

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE TOWN HOUSE ON MONDAY 16th APRIL 2018**

1. Present

Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Yvonne Lee, Cllr Peter McPartland, Cllr Mel Chammings, Cllr Bill Sterland, County Cllr Fiona Hill, Cllr Tony Hunter, Mrs Laura Childs (Clerk), Mr Tim Martin (RFO)

3 members of the public and Mr Brian Haughey, Mr Richard Emmerson & Mr Graham Clark

2. Apologies

Cllr Peter McParland, Cllr Ian Turner, District Cllr Gerald Morris

3. Councillor's declaration of interest

Cllr Lee asked it to be noted that she overlooks Hilltop, Pudding Lane, Barley and Cllr Sterland asked it be noted that he is a neighbour of Dibble Cottage, School Lane, Barley which are both to be discussed as planning applications on the Agenda.

There were no other declarations of interest made.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2018 were read and approved.
Proposed by Cllr Sterland and seconded by Cllr Lee.

5. Matters arising

Mr Richard Emmerson, who represented the Parish Council at the recent meeting with Mr David Lloyd, the Police & Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, updated the council. He reported that Mr Lloyd was very supportive of their ideas and suggested that there may be grant funding to put towards the cost of any new camera equipment. An application will need to be made to the Road Safety Fund and a feasibility study required. Mr Lloyd could see the benefit and potential in the equipment being used for Drivesafe. The application must be made by June and Mr Emmerson and Mr Haughey agreed to compile all the supporting information to be presented at the 14th May meeting for review by the full council.

Mr Graham Clark, who acts as police liaison on behalf of the Parish Council, reported on his most recent meeting with Sgt Guy Westwood. He confirmed that two further speed checks have taken place in the last month. The first was carried out by PCSO's from Hitchin and the second by two officers from the Royston station. A number of warnings were issued but no tickets. Sgt Westwood confirmed that he is still committed to providing these checks when his resources allow. It is hoped that Sgt Westwood and one of his officers would be able to join us at a Parish Council meeting in the near future.

Mr Clark left the meeting at 20.30

In Cllr McPartland's absence Mr Martin confirmed that the minutes of the past Parish Council meetings have been uploaded on to the website and the information on the renovation of the Lock Up had also been added.

Cllr Hunter continues to investigate who has responsibility for the trees on Bankside.

Cllr Carlisle reported that the meeting with Mr Jack Shepherd has now taken place to discuss the ownership of the marquees and the terms and conditions under which he leases them out. A further meeting needs to be held with the now 'retired' show committee to ascertain how much is held in their account. Mr Martin agreed to check whether insurance cover is in place for when the marquees are erected.

Cllr Carlisle has previously asked County Cllr Hill for her assistance with investigating the old drain that sits at the end of Pudding Lane which has recently been uncovered. Cllr Hill reported that she has been told that it is 'on the list' for cleaning but Cllr Carlisle asked if she could chase the Highways contractor for a more precise timescale.

The ongoing improvement programme for the Flint Cross junction on the A505 was discussed and Cllr Carlisle asked County Cllr Hill to find out if other works are planned.

It is understood that the new owners of the Fox & Hounds are now known but no contact details have yet been ascertained to allow the Parish Council to make contact and invite them to a meeting to discuss their plans for the pub.

The Clerk confirmed that she has emailed Julia Clarke, the Rights of Way Access Project Officer to advise of the damaged and missing footpath signs, no response has yet been received.

County Cllr Hill & Cllr Hunter left the meeting at 20:45

6. Planning

Case ref: 18/00451/FP Land to rear of Hilltop, Pudding Lane, Barley – Full Planning Permission: Detached 5 bedroom dwelling with detached double garage and new access off Pudding Lane

Discussions took place regarding this application and it was unanimously agreed to respond as follows:-

Barley Parish Council objects to this application and when arriving at their decision wish NHDC to take the following comments into account:-

Despite the Parish Council's objections to the previous application for the site Planning Permission was granted for a 4 bedroom thatched property plus a garage on 13th December 2017 (ref. 17/02530/1). This current application is for an even larger 5 bedroom property and garage on the site. The proposed development will have a footprint in excess of 27% bigger than the recently approved development and we consider that the scale and bulk of this proposal to be excessive and unacceptable in this location. The Conclusion to the planning officer's Delegated File Note in respect of the approved development refers to the consented proposal being "*...the development of a modest vernacular dwelling within an existing garden.....The new dwelling would affect an improvement in the visual amenities of the area....*". This latest proposal cannot be considered "modest" by any stretch of the imagination and neither can it be claimed to be an improvement to the visual amenities or character of the area.

While the site lies outside the Barley Conservation Area it actually adjoins it and we believe the scale of this proposal will have a significant and detrimental effect on the Conservation Area. The site is elevated compared to the surrounding area to the North, all of which lies within the Conservation Area and the proposal will be very visible. Following the grant of the recent permission on 13th December 2017 the site has been cleared of vegetation, in readiness for construction, including most of the established planting to the boundaries. There is now little visual protection of the site to the North or West or indeed to the Southern boundaries. Consequently we repeat our previous comments concerning this site that we consider that there will be overlooking issues as a result of the development of the site, exacerbated by the removal of most of the established planting to the boundaries.

Well used public footpaths run along and adjoin both the north and western boundaries of the site. The existing 1.8m high close boarded fence to both of these boundaries is in a very dilapidated condition and is collapsing in places and will require replacement. In this connection the plans accompanying the application do not indicate whether a new fence is proposed to these two boundaries but it is noted that it is proposed to provide a new 1.5m high close boarded fence to the donor property. A replacement fence of this limited height to the northern and western boundaries would be wholly inappropriate and would cause even further visual harm to the area. If despite our objection to this proposal NHDC are nevertheless minded to approve the application we would ask that a condition be included in the consent to require that a replacement close boarded fence be provided to the northern and western boundaries of a height of at least 2m.

In conclusion we repeat that in our view the scale and bulk of this proposal is excessive and will have a significant detrimental effect on the Barley Conservation Area and should in our view be refused.

Case ref: 18/00331/FPH Dibble Cottage, School Lane, Barley – Full Permission Householder: Single storey side extension following demolition of existing conservatory. Single storey first floor rear extension and porch following demolition of existing rear porch. Single storey front porch extension following demolition of existing porch.

This application was discussed and it was agreed to object to this application and whilst arriving at their decision asked NHDC to take the following comments into account:

We note that the property is situated within the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the current 1996 NHDC Local Plan and the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan which is currently the subject of Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The property is also within the Barley Conservation Area.

We consider that the proposed extensions to both the front and rear of the property would result in an unacceptable bulking and massing of the property accentuated by the narrowness of the building and the plot, the position of the property relative to adjoining properties and the public footpath which adjoins the property. We also consider the design and materials proposed are inappropriate and will do nothing to enhance the appearance of the property. The proposal would also exacerbate overlooking issues affecting the properties to the front and rear.

As noted above the property is situated within the Barley Conservation Area and we consider that the proposals would have an adverse effect on the visual quality and character of the conservation area in this location because of their design, materials, form and scale.

The proposals should in our view be refused.

Case ref: 18/00694/FP Land adjacent to Fox & Hounds, High Street, Barley – Full Planning Permission: 2 x 3 bed detached dwellings together with associated parking and amenity space

This application was discussed and it was unanimously agreed to respond to the application as follows:

Barley Parish Council objects to this application and when arriving at their decision wish NHDC to take the following comments into account:-

We note that the property is situated within the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the current 1996 NHDC Local Plan and the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan which is currently the subject of Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The property is also within the Barley Conservation Area.

As noted in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the application there have been two previous consents granted for this site – the original consent for 2x2 bedroom semi detached houses which has now expired (February 2017) and more recently for 1x4 bedroom detached house. In each case access was over the adjoining Fox and Hounds car park. This application for 2x3 bedroom houses is in our view a significant over development of the site. The scale, bulk and massing of the proposal being unacceptable in this sensitive location. We note that the application does not include any information on the impact of the proposed development on the street scene in this important location being in the heart of the village. This is an important omission from the application. The absence of this information makes it difficult to set the proposal in proper context with its surroundings. The proposed use of UPVC windows and doors is particularly inappropriate and out of keeping in this location. We also have concerns that as the two houses will be set further back into the site there will be overlooking issues affecting Kestrels to the rear and the adjoining house on Bankside.

We also have major concerns about the proposed access for the development. Contrary to the statement in the Design and Access Statement the proposal will not in our view allow sufficient vehicular turning space within the site nor sufficient visitor parking. Neither will it be possible for the necessary sight lines for vehicles exiting the property safely be achieved due to the difference in levels between the site and the public highway including the footpath and the need to construct retaining walls as shown on the plans. The provision of this new access so close to the existing access road serving Bankside and the other existing accesses to properties on the opposite side of High Street will constitute an added and unacceptable danger to passing vehicles and pedestrians. The Design and Access Statement refers to

“....an existing dropped kerb exists off the carriageway into the site and the proposal is to use this as a more satisfactory entrance” . The dropped kerb referred to does exist (its last previous use being unknown) but it is located adjacent to the boundary of the site with Bankside and not in the middle of the frontage as shown on the plans. The position of the proposed access would only use a very small section of this dropped kerb. In any event the ground level along the boundary of the site with the highway has been built up over the years such that there is now a difference in levels between the site and the pavement of some 1.5m which makes this proposed access, because of inadequate sight lines and the close proximity of existing accesses to other properties, unsatisfactory in highway terms. Since the original consent was granted in 2014 the potential for creating an access at this point has been considered many times by the site owners but a satisfactory solution in highway terms has not proved possible. This proposal is no exception and the application should in our view be refused on this basis alone.

The site also lies within the Barley Conservation Area and we consider that this proposal will have an even greater adverse impact on the Conservation Area than either the current consent for a single 4 bedroom property or even the original consent for 2x2 bedroom semi detached houses which consent expired in February 2017. The Conservation Area Policy provides that NHDC will only permit proposals which will maintain or enhance their character and any development proposal which does not respect and reflect the visual quality of the area because of its design, materials, colour, form and scale will be refused. It is our view that this proposal will have an adverse effect on the visual quality and character of the conservation area in this location because of its design, materials, form and scale and should be refused accordingly.

We consider that this proposed development is contrary to the provisions of both the current Barley Selected Village Policy Area as set out in the 1996 NHDC Local Plan and of the proposed Preferred Options Draft Local Plan and the Barley Conservation Area and should be refused.

We would add that the site area shown on the deposited plans does not appear to accord with the plan referred to at the Land Registry entry for this site and NHDC may wish to take this up with the applicant. Should NHDC be minded to approve this application despite our objections then it is incumbent upon NHDC to be reasonably satisfied that any such consent was capable of being implemented.

Case ref: 18/00909/FPH Barley Brook Cottage, High Street, Barley – Single storey front extension
Discussions took place regarding this application and it was unanimously resolved to respond to the application as follows:

Barley Parish Council objects to this application and when arriving at their decision wish NHDC to take the following comments into account:-

We note that the property is situated within the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the current 1996 NHDC Local Plan and the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan which is currently the subject of Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The property is also within the Barley Conservation Area.

We consider the design, scale, bulk and position of the proposed extension at the front of the property to be contrary to the provisions of not only the Barley Conservation Area policy, which provides that proposals will only be permitted which will maintain or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and that NHDC will refuse any development proposal which does not respect and reflect the visual quality of the area because of its design.....form and scale, but also is contrary to the provisions of parts (ii) and (iii) of the current 1996 Barley Selected Village Policy Area.

At the time of the grant of planning permission for the original construction of Barley Brook Cottage in 1999 or 2000 it was intended that although the property is set back from the road there would be no extension or other structure allowed to be built to the front of the building. While we have no objection in principle to the proposed alterations to the front entrance porch we consider the design, scale and bulk of the proposed single storey extension to be wholly inappropriate in this location and should be refused. If this additional accommodation is to be provided anywhere then it would be more appropriate for it to be sited to the rear of the property.

7. Financial Officers Report & Signing of Payments

Mr Martins reported that the following payments are now due:-

Barley Parish Council

Between Time Ltd	Repairs to the Lock Up	£8,803.08
		£1,491.67
Hardcastle Burton	Payroll Services	£ 111.00
HMRC	PAYE for 1 st quarter	£ 367.20
Came & Co.	Town House Insurance	£1,905.95
Laura Childs	Clerk March & reimbursement notice board keys	£ 341.20
Tim Martin	RFO March & reimbursement for web email	£ 304.68
HAPTC	Annual subscription and affiliation to NALC	£ 390.01

It was agreed that all of these payments should be made
Proposed by Cllr Champlings and seconded Cllr Sterland

Barley Town House

Alison Stacey	Letting Officer fee for March and advert in the Diary	£ 204.70
Nick Shaw	Reimbursement for cleaning and various materials	£ 252.23
Robin Saklavata	Wedding caretaking 7 th April	£ 50.00
Affinity Water	Annual water and sewage charge	£ 361.25

Wedding deposit refund

J.Pyrchidko	Refund of deposit - 7 th April	£ 150.00
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It was agreed that all of these payments should be made
Proposed by Cllr Sterland and seconded by Cllr Champlings

The bank statements and balances of accounts were distributed and reviewed.

The year end accounts were circulated via email to all Councillors prior to this meeting. The accounts will need to be presented in a different format for the external auditors this year, they are suggesting that an internal audit report is done first and then send to the external auditors. A little more detail is also being requested along with a report of the effectiveness of the council's internal controls. As part of the internal audit a review of the asset register is also required.

Mr Martin confirmed that there is approx. £2,000 in VAT to reclaim.

Cllr McPartland and Mr Martin have been reviewing the Financial Regulations for the Parish Council. Mr Martin has found that his own personal bank account details are becoming blended with those of the Parish Council in terms of accessing the account on line and Mr Martin has yet to receive a satisfactory solution from Barclays. He suggested that perhaps consideration needs to be given to changing banks to ensure complete security.

Cllr Sterland and Cllr Lee are due to review the Standing Orders and will shortly be meeting to resolve this.

8. Town House

Mr Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Townhouse Committee, emailed the Clerk ahead of today's meeting as he was unable to attend. He noted the comments regarding the lights and heaters in last months minutes and confirmed that he also regularly turns off the lights left on by hirers. He did confirm however that he had been leaving the heating on for a few hours in the worst of the recent cold weather to keep the damp out of the building. The new Lettings Officer is due to email all regular users to introduce herself and could include a note about remembering to turn off the lights.

9. Recreation Ground

In the absence of Cllr Turner there was nothing to report other than it had been noted that the bins still need emptying. The Clerk reported that several emailed complaints have been received about the state of the bins and Cllr Carlisle agreed to empty them.

The Clerk confirmed that Playsafety will undertake the annual RoSPA inspection of the playground sometime during May / June and the report will be emailed.

The first cutting of the grass has been undertaken by Bullards. Cllr Carlisle asked the Clerk to chase Bullards for their Risk Assessment and Method Statement for these tasks.

10. Scout Hut

Cllr Carlisle advised that there had been no further progress made since the last meeting.

Cllr Lee confirmed she has given the plans to a building surveyor for a guide figure on what it would cost to build the proposed pavilion.

11. Lock Up

Cllr Lee reported that renovation works have now been completed and grateful thanks should be given to Mr John Foy for allowing the building contractors access to power, water and facilities.

12. Health & Safety

Cllr Chammings had nothing to report. The next meeting with Drew & Baltrop, who are the health & safety advisors to the Parish Council, is scheduled for July. Mr Martin asked if Cllr Chammings could chase Drew & Baltrop for last year's invoice which has not yet been received.

13. Correspondence

An email has been received from Cllr Bill Dennis of Barkway Parish Council, asking if Barley Parish Council would be interested in creating some sort of system whereby we liaise closely on mutually relevant matters. All Councillors were happy to do this and the Clerk was asked to reply to this effect.

All other correspondence received is to be distributed amongst the councillors.

14. Any Other Business

The Clerk has been made aware of a possible grant available from the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) of up to £1,000 and wondered if this could be put to use by a self-help group to improve the footpaths around the village where they are very wet and boggy.

Cllr Hunter reported an initiative by Sgt Guy Westwood of Royston Police whereby they are supporting the purchase of alarms for outbuildings and vans and providing DNA marking kits for use in Royston and the surrounding villages.

Meeting finished 22:50