

Ashill Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Ashill Parish Council Planning Committee held remotely on Wednesday 10 March 2021 at 7.30 pm

Present : Cllrs P Lang (Chairman), R Abel, L Clay, C Criddle, A Knight, County/District Cllr L Vijeh, Mrs J Davidson (Clerk), Matt Frost (Town Planner – Boon Brown). Georgina Martin (Architect – Boon Brown) and Steve Billings (Technical Director – Burrington Estates) and 7 members of the public.

1/3/21 Apologies

It was resolved for apologies with reasons given to be noted from Cllr Criddle and Cllr Freudenberg.

2/3/21 Declarations of Interest/Dispensation Requests

None.

3/3/21 Reserved Matters Planning Application

Application No.	20/03697/REM
Proposal	Application for approval of appearance, landscaping and scale ('the reserved matters'), landscaping (condition 4), ecological mitigation (condition 5), access details (condition 9), cycle and footpath links (condition 16) and foul and surface water drainage (condition 20) pursuant to outline planning permission ref. 17/03800/OUT for the erection of 25 dwellings and formation of access.
Location	Land Os 3727 Part Windmill Hill Lane, Ashill.

- a) The Chairman welcomed Matt Frost (Town Planner – Boon Brown), Georgina Martin (Architect – Boon Brown) and Steve Billings (Technical Director – Burrington Estates) to the meeting who were then invited to speak with regard to this proposal.

Matt Frost (Town Planner – Boon Brown) – confirmed this application was to address the following 'reserved matters' :

- Approved Access Point
- Layout
- Appearance, Scale & Landscaping
- Ecological Mitigation
- Drainage
- Path & Cycle Links

Georgina Martin (Architect – Boon Brown) – spoke of the style, appearance, character and design.

Steve Billings (Technical Director – Burrington Estates) – spoke of Burrington Estates being a small/medium housing developer of quality developments.

- b) The Chairman then invited members of the public and Parish Council to ask questions and make observations which were summarised as follows :

Approved Access Point	Objections were raised with regard to the proposal for the footpaths within the development to be able to lead directly into the playing field and also on to the bridleway.
Layout	The current proposed layout - backing on to Windmill Hill Lane - shows new properties which will be directly lined up with the

	<p>existing properties opposite. The Parish Council would like to see the proposed new properties being offset to help mitigate the impact of overlooking and loss of privacy for the existing residents opposite. The lengths of the blocks 22-25 and 19-21 are considered to be particularly overbearing and the “large gaps to reduce scale and massing” as mentioned in the Planning Statement is felt to be not evident with regard to these proposed properties. There are concerns with regard to the number of spaces within the development which have been allocated for parking (84). This number includes car parking spaces in garages and it is questioned as to how many of these spaces would be used for storage rather than cars. Also with only two spaces allocated for visitors there are therefore concerns with regard to Windmill Hill Lane being used as an ‘overflow’ parking area for the development. Already when village events are held – for example at the Playing Field or Church - the lane is used for parking which creates access and safety issues for other road users including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.</p>
Appearance, Scale & Landscaping	<p>The Parish Council accepts that opinion for the use of cladding for the exterior of the new dwellings could be considered to be subjective. However in the context of the neighbouring properties - and in the village of Ashill as a whole - it is felt that the proposed use of cladding would be out of character and not in sympathy in the context of this location. The ground level of the proposed development site is higher than that of the existing properties along Windmill Hill Lane. There are therefore concerns with regard to the loss of privacy and light due to the density, height and close proximity of the proposed new dwellings to the existing ones. The proposal to retain the boundary hedge is supported as it is felt it will help to protect and maintain the rural appearance of the street scene. It is understood there is to be garden boundary fencing erected behind the hedge which raises questions as to how high the fencing will be and as to how the hedge will be maintained.</p>
Ecological Mitigation	<p>Concerns raised by Somerset Wildlife Trust in their response to SSDC Planning - 2 March 2021 – were echoed about the possible impact of the development on local wildlife. There still remains the potential for a significant negative impact on dormice principally because of the potential for increased numbers of domestic cats.</p>
Drainage	<p>It was noted from the plans that it is proposed for the outlet pipe from the attenuation pond to connect into ‘existing drainage’. However there is no ditch or natural drainage on either side of the adjoining hedge and therefore it is concluded that the existing drainage mentioned is actually the Highways drain. The road is at a lower level to the site and hedge so it would be expected for any excess water to seep onto the road anyway. Any such surface water would run down the road and would be a safety hazard particularly if it were to freeze. There are also concerns with regard to the siting of the large attenuation pond close to the road and on higher ground. Notwithstanding the only place for the water to go would be on to the lower road - in the in the event of the pond overflowing - but it is considered to be inevitable that water will also seep down through and on to the road. The Parish Council is therefore of the opinion that the current proposed drainage strategy is not capable of dealing with the surface water from such a large development – and the existing playing field - without it ending up on the road below. This area of road is</p>

	already prone to surface water flooding - during heavy rainfall - potentially causing flood damage to New Road Cottages and creating dangerous driving conditions. During heavy rainfall a substantial amount of water currently runs off the site onto New Road rendering it dangerous especially when it freezes on the bend of the road during the winter months. Also surface water from the village regularly flows down Park Barn Lane – behind New Road Cottages - during heavy rainfall and the Highways drainage becomes overwhelmed.
Path & Cycle Links	It is understood that it is not now proposed for there to be a footpath constructed along Windmill Hill Lane – adjacent to the development - as per Planning Statement 6.20. Windmill Hill Lane narrows to 4.58 metres width in parts and therefore it is felt a footpath would intrude too much into the existing carriageway.

- c) The Parish Council agreed that a response based on the points which had been raised at this meeting would be submitted to SSDC Planning by the Clerk. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and said that he felt the meeting had been a constructive one. The Chairman also thanked the members of the development team for taking on board the comments which had been raised and hoped they would be able to return to future meetings of the Parish Council in order to discuss the other reserved matters when they have been submitted to SSDC Planning for consideration.

4/3/21 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed the next meeting which will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council - to be held remotely - will be held on Monday 4 May 2021 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 9:45 pm

Signed : (Chairman)
Date : 4 May 2021

