities**

- a. Playground inspections
 - i. the quarterly report from Vitaplay was **NOTED** together with the weekly reports from councillors.
 - ii. The **PROPOSAL to ACCEPT** the recommendation of no further action needed currently was **ACCEPTED with an AMENDMENT** to ask the clerk to get quotes from Vitaplay for repainting the junior swing set. **ACTION: clerk**
 - iii. The **PROPOSAL to AGREE** Cllr Roberts attends the inspection training course £125 + VAT was **AGREED**.
- b. The **PROPOSAL to ADOPT** the [risk assessment for the play areas](#) was **AGREED**
- c. The **PROPOSAL to ACCEPT** a [quote for the adult gym servicing](#) was **REJECTED**. Clerk to ask Vitaplay only to fix the cross trainer **ACTION: clerk**
- d. **REPORT** (Cllr Fuller) from the Community Hub WG
 - i. The Pavilion refurbishment is complete. There was a small overspend as the toilets were found to be leaking. The material used to complete the frontage is as per the spec. Cllr Fuller believes it is a cost effective solution.
 - ii. The Explorers have signed a licence to use the Pavilion.
 - iii. The WG met Vitaplay and are awaiting a quote for the MUGA goal posts and a design for installing new equipment. Councillors **CONFIRMED** that the goalposts can be purchased with money from reserves.
- e. **UPDATE** on youth activities – Cllr Britton reported that he had met with Karen Linaker (WC) and others to begin to scope the collaborative project Alderbury had advocated.

Cllr Sloan took no part in the following matter

- f. The **PROPOSAL to ACCEPT** a request for Picnic in the Park to use the recreation ground on 7th June 2025 was **ACCEPTED**

75.24 **Highways**

- a. **ALDE20** – Cllrs Britton and Fuller had met with officers from WC including the footpath officer, an engineer responsible for liaison with Vistry, a drainage expert and a Highways rep. They rejected the soakaway suggestion due to the presence of clay. They noted that land for the school field extension near the guide hut is already boggy. No final conclusion was reached but the most likely solution is a new drain to take water directly down to the Firs Road drains
- b. **NO 'idling' signage** – Cllr Lawrence explained there is existing legislation making this an offence, which she will find. Clerk was asked to include this in The Fountain article and post to Facebook. **ACTION: ML, clerk**
- c. **UPDATE on SID**
 - i. The **PROPOSAL to AGREE** a [funding bid to LHFIFG for the post and socket](#) was **ACCEPTED ACTION: clerk**
 - ii. The **PROPOSAL to AGREE** delegated powers to clerk plus one or more councillors for all future decisions including spend up to £2,500 (excluding socket above) was **AGREED** Cllr Hartford will be the nominated councillor. **ACTION: EH, clerk**

76.24 **Environmental issues**

- a. Spider's Island tree planting project
 - i. Cllr Lawrence has received 5 responses from people living in the community who may be interested in helping
 - ii. There is a group in Salisbury who also may help

- iii. With this degree of support Cllr Lawrence does recommend APC take on ownership of the land
- iv. Clerk was asked to approach WC about further clearing of the site before that decision
- v. Current thinking is native trees in a S-shape with the trees kept small (tiny forest concept)
- vi. Would need a water tank but this can be included in the funding bid 76.24b.
- vii. Cllr Hartford reported that Hurdcott have looked at the site
- viii. **ACTION: clerk to contact WC, clerk to meet ML to draw up a plan of the area, agenda**
- b. The **PROPOSAL** to support the acquisition through a funding bid of willow trees for the Oakwood Amenity area &/or Spider's Island **AND** to give permission to plant them was **POSTPONED** to the August meeting **ACTION: agenda**
- c. **REPORT** from the Southern Operational Flood group NTR
- d. **CONSIDER** a letter of support for the [primary school drainage project](#). All **AGREED**. **ACTION: clerk to write before the end of term**

77.24 Planning

- a. The following responses were **AGREED**
 - i. [PL/2024/04892 Foster Lane](#) No comment
 - ii. [PL/2024/05291 Kiln Close](#) Object – a full list of the objections to be raised is appended to this document
 - iii. [PL/2024/05611 Matron's Farm](#) No comment
 - iv. [PL/2024/05034 Alderbury House](#) No comment
- b. **NOTE ALL AGREED** no response to trees application at [Twineham Gardens](#) [PL/2024/04990](#)
- c. **Community Infrastructure Levy** – WC is chasing in CIL for the development at Foster Lane. £5,405.22 has been received in July for a development on Junction Road

78.24 Communication with residents

- a. **Comms working group**
 - i. **NOTED** [their report](#)
 - ii. **PROPOSAL to AGREE** the recommendations in the report **ACCEPTED**
- b. **The Fountain magazine** – councillor vacancy, no idling law, thanks to residents for turning up to talk about Kiln Close, ALDE20 progress, parish steward has his lunch break in Alderbury, check meeting time
- c. **Facebook**
 - i. Respond to [matters raised by residents](#) – **ACTION: clerk to ask RBL to take down their flag at the war memorial and acknowledge their request**
 - ii. New weekly posts planned for APC – as Fountain above

79.24 Date for meetings

August 8th

The meeting closed at 21:35

REPORTS REFERRED TO IN THESE MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE or from the clerk on request

ALDERBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Caring for Alderbury and Whaddon

SIGNED as true record (Chair)

Reference: 77.24a ii Kiln Close objections

11th July 2024

Dear Mr Richardson,

PL/2024/05291 Land adjacent to Kiln Close

Alderbury Parish Council has not changed its mind on all the objections raised from the last application at this site PL/2023/11012. From the turnout at our meeting last night, we can say that none of the residents who raised objections last time are appeased either.

There is one matter of fact which was questioned. The site layout appears to show 3 houses of about equal size. However, looking at the plan for each house individually, this does not seem to be true. Please can you establish which is correct.

Alderbury Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application in the strongest terms.

Specific concerns are:

1. This is clearly an **overdevelopment** of the area. The reduction in the number of houses from 4 to 3 does not adequately address this. Our view is that the developer's supporting argument citing surrounding housing density is specious. Kiln Close is a completely separate area and not similar enough to those roads to make that comparison appropriate.
2. This development will be **out of keeping** with the area. This is not a road which lends itself to multiple dwellings. The proposed properties, unlike their immediate neighbours, will be close to each other with small gardens.
3. It is well known that railway embankments were originally built up of waste materials from other sites. The chance of **toxic contamination** is very high. We believe this will be true of the soil as it is moved, but also in air contaminants which will be released during the process which may spread over a large local area. It is likely that part of the original build up was from nearby rail depots (at the time) and is highly likely to contain asbestos. Residents who watched the soil sampling take place are extremely concerned that the samples taken were entirely inadequate for the size of the embankment and question the validity of the findings.
4. Already parking and access can be difficult. There are occasions when the **refuse collection vehicle cannot get into** Kiln Close, meaning elderly residents have to drag their bins to the end of the Close. This will only get worse and will be a constant problem through any construction work. Councillors are also concerned about access for emergency vehicles.
5. There is **no information about how the removal of the large amount** of soil making up the embankment will be removed. The impact on residents is a key concern here. A detailed plan should include a risk assessment and plans to mitigate those risks. This needs to be established before permission is granted, as access is so difficult.
6. Alderbury Parish Council has a **tree policy which this development breaches** on several fronts including the pre-clearance of the site and the overall loss of trees to the village. No plan to reinstate trees is evident.
7. Whilst accepting the owners had a legal right to fell trees and associated undergrowth, the community is outraged that this happened. Given the position and age of the vegetation, it was clearly home to many plants and animals and provided a much needed corridor for movement between habitats. Residents have already reported a significant reduction in the number of bats they see. Regeneration of the trees and flowers is already apparent. The embankment can still and should remain as a wildlife corridor. The subsequent licence application is considered cynical and reduces trust in this developer.

It is essential that any measure of bio-diversity gain is measured from the time before this clearance. Clearly the density of the build on the site will not allow for a 20% gain.

8. *All development in Alderbury exacerbates **traffic build up on the A36**. Where there is no significant gain to housing stock and no immediate need for Alderbury to be required to take more houses, this development will add to that traffic problem whilst providing very little other gain.*
9. *Notwithstanding Highways comments that the entrance/exit from Kiln Close is safe, this is not the lived experience of all residents of Alderbury. The junction is hidden on a bend just before the slip road to the A36.*
10. *There is a widely held view that the railway embankment is a **heritage asset**. It has been part of Alderbury for many years and an important landscape feature for the village.*
11. *The embankment has provided protection for neighbouring residents from light pollution and excessive noise from the A36. There is a clear **deterioration in amenity for these neighbours**.*
12. *Councillors heard from residents that water previously held by the vegetation on the embankment now flows more freely onto the road. There are clearly **flooding** consequences from the removal of so many trees and plants. There is still no specific drainage report on the website*
13. *The development as proposed will create an **incongruent relationship** between it and existing houses on Southampton Road. We question if this development meets the WC policy on attractive, well-designed communities.*
14. *Many more people will be **adversely affected** by this development than the small benefit gained from providing just 3 more houses.*

Yours sincerely