

OLD MILVERTON AND BLACKDOWN JOINT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 17TH. JANUARY 2022 AT OLD MILVERTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Councillors J. Emmerson (in the Chair), Rachel Pope, M. Rayner and W.M.O.Tansey; County and District Councillor W.L.Gifford and District Councillor Sidney Syson

2145. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. L. Keeling; County Councillor W. Redford; and District Councillor Carolyn Gifford.

2146. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th. November 2021 were approved, and signed by the Chairman.

2147. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

None other than later in the minutes.

2148. THE SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

The Parish Council had been informed of the next step in the development of the South Warwickshire Local Plan which was the identification of sites advocated by developers but not endorsed by the District Councils at this stage. Such sites would have significant effect on Old Milverton and Blackdown, and it would have been preferable to engage Ridge Consultants to shepherd the Parish Council through the steps ahead, but it appeared they were already representing at least one of the developers, so it was agreed that subject to confirmation that this was the case Avon Planning Services Ltd., Planning & Development Consultants of 103-105 High Street, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 4DN, which represented the Parish Council in dealing with issues relating to the Jephson House development, be invited to represent the Parish Council.

2149. CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a). A local resident had expressed concern about the recent felling of trees at the Jephson House site, but it appeared their removal was under the Planning Permission already granted. The Planning Enforcement Office had been asked to check the position.

(b). Councillor Redford reported that the laying of strips to record traffic counting and speed had been arranged and would be processed in due course in their turn.

(c). It had been reported there appeared to be activities at Quarry Park, Old Milverton Lane, which were not in accordance with current planning permission including brand new industrial units, several occupied by different sorts of businesses, one a retail baker and the others offices. From the roadside they looked like container units so the area appeared to be a small industrial estate with parking facilities. The Planning Enforcement Office had been asked to investigate.

(d). Councillor Gifford drew attention to the fact that Warwick District Council Planning Committee had given outline planning permission for the West Midlands Gigafactory at Baginton. Subject to the consent of the Secretary of State, this decision enabled an opportunity to create thousands of new and highly skilled jobs, boost the national effort to reduce carbon emissions and build a more prosperous local economy, which would probably have a peripheral effect on the Old Milverton and Blackdown area..

2150. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following Planning Application actions were approved:

W21/0924 PearTree Cottage, Stoneleigh Road, Blackdown

Demolition and replacement with new dwelling and associated works

The Parish Council had had no problems in principle with the application, but objection was made because the replacement appeared to have a detrimental effect on neighbours, regarding height; the illustrations depicted property not in keeping with others in this semi-rural position whose size might constitute an unacceptable increase in area which the Planners were asked to check (minute no. 2025 on 6th. September 2021). Information was subsequently received from the Planning Office claiming that these matters had been met and accordingly, it was resolved not to maintain the objection as none of the local residents had objected on grounds of scale and that, accordingly, it would be undemocratic to pursue it. However, the following observations were made to be forwarded to the Planning Office for response. Firstly, there was a degree of inconsistency in adopting volume over footprint as a measure so specifically in this case, which was not supported by reference to another case mentioned. As such, extreme caution should be applied in highlighting its use. The argument of footprint versus volume could not be seen as a simple mathematical one as the expansion of footprint in any case will have an impact on the ground-use in terms of water distribution, ground ecology, human logistical movements and has a small but exponentially significant impact on the potential physical presence of “urban sprawl”. Encroaching on ground space of the green belt would eventually lead to a compromise in its primary function. Secondly, there was the matter of precedent. While the very special circumstances required to justify a replacement building may well have been met there remained the problem that the assessment usually applied is the footprint of the building, which has been significantly re-defined in this case. Future applicants may well argue in favour of further larger replacement dwellings in green belt based on this decision using an isolation of volume from footprint rather than the conjunction of both measures as previously cited as a reason for refusal in past applications. It would be prudent for the Planning Officer to highlight not only the very special circumstances which allow the replacement dwelling, but also those which allow for the degree of flexibility in assessing material size specifically in this case. The disparity between footprint expansion (46.9%) and volume expansion (4.91%) is significant and unless this case is ring-fenced as “very special” it would give weight to future sprawling applications not only for replacement buildings but in arguing the case for extension of existing dwellings beyond current guidelines.

2151. SCHEMES TO BE FUNDED FROM CIL GRANT

As previously approved it was agreed that the following schemes to be put in hand from the CIL grant, be processed as follows:

(a) *Illustrated information boards at footpaths and cycle ways.* - The Clerk to identify along with Cllr. Pope the exact locations of the proposed signs, with a view to seeking permission from landholders for their installation and Cllr. Pope to continue with the drafting of the content of the boards.

(b). *Feasibility for new foot way within the grass verge between Blackdown Roundabout and Old Milverton* - Cllr. Emmerson to approach the Road Engineers for advice as to who to engage to carry out the study.

(c). *Blackdown "welcome" signs on Stoneleigh Road* - The Clerk to ask Highways Engineers to initiate, with commitment of non-refundable £500.00.

2152. PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED WITH HSBC BANK

The string of queries obviously created by HSBC Bank, the Parish Council's bankers, had been summarised by the Clerk and were duly noted.

2153. UNITY TRUST BANK, BIRMINGHAM

In view of the problems experienced with HSBC Bank it was agreed that the Parish Council's bank accounts be transferred to the Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindly Place, Birmingham B1 2JB, as soon as practicable (i.e. when invited by that Bank in view of its extensive list of applicants). The bank was the same as that used by WALC.

2154. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS

None.

2155. BUDGET COMPARISONS AND COMPARISON WITH BANK BALANCES

Balances as at 22nd. December 2021 were verified by one of the Parish Councillors.

2156. ITEMS FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

None

2157. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

CHAIRMAN