



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00pm at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth

**Present:** Councillor Kevan Walton (Chairman)  
Councillors Tim Dant, Denise Parrett and Heather Ward  
Derek Whiteway, Parish Clerk  
One member of the public attended the meeting

### 23/048 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Webster, City Councillors Tim Hamilton-Cox and Abi Mills and County Councillor Gina Dowding.

### 23/049 Minutes of the previous meeting

- 1) The minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023, were approved without further amendment.

#### Matters arising:

- 2) **23/041(2) Aldcliffe Cycleway Wildlife Opportunities.** No further update to report.

**Action:** The Clerk will continue to liaise with NE and other parties to arrange a meeting.

- 3) **23/041(3) Stodday Picnic Site.** Councillors commented on the successful official opening of the picnic site on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- 4) **23/045(1) Signage on Arna Wood Lane.** Nothing further to report.

**Action:** The Clerk will review and pick up this issue again

- 5) **23/045(2) Enquiry from Lancaster Ramblers Association.** The Clerk read out an email from the local Rambler's Association which accepted the Parish Council's response that it was unable to help the Association any further with their project to improve a walk which included Stodday.

### 23/050 Declarations of Interest

No further declarations or changes to existing declarations were made.

## 23/051 Planning Applications

- 1) **23/00894/VCN Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping (pursuant to the variation of condition 7 on planning permission 16/01564/VCN to retain the screen fencing to the rear of 9-13 Aldcliffe Hall Drive for a further period).** Land North of Inglenook, Aldcliffe Road.

The Parish Council had submitted a response to the City Council's planning consultation on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 objecting to the application and asking that a shorter period (3 years as opposed to 5) be allowed for the required hedgerow to be developed.

The parishioner in attendance at the meeting, Mr Million, requested to address the Council in reply to its consultation response. At his request, the text of Mr Million's address is appended to the draft minutes, as is the Parish Council's response.

The Chairman thanked Mr Million for his address. Mr Million left the meeting at this point.

- 2) **23/00901/FUL Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock and storage.** Arna Wood Farm West, Arna Wood Lane, Aldcliffe.

Councillors discussed the application with reference to an earlier agricultural determination for a similar building on the site, which the owner was now using to deliver an agricultural contracting business. Councillors agreed that some clarification should be sought as to the uses of both buildings in the context of the two different planning applications.

**Resolved:** That a response letter be submitted, not objecting to the application, but expressing concerns over landscape impact and the character of the land, and seeking clarification/assurance that the development is for the benefit of the relatively small agricultural holding only.

### Update on Previous Planning Applications

The Clerk reported the following planning decisions made by Lancaster City Council:

- a) **21/01581/FUL (January 2022)** Partially retrospective change of use of land to 3 no Gypsy/Traveller pitches comprising 3 touring caravans and 3 mobile homes, siting of a day room, erection of a barn, installation of a septic tank and creation of an area of hardstanding. Field 3225, Arna Wood Lane, Aldcliffe.

The Parish Council objected to the development (minute 21/098, 01/02/22).

**City Council decision: Application Refused.**

- b) **22/00885/OUT (July 2022) - Outside the Parish)** Outline application for development of up to 70 dwellings with public open space and associated infrastructure and creation of a new access. Land North of Ashford House, Ashton Road, Lancaster.

The Parish Council objected to the development (min 22/102, 17/01/23)

**City Council decision: Application Refused.**

- c) **23/00567/OUT** Outline application for erection of 7 dwellings with associated access and landscaping. Land South of Aldcliffe Hall Lane, Aldcliffe Hall Lane, Aldcliffe.

The Parish Council resolved that a response letter be submitted objecting to and seeking refusal of the planning application (min 23/043)

**The application has been withdrawn**

### **23/052 Lancaster South Area Action Plan (LSAAP)**

Councillor Ward advised that there were no new developments to report. Councillors agreed that the LSAAP should be dropped as a standing item on the agenda, to be reinstated as and when necessary.

### **23/053 NDP – Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

Councillor Parrett reported that a review was now due of the Parish's Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) List. Following discussion, Councillors agreed that they were happy with the existing entries on the list. Councillor Parrett proposed, and Councillor unanimously agreed, that enquiries be made with the owners of the old Police Station and of Lunecliffe Lodge (both on Ashton Road) with a view to them being included on the list.

**Resolved:** That existing entries on the NDHA list are reaffirmed. Also, that enquiries should be made with the owners of the old Police Station and of Lunecliffe Lodge (both on Ashton Road) with a view to them being included on the list.

### **23/054 Lancashire County Council Public Rights of Way Local Delivery Scheme and Biodiversity Small Grant Schemes 2023/24**

The Clerk reported that an invitation had been received to apply for funding for 2023/24 under Lancashire County Council's annual Local Delivery Scheme and Biodiversity Grants Scheme. The Clerk reported that, for a variety of reasons, the Parish Council had not been able to fully utilise the funding provided in 2022/23. This situation was likely to continue until the Parish Council had re-established a Lengthsman, or equivalent, service.

Following discussion, Councillors unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should not apply to participate in the two schemes for the current year only, with a view to re-applying in 2024/25.

**Resolved:** That the Parish Council should not apply to participate in the Lancashire County Council's Local Delivery Scheme and Biodiversity Grants Scheme schemes for 2023/24 only, with a view to re-applying in 2024/25.

### **23/055 Parish Council Communications**

Councillors discussed the merits of different email handling options that had recently been identified. Following discussion, Councillors agreed to retain current arrangements and protocols.

## **23/056 Oaklands and Craiglands Court Pedestrian Gates**

The Clerk read out an email from the Chairman proposing the engagement of a local painter/decorator to repaint the four pedestrian gates adjacent to the two cattle grids on Oaklands and Craiglands Courts. The Chairman advised that, to his knowledge, the gates had not been painted in the past 30 years.

The painter had quoted £100 plus material costs for painting the four gates.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Walton, seconded by Councillor Parrett and resolved unanimously that the quote be accepted and work be undertaken as outlined.

**Resolved:** That the local contractor's quote of £100 plus materials be accepted to re-paint the four pedestrian gates adjacent to the two cattle grids on Oaklands and Craiglands Courts

## **23/057 Public Discussion and Updates**

### **City and County Councillors' Reports**

No further reports were received.

### **Clerk's Report:**

Nothing further to report.

### **Members' Updates**

#### **1) Highways (Chairman)**

Nothing to report.

#### **2) Amenity, including the Lengthsman (Chairman)**

Nothing to report.

#### **3) Stakeholder Liaison.**

Councillor Ward reported that previous issues over noise from the WwTW appeared to have stopped following recent work by United Utilities on some holding tanks and pipework.

Councillor Ward agreed to use her newly established contact with United Utilities to request a Parish Council visit to the site, as proposed by a previous site manager.

**Action:** Councillor Ward will make enquiries with United Utilities regarding a site visit to the WwTW, as proposed by a previous site manager.

#### **4) Broadband.**

Nothing further to report.

**5) Other Matters**

Councillors observed that Smugglers Lane and the Snuff Mill Lane footpath were now both quite overgrown and in need of cutting. Following discussion, Councillors agreed not to take any direct action, but to monitor the condition of the footpaths.

**Action:** Councillors will monitor the condition of the Smugglers Lane and Snuff Mill Lane footpaths.

**Public Discussion:**

No further matters were raised.

**23/058 Payments**

Payee & Detail	£
St Paul's Parish Hall – Room Hire 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 (note 1)	25.20
Rose and Thistle – Weed Spraying in Aldcliffe 10/08/23	108.00
Derek Whiteway – Parish Clerk salary and expenses, July-Aug 2023	326.51
HMRC – PAYE deductions, July-Aug 2023	80.40

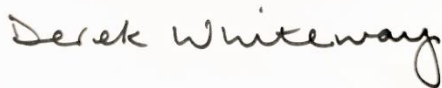
Note 1. Invoices from St Paul's Parish Hall are now received at the end of each calendar month and payments are processed separately.

**Resolved:** That the above accounts be approved for payment.

**23/059 Date and venue for next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth, commencing at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8:55pm



Clerk of the Council



Chair

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

## **Planning Application 23/00894/VCN**

### **To: Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council**

#### **The text of my remarks to the Parish Council meeting on 6 September 2023.**

I am here to ask for a right of reply to the Parish Council's public criticism of us in its planning comments, published 2 days ago.

I will be as brief as I can, and will keep to the main points of my reply. There is much else to be said, but not all of it today.

I and my wife are the owners and residents of one of the 3 properties which are the subject of the planning application under consideration.

I am speaking for myself and my wife only. I am not here to speak for the owners of the 2 other relevant properties which are also part of the planning application – although there are some common features.

My wife and I have lived in our present house for over 6 years. Our house was built, and we started living there, at about the same time that the Parish Council came into existence. Never in the 6 years since then has any member of the Parish Council made any individual or collective complaint to us about the way that we were planting or maintaining the hedging and fence of our property. The first we heard of the current complaints was 2 days ago when they were published on the planning website.

Why, if they are so significant, has no-one on the Parish Council spoken to us about it before in the last 6 years?

In the Parish Council's published remarks, the councillors say that my wife and I have not properly planted and maintained the hedging and verge. That is something which is demonstrably false – as any objective person seeing our property would agree.

We have always clipped and pruned the shrubbery and hedging along the Drive, we have replanted shrubs where previous shrubs and hedging have died because of the ground conditions under the big trees. We have used a variety of native shrubs and small trees. We have always mowed and cared for the grassed and planted verge to the side of our property along our part of the Drive - both to maintain the good appearance of our property and that of the Drive itself. The Parish Council gives us no credit for any of that.

In the local area and along the Drive itself, there are differing styles, sizes and constructions of boundary walls, fencing and hedges facing onto the Drive and other roads. Our own wooden fencing to the front of our property is largely but not completely covered by hedging and shrubbery. You say in your published comments that our fence "continues to impinge upon the local environment" – that's hardly a ground for criticism – because everything "impinges" on everything else.

## Appendix. Address to the Parish Council by Mr Clive Million

But, at the Parish Council Chairman's own property, he has bare wooden fencing of a similar height to ours. It surrounds his garden and faces onto the Drive. Does he plan to remove his fencing "in the interests of the amenity of the area"?

There is also another property further along the Drive (on the opposite side to our house) which has a long high boundary fence comprising concrete posts and bare slats of composite wood-effect material? Are you asking for that to be removed? Why not?

Why the different treatment and discriminatory attitude towards us by the Parish Council?

My wife and I have always thought it unlikely that hedging along the front Drive side of our house would give us sufficient privacy and security. This is in part because of the nature of hedging, but also because the growing conditions for hedging or shrubbery under the colonnade of large trees is always going to be challenging, due to the dry shady conditions created. You can see this in the parts of the Drive that go down towards the canal, where dense hedging under the big trees has never established itself.

We have always believed that a combination of fencing and the planting of covering shrubbery would best meet the reasonable needs of security and appearance. We believe that hedging alone will never give us the necessary security or privacy.

I also believe that, because of our personal circumstances, we have some enhanced needs for privacy and security within our own property, but the Parish Council has not enquired about or considered our individual needs.

I also ask the question - what harm will be caused by our fencing and its covering of shrubbery? It is and will be entirely contained within our own property boundary. No member of the public has any rights of use or access over any part of our property.

Wildlife regularly travels under our current fencing through gaps caused by undulations in the ground. For example, several hedgehogs travel into and through our garden nightly and some sleep and hibernate there regularly.

We are justifiably indignant about the Parish Council's prejudiced approach towards us as individual residents in the parish.

Clive Million  
6 September 2023



Derek Whiteway, Clerk to the Council  
122 North Wing, The Residence  
Kershaw Drive  
Lancaster  
LA1 3TF

Tel: 01524 64908 (Home)  
07805 260976 (Mobile)  
Email: [clerk@aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org](mailto:clerk@aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org)  
Website: [www.aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org](http://www.aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org)

Mr Clive Million



By email to 

25<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Mr Million

**Planning Application 23/00894/VCN. Address to Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council**

On behalf of the Parish Council, thank you again for attending and addressing the Council at its meeting on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September and for supplying the text of your address. As you requested, the document will be appended to the published draft minutes of the Parish Council.

Having now had the opportunity to consider your address fully, the Parish Council has instructed me to reply as follows:

Please be assured that the Parish Council's consultation response to planning application 23/00894/VCN was not intended as a personal comment on yourselves. It is a response, formulated on behalf of the local community, to a formal consultation by Lancaster City Council on a new planning application. We understand that this application is the result of the applicant having held discussions with the City Council Planning Officers on how the planning condition can be met.

Your address makes observations regarding fencing and other boundary treatments on other properties on Aldcliffe Hall Drive. Without going into all the historical details here, the use of fencing on these properties was required by planning and landowner/land usage



conditions in place when the Aldcliffe Hall carriage-drive was being developed. The open-plan frontages were introduced later as a planning requirement when the Drive was widened towards the Aldcliffe Hall Lane end. The same concept was subsequently applied to the development of the old hall grounds at Oaklands and Craiglands Courts.

These existing features of the hamlet are not part of any planning related consultation and have not been raised by the community or others as an issue on which the Parish Council might be expected to act.

Referring back to planning application 23/00894/VCN, you may be aware that the Parish Council was not established when the plans were submitted and approved, and the local community was not consulted on them. Notwithstanding this absence of consultation, the Parish Council does hold the view that the closed-in nature of numbers 9,11 and 13 Aldcliffe Hall Drive is very much at variance with the overall aspect of the rest of the Aldcliffe hamlet. Councillors do therefore support the Planners' reasoning in condition 7 of the Decision Notice for application 16/01564/VCN on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017, that removal of the fencing, along with other landscaping conditions, is *"in the interests of the amenity of the area"*. The Parish Council does wish to see the planning condition fulfilled.

You have also commented on your personal privacy and security needs. As stated earlier, the Parish Council's comments were a direct response to the planning application consultation. Whether the plans to which the planning condition relate were/are fit for purpose is not currently a matter for the Parish Council's consideration or comment. As mentioned, the Parish Council was not established when those plans were submitted and approved, and the local community was not consulted on them.

Councillors have, however, recognised the practical difficulties encountered in establishing a viable hedgerow when suggesting in the consultation response that, *"...given the poor progress to date, a qualified horticulturist should be employed to improve the growth and condition of the hedges."*

Councillors do understand and appreciate the points you make about your personal needs for privacy and security and would respectfully suggest that, if you and your wife feel that the planned shrubbery is insufficient in this regard, that is a matter you need to explore with the applicant and the City Council Planning Service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derek Whiteway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'D' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

Derek Whiteway  
Clerk to the Parish Council

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