

## Minutes



# Westbourne

Parish Council

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**Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Planning Committee which took place on Tuesday 4 May at 6.15pm. The was held remotely using Zoom video conferencing.**

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr David Mack, Cllr Ann Pearcey, Mr Frank Campbell, and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Hitchcock. Two members of the public were present.

1. Declarations of interest: None.

2. Apologies for absence: None.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 8 April 2021: The minutes were approved as a correct record and were signed as such by the Chair.

4. Updates and issues from the minutes of 8 April 2021: None.

5. Planning applications: Members made the following comments.

**21/00677/DOM and 21/00678/LBC:** Form new vehicular access and gravel parking area, including dropped kerb and entrance gate. Replacement sash windows on south elevation and garden door. Enlargement of existing south-west facing roof light, and internal partition alterations to first floor bathroom. St Leger, The Square, Westbourne. Members agreed to object to the planning application. The full objection is available in Appendix 1.

**21/00962/DOM:** Demolition and replacement of single storey rear extension. 22 East Street, Westbourne. No objection.

**21/00885/DOM:** Proposed alterations, additions and detached garage. The Wilts, Duffield Lane, Woodmancote. No objection.

**21/01170/DOM:** Replacement of existing conservatory with a single storey side extension. The Retreat, North Street, Westbourne. No objection.

**21/01086/DOM:** Change use of garage to habitable accommodation. 29 New Road, Westbourne. No objection.

**6. Planning appeals:** To discuss appeals relevant to the Parish.

- **Enforcement case no: 13/00163/CONWST DCGL ref no: APP/L3185/C/18/3203193 – LEAD, APP/L3815/C/18/3203215, APP/L3815/C/18/3203219 and APP/L3815/C/18/3203222:** The Old Army Camp Cemetery Lane Woodmancote Westbourne West Sussex Alleged Breach:

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Without planning permission, change of use of land and erection of fences (Notices (WE/40, WE/41, WE/42 and WE/43). Notification of enforcement appeal and public inquiry. Members discussed the forthcoming public inquiry.

- Members approved the written representation for APP/L3815/W/20/3259671, 4 The Paddocks Common Road Hambrook Westbourne. See full submission in Appendix 2.

7. Chichester District Council Enforcement Reporting: Members noted the list of enforcement issues.

8. Announcements and items for the next meeting: None.

9. Date of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 10 June 2021 at 6.15pm.

Meeting closed at 7pm.

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### **Appendix 1: 21/00677/DOM and 21/00678/LBC**

Members agreed to object to the planning application on the grounds of appearance and character issues relating to the flint wall. The property is a listed building and a good example of its type, which is an important aspect of the conservation area. Losing some of the flint wall would affect the setting of the listed building and compromise the conservation area and village scene. The Parish Council considers the treatment of the new opening, with the reduction of the wall height on either side of the gate, is unsatisfactory. This is perhaps to improve visibility but it would look strange to leave the gate higher than the adjoining walls on either side. It is clear that the highway authority is not satisfied that there are sufficient visibility splays available for the access point or sufficient distance to the section of road designated for parking opposite to provide safe manoeuvring. Changes to deal with this may make the wall opening even larger. In addition, the Parish Council is concerned about the potential danger of vehicles entering and exiting onto The Grove, which is, owing to the designated parking spaces, in effect a busy one-way road and acts as an important east-west route providing the local community of Westbourne and Emsworth with access to Chichester and neighbouring villages. The designated parking spaces on The Grove are well used at all times of the day and allow residents to access local businesses. The proposed access would hold up the flow of traffic, as cars entered/exited the property, and create disruption to the local road network causing congestion in the centre of the village. Traffic through the village has increased in recent years due to new housing development in the area and many travel above the 20mph limit on The Grove. The Parish Council agreed that it would support the renovation of the property and other aspects of the proposals but was opposed to the creation of a vehicular access and gravel parking area, including dropped kerb and entrance gate.

The Parish Council has received the following objection from a local resident who would like to remain anonymous. It was agreed with the District Council's Planning Department that this could be submitted by the Parish Council on their behalf. Please see the comments below:

'I write as a neighbour to this property to object to the proposed application which includes providing vehicular access, via a new opening in an ancient flint wall, to The Grove, across a narrow pavement. My objection is made on the following grounds: Safety in an area of unpredictable traffic flow, past the shops and a line of parking bays in constant use  
Increased hazards in the same area for pedestrians using either pavement  
Visual effect of a change in the ancient flint wall.  
Please add my comments to others that may be made.'

### **Appendix 2: APP/L3815/W/20/3259671, 4 The Paddocks Common Road Hambrook Westbourne.**

Westbourne Parish Council strongly objects to the planning application on the grounds of environmental damage, intensification of the site and a high concentration of such units in the Parish. It is also considered to be contrary to emerging and current local planning policy and Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan.

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The development subject to this application has already been partially implemented by the applicant as the additional four mobile homes are on the site and understood to be occupied even though they are not in the positions shown on the submitted plans. Also, a significant amount of tree removal has taken place by clearing of a large area of woodland protected by a Tree Preservation Order without any consent for their removal. Approximately 50 mature trees are believed to have been removed. In addition, the main area of the site has been surfaced with scalplings to form the circulation space and hardstanding for the mobile homes.

The woodland that has been partially removed is a habitat for wild birds, bats, insects, small mammals and deer, and the loss of a large section will have a negative effect on the local environment. The Parish Council considers that appropriate action should be taken by Chichester District Council to prosecute the applicant for this illegal tree removal and that this should include enforcement of replacement tree planting.

Policy DM5 of the Chichester Local Plan Review for Gypsy and Traveller proposals, makes clear that proposals for new sites for GTTS Plots should not dominate existing nearby residential settlements or have any detrimental impacts on their residential amenity or have detrimental impacts on nature conservation. The Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan includes similar protective policies which were considered by the Inspector at the Hearing that took place in autumn 2017. The Parish Council is strongly of the view that the proposed development would cause real harm to residential amenity and nature and wildlife interests adjoining the site. In support of these concerns, the Parish Council would bring to the attention of the District Council the history of complaints about toxic fires emanated from this site, giving rise to asthma attacks and very poor air quality. Most of the fires have been conducted in the evenings and weekends when it is difficult to report. These complaints were brought to the attention of the Chief Executive of Chichester District Council approximately 18 months ago, which resulted in a multi-agency meeting chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by various regulatory authorities including the Police, Planning Enforcement, Environmental Health, the Environment Agency and Social Services.

The Parish Council is also concerned that there are no satisfactory proposals in the application for the discharge of waste water. The Parish Council is aware that the existing waste water treatment system is insufficient for the current level of sewage generated by the occupants of the site, with overflows regularly spilling on to the site entrance and Emsworth Common Road. As it would appear to be the applicant's intention to connect the additional mobile homes to this overloaded system, it will result in even greater levels of surcharge, flooding and untreated sewage contaminating the site. There is also concern about the electrical supply capacity on the site to cope with four further units, as one transformer that served the site blew up.

In addition to the environmental objections listed above, the Parish Council is concerned that the number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showman pitches and plots has greatly increased in the Parish in recent years. There is already a high concentration of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showman pitches and plots in the

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Parish of Westbourne and neighbouring Parish of Funtington. This is the highest local concentration of such uses in the county area of West Sussex. This has a disproportionate and adverse impact on the local communities of Westbourne and Woodmancote, which will disrupt social cohesion. There have been numerous incidents of anti-social behaviour associated with the Paddocks, which resulted in the high-profile multi agency meeting mentioned above. This current application will exacerbate these issues, increase social tensions and create pressure for local services and schools. This detrimental impact on the local settled community is a real concern and the increased pressure on local infrastructure, especially schools and services will seriously reduce the quality and effectiveness of those services, which are already at capacity and will be unable to cope with increased demand. Furthermore, the Parish of Westbourne has already provided the required number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches as identified in the Local Plan and taking into account concerns raised above, there is no justification to allow an increased number of pitches. Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan has a policy which also recognises this issue. On 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, CDC Cabinet agreed a Decision Statement for the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan, which gives the Plan significant weight. It is hoped that the Neighbourhood Plan will go to public referendum at the end of July.

The section of the Neighbourhood Plan which is of relevance to this application is as follows:

### "OA4 – 2

Development proposals to meet the needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community (as defined in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) or any subsequent policy) will be permitted where they:

- a. Can demonstrate a local connection;
- b. Can demonstrate that there is no alternative available pitch which could be used in the locality;
- c. Do not result in sites being over-concentrated in any one location or disproportionate in size to nearby communities;
- d. Are capable of being provided with infrastructure such as power, water supply, foul water drainage and recycling/waste management without harm to the special qualities of the National Park;
- e. Provide sufficient amenity space for residents;
- f. Do not cause, and are not subject to, unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring uses and occupiers;
- g. Have a safe vehicular and pedestrian access from the public highway and adequate provision for parking, turning and safe manoeuvring of vehicles within the site; and
- h. Restrict any permanent built structures in rural locations to essential facilities.

Proposals for sites accommodating Travelling Showpeople should allow for a mixed-use yard with areas for the storage and maintenance of equipment".

With regard to b) above, Westbourne Parish Council is aware that several pitches that have been approved in the past remain vacant. There are, for example, four vacant pitches in Cemetery Lane, Westbourne and permission has not yet been implemented for a further nine.

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In conclusion, the Parish Council strongly urges the District Council to:

1. Refuse the planning application for the environmental, nature conservation and planning policy reasons mentioned above.
2. Initiate enforcement action to remove unauthorised development and occupation at the site.
3. Prosecute the owner / applicant for unauthorised removal of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order and secure appropriate replacement planting.