



12th April 2021

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting, 7.30 pm

Present

James Perkins (Chair), Roger Hiskey, Helen Hennig, Charles Wilkinson Chris Vane and Derek Winter.

In Attendance: Borough Councillor Mick Burgess and the Clerk Mary Philo.

Members of the Public: 9

The chairman called for discussions to be held respectfully and a minute silence was held for the passing of HRH The Prince Philip.

1. Formalities

I) The council was quorate. (LGA Act 1972 schedule12, 12/28/45)

II) Apologies had been received from County Councillor Michael Hill. (LGA 1972 schedule12, 12)

III) Declarations of interest and dispensations: none (Code of Conduct)

2. Approval of Draft Minutes

It was resolved to agree the minutes of the meetings held on 1st March 2021 as a true record.

Proposed by Councillor Hiskey and seconded Councillor Vane. (LGA Act 1972 schedule12,19.1)

Adjournment of Meeting for Reports and Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned at 7.45 pm

Borough Councillor Mick Burgess Report

As councils could no longer hold virtual meetings from the 7th May, the borough council was trying to hold as many meetings before the 7th including the full council meeting. In response to query the Borough Councillor advised that, as a Councillor and not as Chairman of the Planning Committee, his view on the planning application for a new bungalow accessed in the narrows is that he anticipates all developers to endeavour to make the most profit possible from any site and that this would not necessarily be acceptable to local residents.

Public Questions.

Agenda queries

The chairman confirmed that the application within the parish of Kenardington would not be responded to by Appledore.

It was further clarified that the estimated cost of £250 was only with regard to a traffic survey not the footfall survey. It was confirmed the issue of the removal of the incorrect 40 mph roundel had been resolved.

Due to further deterioration the road now required full resurfacing and the current roundels would be removed during this process.

With regard to item on verge posts for The Street, £275 for 10 wooden posts would be paid for directly by the parish council so that vat of £55 could be reclaimed and the remainder of the cost being labour to replace or repair the required posts. Some of the posts would be saved for later replacement work.

Public Conveniences

In response to query the Clerk advised the council was waiting to hear from the quantity surveyor with the value of refurbishment works. The return of hanging baskets and ladies and gents signage to the public toilets would be responded to by the Chairman at a later date.

Infrastructure payment – Allotments

The sum to be paid to Ashford and then claimed by the Allotments Society, is due to be paid when the residential development on the council field is about two thirds of the way through the build.

Parking Situation now that the Hall Car Park was unavailable due to Refurbishment Works

Concern was expressed about visitors' cars parking in the Street as the hall car park is closed.

It was suggested that the hall refurbishment works should have been delayed and the hall allowed to restart as the pandemic restrictions are being lifted, so that the hall would not lose income.

In response it was pointed out that if Ashford Borough Council lawyers had not taken so long to review the paperwork, the refurbishment would have started during lockdown and now been four months in. Letters of complaint had to be written to the Borough Council Chief Executive Officer in order to ensure the final documents were signed. Calls were made for discussions to remain civil.

A resident enquired on the council procedure. A further resident had informed their walking group and other groups about the car park closure. They suggested contacting cycle groups and erecting signage outside the village. Other suggestions made included using the council field but this is not possible as archeological trenches would soon be dug across it and sharing the hall car park during the build which is not possible as vehicle movements prohibited it.

The Chairman advised that the council would look into this further

The meeting reconvened at 8.20 pm

3. Planning

(Town and Country Planning Acts 1990 schedule 1/2010)

3.1 Planning Decisions by Ashford Borough Council

- a) 21/00088/AS Gusbourne Estate Vineyard, Kenardington Road: Erection of 1 no. non-illuminated wooden entrance sign – Permitted
- b) 21/00154/AS Oaklands, Moor Lane: Lawful Development Certificate: Existing use of barn as an annex to the main dwelling – Lawful Development
- c) 21/00195/AS Listed Building Consent Queens Arms 2 Court Lodge Road: Insertion of heritage roof light into 'blind' dormer – Granted
- d) 21/00003/GPDE/AS Tithe Barn, The Street: Prior notification for larger homes extension – Refused
- e) 21/00228/AS Listed Building Consent Appledore Station: maintenance and refurbishment work to the station building and exterior wall – Granted
- f) 21/01232/AS No 1 The Street: Variation/modification of condition 27 of 18/00381/AS – updated elevations to include minor fenestration/elevation detail adjustment – Permitted

3.2 Planning Applications Considered

a) 21/00385/AS Land between Old Watch House and Chi An Geltyon 2A The Street: Erection of dwelling with associated access and landscaping. Following a lengthy discussion and consideration of a review paper circulated to councillors, Councillor Wilkinson proposed objecting to the application and this was seconded by Councillor Winter. The response which can be found at the end of the minutes, covers all the discussion points except for the comment that The Crown Estate could have protected the village by restricting the number of houses in the contract, especially as it sold all the land available without advising the village. Also, that some planning and highways officers that had made comments on the application had not visited the site and were basing their comments on out-of-date information.

4. Residential Enabling Car Park Court Lodge Car

The attenuation tanks and inspection chambers for the car park have been installed

5. Highways Update

Councillor Hennig was currently dealing with the following minor issues: damage to pavement in The Street near Old Way; drain cover damage; a 40mph sign by the Oast on Kenardington Road appeared to have been moved and a water leak near Horne's Place Oast. Councillor Hennig had also attended the Vision Zero Seminar and would forward her notes to councillors.

a) Pedestrian Crossing

It has been confirmed that to achieve a pedestrian crossing of any sort a footfall and traffic survey must be carried out and highways personnel have advised that the survey is unlikely to provide the data needed to approve a crossing. The cost of £1000 could be greatly reduced if volunteers carry out the survey of the footfall between 8am to 5pm. The only cost would then be the traffic survey – approx. £200/£250. Following a discussion of whether a survey would be useful with the uncertainty of a rapid return to pre pandemic levels, **it was resolved to ring fence £250 for a survey to be commissioned within twelve months.**

b) Gateways and Associated Road Markings

As the original proposed sites for these are not all suitable. Highways proposes to re-visit and confirm number and sites – the probable locations are Kenardington Road, Station Road and Tenterden Road. The red high friction surfacing is no longer recommended as this is expensive to install and very expensive to maintain. Approximate expenditure for each gate £1919.43. The item was deferred as confirmation of cost had been delayed as the officer had taken a holiday.

c) Rationalisation of Signage

This item was also deferred as the costs were delayed with the officer taking leave.

d) 30/30 Seven Road Surface Roundels through the Street

Estimated cost £4931.29 which includes the cost of the rationalization of the signage. This item was also deferred as the costs were delayed with the officer being away.

e) The Street Verge Posts

It was resolved to maintain and replace verge posts along The Street. Cost £570 including vat £55. Proposed by Councillor Wilkinson and Seconded by Councilor Perkins

6. Public Conveniences

Beverley Gray had resigned since the last meeting. The chairman had thanked Bev Gray for her many years of service and presented her with a thank you present. Hannah Smith has taken on the job since the Easter Weekend.

7. Communications

Councillor Hennig had forwarded councillors the power point presentation within which using social media was promoted as the way forward for councils. It was suggested that a councillor lead this. The Clerk suggested that an informal discussion of councillors would be a useful place to start and review the various social media options.

8. Tourist Maps

Councillor Hiskey was in support of the idea of tourist signs and offered to take this forward working with Mr. Blaney who had obtained initial costings. Costings, sign sizes, supporting posts where required and siting of signs could be reviewed and re-presented to the council. It was suggested that the council should take the design and financial cost in house to allow for a holistic approach to the tourist signs and other signs needed in the village. The History Society could be asked for input on the tourist maps and a QR Code was also put forward. Councillors debated whether there was a need for a tourist map at the Station and whether to fund a tourist map for the station. Mr Blaney mentioned that funds could be raised separately for a map for the Station. It was noted that GTR may require an annual rent for the sign and this will be looked into. Following discussion, with Councillor Hiskey leading, **it was resolved to take this matter in house and funding the Station map would not be part of this project but the map design would be made available to be used at the Station.**

9. Finances

9.1 Bank Account: as at 28th February 2021 £.37,386.39

9.2 February Receipts

£0.16 February Bank Interest
£701.66 KCC grant towards website upgrade to comply with the latest data protection regulations

9.3 March Payments

£14.40 Pett P C - share of clerk's mobile phone January to March (no vat)
£220.00 Appledore Parish Magazine annual charge for publication of council articles
£58.50 T P Jones & Co LLP – Payroll January to March (£9.75 vat)
£51.50 LASER – Toilet's electricity December to February inclusive (vat £2.43)
£1,902.75 March Salaries

9.4 Kent Association of Local Councils

It was resolved to renew the annual subscription. Cost £392.42 including vat £65.40

10. Information for Councillors

Vision Zero Report from Councillor Hennig would circulate.
Green Agenda Report from Councillor Hiskey had been circulated.

11. Date of Next Meeting - Virtual

As Monday 3rd May is a Bank Holiday, the next meeting will be Thursday 6th May 2021, 7.30pm

Response to Application 21/00385/AS -Bungalow - OBJECTION

In general, Appledore Parish Council supports small or individual dwelling applications within the parish and has recently supported Court Developments Limited application to increase the number of dwellings from 4 to 5 with regard to the Residential Enabling Car Park application 20/00975/AS.

However, in this instance, the council objects to this new application, 21/00385/AS, because both are on the same land owned by Court Developments Limited and for the following reasons:

1) Approval will set the precedent for overdevelopment of the area and thereon resulting damage to the surroundings of a heritage asset The Royal Military Canal and the village conservation area.
2) The danger to pedestrians posed by the sharing of an exceedingly narrow access with vehicles which is blind to traffic even at low speeds.

3) Concerns regarding the protection of the oak tree T21 which may already have sustained damage from the creation of a path closer to the tree than the approved original application 17/00920/AS and closer than the tractor tracks visible prior to the car park building works starting.

Additionally, we would like to highlight the following:

a) The residential enabling car park was only allowed because the benefit that the car park brought out weighed the damage to the surrounding area. Damage limitation was ensured by the original planning officers with the rejection of a first proposal for 9 homes and the requirement for 4 large dwellings. 9 dwellings would have been a notable change in appearance of the area. If this application is allowed then the original officers requirements will have been ignored. Particularly, as Court Developments also have plans drawn up to apply for another house in the wooded area along Court Lodge Road which provides animal habitat and mitigation for the 5 houses in the current application. Approval of this application could lead to a further amended application for more houses located on the land behind which Court Developments also own.

- b) The reference to No 1 The Street as creating precedence does not apply as the ramshackle buildings already existed and had been up for sale for many years. Additionally, the development is an improvement of exceptional quality design.
- c) The traffic survey that was carried out for 15 days from lockdown to 21st January is not a true reflection of the traffic at the location. It shows
Northbound – 393 vehicles per day and southbound – 372 vehicles per day
whilst the 2018 Highways Improvement Plan 7-day survey showed
Northbound – 1631 vehicles per day and southbound – 1723 vehicles per day. A considerable difference. The quantity of traffic is more significant than the speed as driver error increases with traffic numbers. The reality of increased local and national tourism resulting from COVID-19 will remain with us and with the opening up we are already seeing increases on the usual numbers of visitors resulting from over-crowding at beaches in the area.
- d) Walking has seen an enormous revival with those from surrounding villages coming to Appledore to walk along the canal. Numbers are expected to rise again as people are allowed to travel nationally. The proposed footpath will see a much higher usage than originally anticipated especially for visitors with children and dogs. The access is not wide enough to ensure that a car and people can be side by side. A vehicle is just about able to get between the brick wall and gate. Visibility is poor and a car will reduce this further. If a car and pedestrians reach the access together the pedestrians are forced to remain in the road. Providing a lined path will not be a solution as pedestrians will ignore this, preferring to immediately cross to the other side where there is better visibility for them and drivers. This is a dangerous situation and the footpath was applied for first.
- e) The field has never been used for horses. It is used for sheep. The farmer checks on them twice a day and chooses to do this on foot because of the access issues. It is therefore absolutely definite that have a house there will create more trips than currently.
- f) Accident records are thankfully low but are a very poor indication of the real dangers as they only record deaths and serious injury. Residents can bear witness to yearly damage to the house and garden walls of the properties making up the area known as the 'Narrows' and witness continued regular driver errors. Driver error is the real danger from vehicles and these happen at low speeds. The area can very quickly become congested and when you add pedestrians and cars exiting properties there, the danger to pedestrian increases exponentially. A car park is more dangerous than a road. Small children and dogs cannot be seen in this melee. Similarly, the elderly cannot move out the way quickly.
- g) The proposed white line to create a pathway is not big enough to improve the complete lack of visibility to the right for a driver exiting. The entire nose of the car will have to be in the road before the driver can see enough. If neighbouring properties change the roadside boundary, then the issue will be made worse.
- h) There is no regular bus service that can be used to travel to work and the train station is 1.2 miles hazardous walk from the village on a narrow road above national speed limit. Residents must use a car to get there. The station car park is full by 6.30am. The same is true for workers who go to a supermarket. Due to weather and traffic speed, cycling to the station is only a fair-weather choice.
- i) The proposal includes a retaining wall for the footpath and this is of concern because of the oak tree T21 being so close to the property. A wall will entail digging into the ground by the tree.
- j) The permanence of the footpath and its legal status is of concern as this is not covered in the application and the path should be required to be a Public Right of Way and right of access permitted in perpetuity for the footpath.
- k) The bungalow does nothing to enhance the heritage asset as it does not bring any contrasting or distinguishing character to the area. There are no mitigating improvements to the natural surroundings to compensate for the loss of this part of the field. The design is not of any quality as it does not make use of any new energy technology nor modern styling but is rather ordinary.
- l) Note that the land is between Corner Cottage (not Old Watch House) and Chi An Gelyton 2A