



Drayton Parish Council

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Special Parish Meeting DRAFT Minutes

held on Monday 31st January 2018 at 7:30pm
in the Small Hall, Drayton Village Hall, Lockway, Drayton,
OX14 4LF



Present: Richard Williams (Chairman)

In attendance: David Perrow (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer), Stuart Davenport (VWHDC District Councillor); Richard Webber (OCC County Councillor)

Parishioners: 47, mainly residents of Walnut Meadow/Barrow Road/Abingdon Road, but including 5 parish councillors

1. Welcome by Chairman

The Chairman welcomed people to the meeting, introduced himself and the District and County Councillors and explained that the meeting was focussed on the current state of the Walnut Meadow development.

A Briefing Paper (attached) was circulated at the meeting giving updated information on the various public areas and facilities which the developer is yet to complete and handover to the Parish Council. A resident commented that she had that day received an email from OCC to say that the revised speed limit on Abingdon Road north of Walnut Meadow – a reduction from 50mph to 40mph – should be in place by end March.

2. Statement by Cllr Stuart Davenport (VWHDC District Councillor for Drayton)

Stuart reflected back to the Drayton Neighbourhood Plan which was supported at Referendum in 2015 by over 90% of those villagers who voted. This supported three main housing developments in the village – including Walnut Meadow – in return for the contribution of badly needed infrastructure for the village (such as sports facilities; village hall refurbishment etc.) The VWHDC as planning authority is responsible for giving planning approval and enforcing planning regulations and conditions. It has a department – Planning Enforcement – devoted to ensuring planning law is followed, but due to resource constraints which must be spread among very many housing developments at present, it is not able to inspect housing developments as they are built, but has to respond to breaches as they are reported by a named person. There are statutory limits on enforcement, so any reports to Planning Enforcement should be made as soon as they are noticed.

As regards Walnut Meadow there is at present one current live issue with VWHDC Planning Enforcement which is the site drainage.

3. Statement by Cllr Richard Webber (OCC County Councillor for Drayton and surrounding villages)

Richard pointed out that with regards to neighbourhood planning (a rather new concept) there were three stages: formulating the Neighbourhood Plan itself (which is quite an effort); construction of agreed housing sites, and delivery of the public facilities. This last stage was proving to be a problem at Walnut Meadow and also required considerable effort by all concerned. He urged that what was now needed was the positive co-operation among all three councils (parish/district/county) and the new residents on the estate.

On specific responsibilities of the County Council in respect of Walnut Meadow he reported:
Adoption of public roads. OCC would – and should not – accept roads which they will have to maintain in future which are substandard. Millers will need to bring these roads up to the OCC standards. Any roads (including pavements, drainage and street lighting) not adopted by OCC will be the responsibility of the site's Management Company (MC). It was in residents' interest that they also ensure that the MC does not accept any sub-standard roadwork from the developer.

The residents might also wish to involve the housing association which is responsible for contributing the MC fee in respect of each of the houses they own.

Junction/Street Lighting He had been in contact with OCC Officers and was seeking an urgent update on the delays here. OCC were working on a traffic calming scheme design at the entry to the village, separate from Millers required work on the junction.

4. Public Participation

Speakers raised the following issues:

- a) **Barrow Road/Walnut Meadow to Corneville Road footpath link.** A resident of Barrow Road commented that there had been insufficient consultation with regard to the footpath link. The Chairman responded that the link was a footpath (not a cycle path as had been commented) and that as far as he was aware planning permission had been granted for this as part of the original VWHDC planning approval. A lighting scheme had subsequently been agreed by VWHDC and OCC and the footpath should be installed soon – it was overdue and much needed as the safe walking route to school originally requested in the NDP
- b) **The estate planting was not to plan and badly executed in soil with insufficient depth.** In discussion it was pointed out that Millers have to plant according to the agreed planting plan in the planning permission and that if plants die they would have to replace them. The Parish Council will not accept any planting not to specification or standard and nor should the MC or house owners. It was reported that Millers original planting company had been replaced and that the current company seemed to be doing a more professional job.
- c) **Junction with Abingdon Road.** Concerns over safety were expressed about the current state of this junction and these problems should be fixed as soon as possible. There was a wide ranging discussion about the various dangers at the junction at present. A request for a safe crossing point, that the pavement opposite should be cleared and complaint that it slopes towards the road. A costed proposal for bus stops near the junction was included in the Briefing document. A straw vote at the end of the meeting showed support for these (7 for; 2 against, many abstentions)
- d) **Wall collapse.** A wall had blown down at the top end of the site near the playground. Millers had admitted that it was of too flimsy a construction to stand up to the winds on that exposed area of the site and had promised to replace it, but that was weeks ago. The owner was at first requested to claim on his house insurance, but Millers did then admit liability and agreed to replace it. The rubble has now been cleared but Millers say it will take 3 months to procure new bricks. Stuart Davenport suggested that this matter be reported to VWHDC Building Control as soon as possible.
- e) **Landscaped garden subsided under fence.** Millers had also promised to fix this by providing gravel under the fence. This was in mid Dec – and again in mid January. An attempt to reach the site manager by telephone today had been rebuffed by Millers – there appears now to be no site manager in charge.
- f) **Site drainage.** A long established resident on Abingdon Road pointed out that the site flooded regularly when an open field and that this had been pointed out to VWHDC and the developer. The current site drainage system is not, in his view, adequate to cope with the floodwater experienced in previous years by local residents. There were other contributions from the public reflecting the view that the developer did not seem to understand the local geology and drainage conditions of the site.
- g) **Barns.** It was questioned why the barns had not been demolished. It was pointed out that the planning permission only required that the barns cease to be used for drying and storing grain (which would have been too noisy near housing). There was no planning requirement to demolish them.
- h) **Holly Lane – French drain.** Was the French drain connected into the drainage system to the swales? Millers say that it is, but this needs testing (by VWHDC?)
- i) **Management Company.** Householders had made a contribution on taking occupation to the Management Company (MC) and yet it seemed that though the company existed as a legal entity

it was managed by Directors who are also employed by Millers. Residents have no current representation on the MC and there has been no meeting or communication with householders about any such representation. The last accounts filed at Companies House show a nil balance. Where is the money which has been paid to the MC and exactly what services are residents receiving at present if the MC currently neither owns nor manages any assets on site?

- j) **Sewage coming into house.** A householder reported that she and her neighbour both had problems with sewage coming back into their houses. An independent surveyor had been hired and she read an extract from his report indicating that work was not to standard. She was strongly urged to report these problems to VWHDC Building Control and the National Housebuilding Council (NHBC)
- k) **Blocked drains.** Another householder reported having to call Dynarod to a blocked drain. Their camera pictures revealed the drain was blocked by debris including a plastic drinks bottle and a plus building debris. This drain covered five houses in that row.
- l) **Block paving on roads subsiding.** It was suggested that residents photograph this and other problems and email photos to the Parish Clerk (who will forward to District/County and Councillors etc. as appropriate) and to Millers. They can also share these on the Walnut Residents Facebook page so that issues are known and shared. If unfixed such subsidising blockwork on roadways will become the responsibility of the MC and therefore an expense to residents.
- m) **Street lighting on all night.** Should it be? Cllr Richard Webber will investigate
- n) **Bins not being emptied.** VWHDC/Biffa responsibility. Seemed a few are being missed from time to time. Please report these asap to Biffa admin.vale@biffa.co.uk
<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/your-recycling-and-waste-collections>

5. Action Plan

- a) Residents (co-ordinated by Richard Stanway) will get together and produce a letter to go to Millers managing director in Edinburgh. This will raise the various issues and ask for a firm undertaking in writing that these will be resolved with a binding timetable, and will give a deadline for this response. It will also ask where the MC money is being kept and arrangements for residents to be represented on the MC.
- b) The Parish Council will also draft and send by recorded delivery its own letter. District and County Councillors may also sign this.
- c) Stuart Davenport will approach the local MP, Ed Vaizey, to brief him
- d) Publicity. Depending on the previous measures, local media (including radio/TV and newspapers) may be approached. Residents can also comment on Millers website/Facebook/Twitter feed – though it was thought that Millers might be filtering negative comments

Contacts:

Parish Clerk: Email: draytonclerk@gmail.com. Tel 07909176061

VWHDC District Councillor (Stuart Davenport) Email: Stuart.Davenport@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

OCC County Councillor (Richard Webber) Email: richardwebber777@gmail.com

Walnut Meadow (Land West of Abingdon Road) planning application docs can be found at:

http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationCriteriaList&TYPE=Application&PARISH=DRT&AREA=&TXTSEARCH=west+of+abingdon+road&APP_TYPE=&APPTYPE=ALL&APP_STATUS=D&SDAY=7&SMONTH=1&SYEAR=2012&EDAY=7&MONTH=2&EYEAR=2018&Submit=Search

VWHDC Building Control email: building.control@southandvale.gov.uk

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/building-control-1>

VWHDC Planning Enforcement email: planning@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-enforcement>

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Appendix: Briefing paper circulated at the meeting:

Walnut Meadow – Update for Special Parish Meeting – 31st January 2018

1. Sports Pitch land

Work to remove the concrete and other debris and finalise the sports pitch land for fitting of field drains and seeding has not been started yet due to a combination of poor weather and lack of resources over the Christmas/New Year holiday period. **Subject to weather the plan is to start this work w/c 5th February. It is expected to take around 4 weeks.** Debris will be removed using a small excavator and will be stockpiled in the compound area before being removed entirely from site. Topsoil will be re-instated to a depth suitable to apply grass.

2. Playground

Kompan have installed their play equipment but need to put down the safe surface on soil through which grass will be seeded. The site can be prepared for this when it is drier, but given the season the grass will need time to establish before the playground can be inspected and opened. The estimate is that opening will now be **delayed until May 2018.**

3. Footpath link with lighting to Corneville Road/safe walking route to school

A meeting was needed with the farmer/owner of adjacent land, but Millers have the specification and permissions in place and **work should be able to start soon on the far side of Barrow Road.** The near (estate) side will need to await the resurfacing work on Barrow Road since a temporary vehicle entry/exit will operate here while the work is in progress.

4. Fence at rear of Abingdon Road – Repair

Work almost completed – **will be done this week.** Excess gravel needs removing and trench filling back (ensuring that new fencing gravel boards are not put under any strain). Planting around the electricity substation was still to be put in place

5. Drainage/Swales

The swales needed clearing of debris, reshaping and testing that the connections work. They are intended to hold back water (SUDS scheme) but water should drain into the tanked area beneath and only overflow into the next swales down the site (and finally into the mains road drainage, once the connection is made) if the water overtops the connecting pipes.

6. Adoption of Chestnut Drive

OCC is not currently willing to adopt either Chestnut Drive or the estate entrance road off the main Abingdon Road. The issue is one of site drainage, not just the depth of the kerbstones on Chestnut Drive. Millers are due to hold further talks with OCC to determine what they require to bring the roads up to adoption standard. Given the need for this OCC specification and work needed on the drainage and road junction the likely timescale for finishing/road adoption is now **late summer 2018.**

7. Modification of road junction with Abingdon Road.

The latest street lighting scheme submitted to OCC has again been rejected and so requires further modification. Once the legalities are completed, OCC will need to issue a 12 week notice of the works. Assuming approval is gained in February it is expected that work will take 6 months from then, **so finishing mid-summer**

8. Speed Limit – Abingdon Road

OCC have agreed that the speed limit should be reduced from 50mph to 40mph but they and the police have declined a request from the Parish Council that the signs be moved 100 metres further north around the corner, to prevent drivers leaving the village having sight of the increased speed limit and speeding up past the Walnut Meadow and Sutton Wick junctions as they leave the village.

9. Bus stops

OCC have proposed the following scheme (see photos below). If agreed the Parish Council will need to find the £700 to pay for the two stops



10. Barrow Road re-instatement

The Method Statement is being prepared for approval by OCC. OCC would need then to issue a 12 week notice of closure. A meeting (involving Cllr Richard Webber) was still to be held with residents. **Work estimated to take place in May 2018**