

MINUTES OF WERRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 22nd April 2024

Present:	Belinda Coaten, Charles Coxon, Pauline Fury, Ivan Hammond, Vince Moon, Geoff Smith, Sally Weald
Ward Councillors:	Cllr John Fox, Cllr Judy Fox
Visitors:	2 members of the public.
Apologies:	Tony Forster, Martin Greaves, Roger Proudfoot

1. Apologies for absence and Chair's Comments

Roger advised whilst he isn't able to attend this evening, he will still be available for the presentation at the AGM plus the environment group.

Vince expressed that he felt everyone involved with WNC are part of a caring community, working as volunteers and accept that where people are coming from are different perspectives at times. He felt that it is important to offer tolerance to others if they disagree with your own views, or when challenge occurs whether someone should be speaking re their interests. He recognised that WNC does not have any standing orders information, unlike parish councils, instead we opt for what the chair decides. Vince proposed it would be useful to have something written down that can be referred to. Action - Vince will look into this as a way forward and will email all members to ensure transparency.

2. Public Forum

Sally read out a statement from Save Werrington Fields (SWF) as members weren't able to attend this meeting. Hard copies were made available too. This is seen in Appendix One.

Subsequently, the following discussion points were made:-

John Fox confirmed that the school had a public meeting in Sept 2021, it was not a survey but a consultation where people could respond. SWF have asked for a copy of this information under the freedom of information act. Judy expressed her concern that it has taken so long for the fields issue to be resolved. It is unfortunate that the school now has academy status as this has contributed to the delay. John expressed concern that no one from SWF was present and that if the feelings were so strong they should have been here. John repeated that a whole generation (5 years) of school children have missed out on outdoor sports. And that he is not the decision maker regarding the fence.

Sally confirmed that WNC's original position was regarding safeguarding and that the school needed fenced off space, but kept to a minimum as possible, with a preference for hedging. WNC will vote on this as a private item at the close of this meeting,

3. Minutes of previous meeting 13th February 2024

Minutes were agreed. Thanks given to Belinda.

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report

Geoff reported that since our last meeting, and based on the latest bank statement issued on 1st April and received as a hard copy on the 10th of April, there had been one cheque payment cleared in the sum of £60 being for the supply of promotional pens by Twenty8Design as arranged by Sally. Two amounts of income had been received namely the donations from PECT on 19th February in the sum of £356 and the first payment from the Co-op's Local Community Fund on 5th March of £529.62. Due to technical issues that TSB are currently experiencing with their online banking the latest information that we have on our balances is that featured in the afore mentioned bank statement which is showing a total credit balance

of £5,008.88. Geoff is not aware of any further transactions during the intervening period. Most of this is ring-fenced and full details of which will be circulated as part of his annual statement to our AGM. He continued by saying that postage totalling £2.50 had been paid out of cash-in-hand on formal contacts with the Independent Examiner - three pence now remains as cash credit. Richard Collingridge had agreed to carry out the examination of our accounts once again and Geoff was due to see him by the end of the week with our books and that he would expect to receive them back later next month. Once they had been approved he would arrange for a copy to be issued to members prior to their inclusion in the AGM meeting papers. He hoped that this year a new Honorary Treasurer may be found to take over from him given his advancing years but that wherever possible he would ensure that continuity and support will be provided irrespective of whether a new incumbent is forthcoming or not.

Geoff then continued by referring to the report he gave to the previous meeting on the future of The Barn and said that he had since continued to liaise with Denham Hughes who, as always, had been as helpful as he could. Geoff confirmed that as suggested he had sent an email to Felicity Paddick (Head of Estates at Peterborough City Council) on the 17th February. The only reply Geoff had received to date was an automatic acknowledgement of receipt due to her being on holiday and he considered it to be prudent not to chase matters until after the local elections. He would keep everyone duly informed on any developments and in the meantime it appears that status quo exists and that we continue to have usage at least into and including May.

Sally raised the query of the loss of use of The Barn for WNC plus the community and how PCC might address this. John suggested we invite Felicity and Simon Lewis to attend the AGM to explain the current status and situation. Sally expressed concern re the public notification process, and the potential risk of a 2 week notice of disposal of The Barn which is unsatisfactory. Action - Sally will send John an email with all the relevant questions and he will forward to the appropriate people for response. In addition, invite to the AGM - Simon Lewis, Adrian Chapman, Felicity Paddick.

5. Environment Group Report

Sally read the following report in Roger's absence

Planted 50 plug plants on the Werrington Meadow with Jane Squirrels help and reseeded areas worked on last autumn as areas had got waterlogged so not established very well.

Took delivery of 130 free hedgerow plants from Woodland Trust. Sally and I are looking after them until autumn when they will be planted out on Lincoln Road behind the bund that was out in place to stop the traveller encampments hopefully to provide further deterrent and to help rewild the area for nature. PCC have already altered the cutting regime in this area and cut a path through the long grass. PECT have kindly provided stakes and protectors.

Will be starting a once every two months WEG meeting. If anyone wants to help organise or offer a venue let me know. Needs to have tea making facilities. Hoping to drum up more volunteers and run some wildlife gardening evenings.

Re the £5000 PCC fund, it's possible that Werrington primary could use it but the total cost to revamp their pond was approximately £10,000. I don't have time to manage this as a project but can help facilitate if anyone else wants to lead the charge!

Re reducing grass cutting in out of the way areas I haven't forgotten this action for Judy from last time.

Finally well done to all especially Sandra for getting the boom cleared. Just a note to remember risk of Leptospirosis- the boom area does have a rat population and any volunteers should be given a card to alert to the dangers.

Judy added that she had meet Darren Sharp, he is actioning for all wards to cut down on the grass cutting. She has advised him not in Davids Lane due to the vista. Judy will have a link to a map (not available yet), which we can access, siting potential areas.

6. Planning

Sally advised she will be taking the summer off, and therefore WNC needs to decide on priorities. She will return in October, and during this time will not be available for meetings/emails/phone calls.

The Planning Report was circulated in advance of the meeting and can be seen in Appendix B

In response to the report, the following additional points were discussed:

- Werrington Centre/Staniland Court: Planning refused for 9 reasons.
- The Ploughman – clarity is needed on what prospective plans might be. Ward councillors can only advise the decision remains with the owners of the centre.
- Canterbury Road Micro Pub – this has involved a lot of work with unpleasant messages and negative personal feedback face to face and via social media. Outcome is a successful application for the Butchers Arms.
- Canterbury Road Micro Pub Licensing application – WNC is against the long licensing hours applied for. Ward councillors followed PPC planning recommendations when they declared an interest in this.
- 1332 Lincoln Road – most recent application is to knock down the existing property and erect a modern house at the front and 3 bungalows at the rear each with 2 parking spaces. WNC has various objections, the main one is the precedent this will set. There was agreement that planning objections will be submitted.
- Tree fell – at 94 Church Street. This is to cut down a dead tree. To retain the Werrington characteristics a replacement tree would be desired.
- The Cock Inn - new illuminated sign on Lincoln Road, with a similar design, and to change the sign over the front door. No objection to this.

7. Other items for discussion:

- Neighbourhood Plan Update – 27 residents responded with over 50 individual points, plus responses from the agencies. These all need to be responded to. PCC have also identified several things to add in. Anglian Water also wanted to add more comments. The Environment Agency have given a large list of requirements. A document of 50 pages has been compiled by Sally and Elliot stating how all these comments have been addressed. This will result in design amendments. Positive feedback given thus far from PCC. Hopefully final amendments will be completed in the next week and it will then be formally submitted. Money has been returned to the government, and we may be able to apply for more, but may not need this funding. One problem identified is the potential for the referendum to clash with the General Election with residents voting against the Plan without knowing what it is about.
- Carnival 22nd June – Sally agreed she will organise and attend the Stand. Pens and postcards will be distributed plus advice on the neighbourhood plan. Sally will email further details.
- Annual General Meeting
 - Tony Cook has agreed to attend as an external speaker for 15/20 mins. This could possibly be a joint presentation with Roger. Action - Geoff will offer to pay speaker expenses. It was agreed to split the presentations between the reports. Action - Geoff and Belinda to liaise re the administration.
 - It was agreed to continue to provide refreshment with details to be discussed further.
 - Only a handful of nominations have been received. Further suggestions were made. No nominations yet for the Youth Award so Sally will provide details to the schools.
 - Sally asked if the framing of certificates were necessary given that this is a large expense when WNC has no funding. It was decided that laminated certificates were not acceptable.
- Parish Council Liaison Committee Vince confirmed that it is worth trying to follow up to obtain crime figures. The Diversity Officer advised that new developments have to meet biodiversity targets, an exception is self build. The 10% net gain can be offset elsewhere. Fly tipping discussed. The working group are recommending more face to face meetings, therefore an equal split with zoom.

- Cuckoos Hollow Bridges – Budget has been secured. The new bridges will now be “LTN 120” compatible, of metal construction and green, they will also be illuminated across the top. The first bridge installed will be the Weir hopefully in October, Baron Court the second one. John is also hopeful for funding to resolve the problems of flooding at Werrington Meadows.
- Werrington benches – Sally meeting officers after the election at the site. They still have the Canterbury Road bench in storage, and just need to ascertain where the 2 benches can be sited. The manufacturer will honour their original quote.
- Civic Awards The two nominations were made and they were both successful: Andy Petrie and PE4 Wombles

8. Ward Councillors Reports

Judy - Nothing major to report

John – The budget for the 20 mile an hour speed limit in Church Street has been put aside. John collaborating with Sandra on this. Unfortunately this has been delayed due to officer sickness

9 Dates of next meetings ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Tuesday 4th June 7.15pm
Monday 15th July (Post AGM and general business)

ITEM FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL MEMBERS ONLY

10. Ken Stimpson Fields Fence

During a discussion, members made the following points

- Members reviewed the available information and noted that Save Werrington Fields have differing views to several aspects. The involvement of WNC in the various meetings along with Paul Bristow, Save Werrington Fields together with the slightly different view points were noted.
- The whole problem here is the City Council not being able to give clear concise information about the ownership and legal status. This is ‘School Land’ and so a matter for the City Council and Academy to resolve. The Community isn’t in a position to ‘negotiate’.
- Even though some of the fields may be lost to Werrington residents, another generation of Werrington pupils will be introduced to different sports for their health and wellbeing.
- There still remains a lot of people who believe that the school should have their pitches fenced and more have probably have moved to that view over the last few months to create the opportunity to secure a compromise.
- The WNC can only respond to official avenues of comment and consultation and cannot ‘campaign’ against the field.

Following a unanimous vote, it was agreed that: IF THE WNC had the opportunity to comment the 2.5 pitch was the preferred option but a four pitch compromise would be supported to achieve the compromise.

IT was also agreed that whilst WNC would continue to acknowledge the loss of community open space it would not challenge to proposed Community Use Agreement

APPENDIX ONE: OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

Statement issued by **Jenna Maryniak, local resident and member of the Save Werrington Fields (SWF) group.**

Firstly, I am really grateful for the dialogue with WNC and for the opportunity to make a statement. SWF seek a compromise of the fencing of 2.5 pitches. This is a position which we believe fairly balances the needs of the school and community, and was originally deemed sufficient by the school in 2019/2020.

Our legal stance is that the fields are “Dual Use”. As well as being educational land, they fit the definition of a public open space for recreation and are protected in law. Legal advice is that the council must consult the public before disposal of this public access either by a planning application or a section 123 (Local Government Act 1972).

The academy say that they cannot use unfenced fields – however there are still plenty of school such as Parkside and Ely that use open public playing fields. Safeguarding is not black and white and it is not a legal requirement that schools fence playing fields. The needs of the school and community must be balanced.

I have heard some doubts over how representative SWF is of the community's feelings on the fence. There have been questions about the wording on Paul Bristow's questionnaire that received around 1000 responses against the fencing. Who is to say what the stance is of all the 694 members of Save Werrington Fields? Were the 1350 members of the public signed that signed a petition against the fence all local? Were there really 250 people who protested on the fields against the fencing of 2.5 pitches? What I can say for certain is that in my 40+ years of living here, Werrington has never seen opposition to anything in such numbers before.

But if you are still not convinced, in Werrington Neighbourhood Council's own Neighbourhood Plan survey of local residents:

- 96% said that 'Access to Green Space' was very important or important for their enjoyment of living in Werrington.
- 99% said it was very important or important to 'Ensure the retention of current open spaces'.

The current position of the council does not seek to balance the needs of the community and academy. Fencing the whole fields is a land grab. We also do not accept an increase from 2.5 pitches to 4 pitches as a "compromise". This was an INCREASE from the 2.5 pitches that the school originally said it needed for its curriculum. There is some talk of a survey that was done to show support of a 4-pitch proposal. We have repeatedly asked for details of this but none has been received, and despite being key stakeholders and community representatives, no one at Save Werrington Fields was even aware of this survey.

I would urge WNC – under its constitutional aims to "represent and promote the best interests of the Inhabitants of the area of benefit as a whole, and to act as a forum for local opinion" – to consider adopting a position of the widely supported compromise of 2.5 pitches, in readiness for any future planning application or consultation.

APPENDIX TWO: PLANNING REPORT

1. Werrington Centre/Staniland Court

As per previous WNC discussion, comments had been submitted objecting to the application. On 8th April Planning Officers refused the application for the following reasons

R1 The proposed development, by virtue of its design, size and massing, would result in unacceptable harm to the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area. This unacceptably adverse harm would be exacerbated through the unjustified loss of nondesignated open space and mature landscaping.

R 2 The proposed development would provide for only 44no. parking spaces which falls below the adopted minimum parking standards for the mix of dwelling/unit sizes proposed. Whilst evidence has been submitted by the Applicant to justify this reduced parking provision, this is not accepted. As such, the proposal would not provide parking which sufficiently meets the need generated by the development.

R 3 It has not been demonstrated that future occupiers would be provided with satisfactory private or semi-private outdoor amenity space in which their day-to-day living needs could be met. In addition, public open space is not located in a sufficiently close proximity for this deficiency to be mitigated. Further, future occupiers would not be afforded satisfactory living conditions. Within the care home, units 40-46, 53 and 56 would be unacceptably adversely affected by noise associated with the day-to-day operations of the site. In addition to this, as a result of the single aspect design of care home Units 33-36, 40-43 and 48 and the west facing ground floor flats, these units would face directly onto public circulation spaces with little to no defensive space, therefore forcing future occupiers to draw their curtains or blinds to be afforded any privacy, therefore resulting in a poor outlook to principle habitable rooms and placing an unreasonable and unnecessary reliance on artificial light.

R 4 The proposed development would introduce a large amount of plant, mechanical ventilation and associated odour extraction to serve the proposed care home. insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptably adverse levels of noise or

smells to neighbouring occupiers, and the proposal would be contrary to Policy LP17(a) of the Peterborough Local Plan (2019).

R 5 Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that future occupiers would be provided with satisfactory living conditions and protection from external noise sources, demonstrating that future occupiers could reside within the application site without generating avoidable complaints in relation to neighbouring, historic businesses uses.

R 6 Insufficient information has been submitted to justify the loss of category B trees and associated green infrastructure, nor has it been demonstrated that the proposal would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on two category A trees. In addition, owing to the proposed layout of development this would place pressure to prune or fell retained trees. It has not been demonstrated that suitable on or off-site tree replanting could be secured by legal agreement.

R 7 The submitted drainage scheme has not taken into account proper SUDS features by following the drainage hierarchy, it has not incorporated advice from the LLFA, maintenance arrangements of such features have not been set out, and there would be no multifunctional benefits.

R 8 The application proposal fails to make provision for replacement bus stop, or a suitable and appropriate amount of tree planting and off-site open space, which are necessary as a direct consequence of the development.

2. Canterbury Road Micro Pub

As per previous WNC discussion, comments had been submitted per below.

Werrington Neighbourhood Council is supportive of this application being an excellent addition to the facilities and services of the area as well to the wider Werrington Community. We are pleased to see renewed life in one of the three empty shops in Canterbury Road. We also regret very much the closure of the important community asset which was the Ploughman, and welcome a new if smaller initiative.

There are three issues we would like to see considered in detail in the interests of local residents:

- The car parking spaces mentioned are used by the eight tenants of the block and by other adjacent residents.*

There is no alternative parking other than outside local houses. It must be assumed that some visitors to the micro pub will arrive by car.

There is mention of visitors arriving by cycle and census figures show that high numbers of Werrington residents do cycle locally but there is no provision for cycle parking outside the premises.

There are flats above the premises and houses opposite so nuisance from noise must be manageable with any seating and smoking locations reflect this, late opening hours considered and are there plans for amplified music?

Micro pubs are good for the community and this application will fill a void in a parade of shops. BUT as stated in the previous comment there is restricted parking and potential noise for the adjoining flats and residents opposite. Some supporters live a distance away who may use a car to visit so the available parking must be proven to be adequate. From the list of micro pubs submitted only few are sited in a quiet residential area and these have restricted hours eg only opening certain days and closing early at night. So the conditions and opening hours of this micropub must reflect this.

Realistically there were few planning reasons to object. Three residents, however, were aggrieved that WNC hadn't supported their cause against the application. WNC gave up the opportunity to speak at the Planning to allow these residents to speak. The planning application was subsequently approved by the Planning Committee. Whilst the planning application was passed, the licensing application has now been submitted and the following statement has now been sent to the Licensing Committee

During the planning application process:

- 1. The applicant said that 'micropubs tend to be small in size and operate within limited opening hours catering for the more mature market'*
- 2. The applicant made several comparisons to Frothblowers - which is only open 6 days a week for 6 hours and closes at 9pm (12 until 10pm at the weekend).*
- 3. Many local residents sent in comments or spoke at the Planning Committee commenting about the closeness of other residences (including directly above the applicant's premises) and how they will be affected by noise from within and surrounding the premises*

The proposed opening hours therefore seem to be all day every day until late at night. We therefore ask that these comments are taken into account when deciding on this licensing application.

3. **1332 Lincoln Road:** A new application with the demolishing of the current modern house and a new house being built on the front with access road down to three further bungalows at the back ... sizes unknown but each has two parking spaces. There has been a previous application for a new large house being built at the rear which Alan previously submitted objections to and was ultimately rejected.

The feeling is that there is little to support the application with the largest concern being setting a precedent for the continued removal of larger houses on Lincoln Road and/or the building on the backland of the area.

Members need to agree a response which could include some of the following points:



Proposed Sketch Layout



Werrington Neighbourhood Council does not in principle object to greater density where appropriate. However we have serious concerns about this application:

- The dwellings of Lincoln Road are large detached houses sitting large spacious plots. The recently built cul de sacs mentioned also have larger houses sitting in modest plots. The application has one house and small bungalows, some semi-detached and we presume there will be at best very small gardens. There will be a high density of people. All of this contrasts strongly with neighbouring properties and out of character for the whole of the Lincoln Road.
- The large plots of this area creates a wide margin of backlands. The suburban gardens are an increasingly important wildlife habitat. This proposal would remove important wildlife corridors
- This development will ingress into the backland area and neighbouring properties will suffer a significant loss of amenity with an increase in number of dwellings and buildings, and consequent loss of privacy, increased noise and nuisance
- the potential occupiers of the new proposed properties will have a cramped and dense environment out of keeping with all the neighbouring properties
- We can assume that most potential occupants will have cars. But as the application makes no indication as to the size of the houses, it is not clear if the parking is adequate. Adequate provision must be made for both resident and visitor cars as it is not appropriate for numbers of vehicles to be parked on Lincoln Road.
- creased numbers of vehicles on the site will create traffic issues as they seek to access the fast-moving Lincoln Road

- finally the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and policy WNP1 protects the open spaciousness and backlands of Lincoln Road. This application is not in spirit with the Plan philosophy.