

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASTON TIRROLD AND ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH
COUNCIL,
HELD ON MONDAY 15th MAY 2017 IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

12/1 Apologies for absence

Susanna Brunskill (SB)

12/2 Present

Joanna Hart (JH) Chair, Tim Vallings (TV), Jane Knight (JBK), Simon Young (SY), Nigel Hawkey (NH), Justin Keeble (JK), Anna Dillon (AD),

Clerk: Denes Marffy (DM)

Public: Ted Betts, Richard Burtleton, Jane Murphy, Ed Blomfield, Gerald Threadgold

12/3 Declaration of any relevant interests

AD noted that she is on the Village Hall Committee re The Paddock appeal.

12/4 Minutes of the 24th April 2017 meeting

Agreed by all and signed off by the Chair (JH)

12/5 Public Questions, Comments Three questions were received from villagers:

- Bryan Bateman regarding construction traffic (covered under Agenda item 15)
- Trevor Rees regarding defibrillator (covered as part of AGM)
- George Curtis regarding Didcot Garden Town and public transport (covered under Agenda item 13)

12/6 SODC and OCC Reports to Parish Council

Jane Murphy said there was nothing really to report as the General Election and OCC elections means that the Unitary proposals have not progressed.

Clerk to contact new OCC Councilor Simon Clarke.

12/7 Planning

To decide on the following planning applications:

P17/S1332/FUL New window at ground floor level on street elevation, new roof lights over ground floor living room, kitchen and breakfast area in vaulted roof (all exceed min 1.7m to lowest part of glazing) and new in-line solar panels to south-facing roof over kitchen wing. Stockwell's Barn Thorpe Street Aston Upthorpe. **No Strong Views** (Clerical error resulted in this application as being entered as refused, has now been rectified)

- The application description did not match the plans.
- Unclear why the solar panels were being installed on the East rather than more suitable South elevation.
- The roof lights could increase light pollution in the village, which is an increasing concern in the village and was covered under a separate agenda item at the meeting.
- The Parish Council notes the legal covenant in place with the neighbours.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 78, The Paddock Spring Lane Aston Upthorpe, Proposed new house and garage. Application reference: P16/S3054/FUL, Appeal reference : APP/Q3115/W/17/3174192

[See attached]

12/8 ARC Approve May minutes. Approved

12/9 Finance

i. The PC approved the payments as below:

Denes Marffy clerk fees	£162.00 (£270 less tax)
Grant: Parochial Parish Council	£2000.00
Grant: Village Hall	£1000.00
Grant: Astons Web Team	£150.00
Grant: Village Hall for Post Office	£500.00
Zurich insurance renewal	£1554.58

12/10 Approve May Financial Statement. Approved. Year end accounts to be given to Steve Morant. Year end forms to be displayed publicly for the required time. Purple form for approval at the next meeting.

12/11 Roads and Footpath. Footpath behind War Memorial in a poor state. To be discussed at the next meeting.

12/12 Confirmation of bench for grass triangle at Rectory Lane. The bench to be added to the Asset Register for 2017-18.

12/13 Reports from CLP working groups

- The CLP working group recommended the installation of a traffic mirror on Chalk Hill at a cost of £800 including VAT. The PC recognized that there was a potential liability and that traffic may increase because the public might think it was now safer. However the CLP survey showed that 85% of the villagers want it. The PC Approved the purchase. Clerk to organize purchase. SY to carry out a risk assessment once the mirror is installed.
- Didcot Garden Town proposals re Transport: The PC supports villagers that wish to comment via the Didcot Garden Town masterplan that outlying villages should have improved public transport, but does not think that the Astons should be part of the Didcot Garden Town, as there is a risk of pressure for increased housing in the village which would be against the will of the village as expressed in the CLP.

12/14 Light pollution in villages. A number of villagers have raised concerns privately with Councillors about increased light pollution in the village. The PC notes that concerns about light pollution should be reported directly to SODC (<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/environment/noise-and-nuisance/nuisances/artificial-lighting>). The PC will also consider any specific concerns if the Clerk formally contacted. AD highlighted a document from the Institute of Lighting Engineers on the correct installation of lighting. This document to be put on the Web site and in the Village News.

12/15 Large Vehicles travelling through the village. Large vehicles have been seen using the village as a through road. Villagers can notify SODC of large vehicles via [<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/weight-restriction-enforcement>.], if villagers are concerned about giving their personal details, providing they send all details and a photo the

Clerk will fill in on their behalf, subject to the level of requests the Clerk receives.. PC to review where the 7.5 ton signs are and what state of repair they are in and discuss further at the June meeting.

12/16 Traffic Management re buildings. PC recommend that applicants for planning permission notify their neighbours of their intentions, agree routes in and out of the village with their contractors and be on hand when large vehicles are due at their site. The PC felt that SODC should provide guidelines for Councillors on what level of traffic is acceptable when considering planning applications . To be discussed with Jane Murphy at the next meeting. JK to share lessons learnt from his building process for incorporation into the planning guidelines on the PC website.

12/17 Items for the Next Agenda

- War Memorial footpath
- Bank signatories
- Information Guide
- Defib processes
- Traffic re planning applications
- Footpaths by The Close
- Barrier on footpath at Baker Street
- Accept ARC AGM minutes
- Appoint second Councillor to ARC

Note there will be a presentation from North Wessex Downs ahead of the meeting.

The next meeting will be on Monday 19th June 2017 in the Village Hall at 8.0pm.
Meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

SIGNED FOR ASTON TIRROLD AND ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

NAME.....

DATE.....

Planning Appeal Reference: APP/Q3115/W/17/3174192

At its meeting on Monday 15th May the Parish Council reiterated its objection to planning application reference: P16/S3054/FUL-10 The Paddock, Spring Lane, Aston Upton as detailed in its response to the planning application and repeated below for ease of reference. The Parish Council would like to make three additional points:

1) A footpath through the site has been proposed: The Parish Council rejected this proposal on the grounds that there is no need or demand for a footpath there. The Parish Council would like to point out that there has been no consultation with the owners of properties that the plans assume the footpath would go through, in particular the Village Hall Management Committee which owns and manages the land where the footpath would start.

2) The Aston Tirrold and Aston Upton Community Led Plan was published March 2017(https://www.theastons.net/files/astons_clp_report_april_2017.pdf) and included ‘question 22: How important to your life here are each of the following?’

a. 96% of the community responded that Green Spaces within the village were either very important (80%) or fairly important (16%)

b. 96% of the community responded that views from the village across open countryside were either very important (84%) or fairly important (12%).

As a result, the Parish Council strongly supports the Planning Officer conclusions (Delegated Report paragraph 7.1) that “The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies this site as one of four important open spaces because it is open.” And “The loss and domestication of part of the paddock diminishes its important contribution to the conservation area and the AONB.”

3) With reference to the introduction of an orchard: the Parish Council would like to note that a new orchard, with smaller rootstocks, is unlikely to have any close resemblance to the historic orchards.

Response from Parish Council Meeting on Monday 17th October 2016:

At the meeting on Monday 17th October the Parish Council voted unanimously to recommend that SODC should refuse the planning application.

The Parish Council is strongly opposed to a new building in a greenfield open space inside the Aston Tirrold and Aston Upton Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The 1998 appeal inspector concluded that the site was an important open space and since then it has been recognised as such and included within the Conservation Area. The proposed new house would not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

We agree with the conservation officer’s recommendation for Refusal:

“The harm to the Conservation Area arising from this scheme although not amounting to ‘substantial’ harm which would constitute a severe or total loss of significance to the conservation area as a whole, it would amount to a particularly high level of harm within this particular context. NPPF paragraph 134 requires that any harm being ‘less than substantial’ is outweighed by public benefits in order to be met with approval. In this instance the benefit of one large executive home is in my view is a negligible benefit to the wider public and would not outweigh the harm to the wider conservation area enjoyed by many.”

Building this new house cannot improve an open green space with historical character, associated with Thorpe Farm, which contributes to the distinctive form of the village. Any opening of views and access would make the house more obvious within the setting of the AONB. We agree with the conservation officer’s view that “.... glimpses of green open space form an important part of the character of the conservation area.” Nor is biodiversity likely to be increased by building on a grass paddock.

Since the 1998 appeal the traffic along Spring Lane has increased in volume and speed. There are road safety concerns about the increased use of the access track. Another recent issue is that Spring Lane has flooded regularly in the last five years, due to surface water runoff from springs, and the building could exacerbate this problem.

The Parish Council is supportive of the many online objections made by the village community.

HISTORY OF THE FILE AS DOCUMENTED BY THE PC TO DATE

This page is for reference only - the points in this sections are known to SODC and have been made before.

- 1) **1987:** Mr Kerr obtains the paddock and applies for planning to gain access to Spring Lane from paddock: Granted permission
- 2) **1990:** Application 1 by Mr Kerr for new house and detached garage on paddock. Application refused.
- 3) **August 1997:** Application 2 by Mr Kerr for new house and garage on paddock. Permission refused. Appeal submitted and then withdrawn
- 4) **Autumn 1998:** Application 3 by Mr Kerr for new house - Permission refused. Appeal submitted and lost
 - a. Application rejected in 1998 for two reasons:
 - i. Character and appearance of the area
 - ii. Highway safety in Spring Lane.
 - b. On appeal (appeal letter dated: 2nd December 1998) - http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=607343159&CODE=5351037A16BE525ED7F1685F780449F0), point 1 was upheld on the grounds that:

“I do not consider that it makes any difference whether the appeal site is regarded as part of the countryside and therefore subject to the restrictions contained in policy H6 or part of the settlement and subject to policies H4 and H5. This is because the appeal site is part of a segment of undeveloped land extending into the settlement that, in my judgement, makes a significant contribution to the semi-rural character of the village.”

- c. At the time, the site was not wholly within the Conservation area and Mr. Holland went on to say that his concerns related to the whole settlement and the wider context provided by the AONB.
- 5) **The 2005** published Aston Tirrold & Aston Upton Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- 6) <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Aston%20Tirrold-Upton%20CA%20Character%20Appraisal.pdf> states:

“10 and 11 Spring Lane are of red brick, gabled to the highway and have painted decorative bargeboards. They are of local note adding historic interest to the conservation area. The highway boundary here is mixed hedgerow behind a short grass verge. Attractive views of Rose Barn and lawns can be glimpsed from Spring Lane between 10 and 11 Spring Lane and Lowbury House”

- 7) **2011:** Application No. 4 by Mr Kerr for new house (different position in paddock) - Application withdrawn
- 8) **2016:** New application 5 by Mr Kerr. Rejected on 31st October 2016 for the following reasons, by Adrian Duffield, Head of Planning - SODC:

“The site comprises an important, open, undeveloped paddock within the Aston Tirrold/Aston Upton Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The development would result in the loss and domestication of part of the paddock diminishing the important contribution the site makes to the wider character and appearance of the Aston Upton/Aston Tirrold Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The development is contrary to

Policies CSEN1 and CSEN3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 and saved Policies G2, C4, CON7 and H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and the Aston Upthorpe & Aston Upthorpe Conservation Area Management Plan May 2005”.

- 9) **Since 1998**, the conservation area has been redrawn and this site is now wholly within the conservation area, meaning that the site is entitled to even more protection than it was in 1998.