



**Barley Parish Council Annual Meeting: 13th May 2024 at 8pm,
Town House, Church End, Barley.**

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT

1.1 Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Ali Hearn, Cllr Alan Cayford, Cllr David King, Cllr Ian Turner, District Cllr Martin Prescott, County Councillor Fiona Hill, RFO Lynn Brett, Clerk Alice Robertson

IN ATTENDANCE

16 members of the public.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year 2024-2025

1.1 To consider nominations for and to elect the Chair for the coming year. The Clerk confirmed to the meeting that Brian Haughey, last year's Chair had recently resigned as a Parish Councillor. Nominations were received proposing Cllr Carlisle for Chair. No other nominations were received. Cllr Carlisle was elected as Chair for the coming year.

1.2 To consider nominations for, and to elect the Vice Chair for the coming year. Nominations were received for Cllr Hearn for Vice Chair. No other nominations were received. Cllr Hearn was elected as Vice Chair for the coming year.

2. Apologies

2.1 Nick Shaw sent his apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

4. Minutes

4.1 A minor amendment was requested in 6.1.2 to reflect the correct amount of underpayment to the RFO of the amount £52.82. With this amendment the minutes of the Barley Parish Council meeting held on 15th April 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Proposed Cllr Cayford, Seconded Cllr King.

5. Public Participation

5.1 See 6.1

6. Planning

6.1 **Reference: 24/00765/FP: Full Planning Permission: Foxlea, The Mount, Barley, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8JH. Erection of two 4 bed dwellings and one 2-bed chalet bungalow with detached garage and home office with associated parking, amenity space and access to the site through the existing access off The Mount.**

The Chair advised the meeting that as reported at the previous Parish Council meeting on the 15th April 2024, the Council had sought and now obtained an extension of time from North Herts Council to consider and respond to this application. He noted that many members of the public present at this meeting had objected to the proposals and were attending to hear and, where invited, to participate in the Council's consideration of this proposed development.

After hearing comments from many of the members of the public present, and following lengthy consideration of the proposals by the Councillors, Barley Parish Council resolved to object to this planning application and ask that North Herts Council in arriving at their decision take the following into account:

- It is noted that the site lies within the Defined Village Boundary for Barley and also within the Barley Conservation Area of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted in November 2022.
- It is also noted that the site has the benefit of a planning consent dated 6/11/2018, Reference 18/01900/FP for the construction of a single 4-bedroom House.
- We also understand that the applicant details set out in the planning application are wrong and that the applicant should have been stated as being a company known as Diarchy Ltd, a company controlled by the family of the owner/occupier of the adjoining property known as Foxlea located immediately to the South of the site.
- The application seeks to increase the number of dwellings from a single 4-bedroom property to 3 dwellings consisting of 2 x 4-bedroom properties plus 1 x 2-bedroom chalet bungalow with detached garage with home office over, and associated parking.
Barley Parish Council consider the proposal to be a significant over development of the site. The scale, bulk and size of the proposed development is in our view excessive and wholly inappropriate for its location and the Barley Conservation Area.
- The Design and Access Statement states that the applicant wishes to re-locate from the existing recently constructed property known as Foxlea adjacent to the site to a "more modest" two-bedroom chalet bungalow. However, we note that this "more modest" two-bedroom property in fact has a building footprint, excluding the garage and home office over, some 30% larger than the proposed Plot 2 4-bedroom property and some 25% larger than Plot 1. Furthermore, the height of the ridge of the proposed Plot 3 Bungalow is only some 1.12m lower than the ridge of Plot 2 and 0.67m lower than the ridge for Plot 1. The site levels rise from the South to the North across the site, all contributing to the view that the scale, massing, bulk and size of the proposed scheme is excessive.
- There is a double garage with a home office above forming part of Plot 3 which the applicant state in their Design and Access Statement could be used at some time by a Carer. In other words, a separate all be it small, single bedroom residential 4th property on the site should be envisaged as part of this proposal.
- In terms of design, and while a somewhat subjective matter, much is made in the Design and Access Statement about the quality of the design of the proposed dwellings, but in this regard we consider these to be unattractive, visually harsh, and quite severe architecturally and are not in harmony with the surroundings and location.
- We consider the proposal to:
 - Be contrary to national and local planning policy as set out in the recently adopted North Herts Local Plan.
 - To seriously impact on the amenity of the immediate neighbours and local residents at The Mount particularly to the properties known as Crieve and Owls Barn immediately to the North of the site.
 - To result in significant and overwhelming demonstrable harm to the Barley Conservation Area where the characteristics of the conservation area have been captured very well in several recent planning appeal decisions by the Planning Inspectorate in respect of a number of developments elsewhere in the village where.... "the Conservation Area displays an open and loose knit character reinforced by the open layout of development within the village...complimented and softened by the presence of

mature landscaping....” and concluding that the openness is a defining part of the significance of the Conservation Area.

- We understand that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that decisions should be taken that support development but must take into account the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting. Furthermore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not prevail where the harm of a development outweighs the benefits. It is the view of Barley Parish Council that the harm occasioned to the Conservation Area totally outweighs any possible benefit that would result from this proposed development.

It is our opinion that the development is in direct conflict with the policies of North Herts Council Local Plan 2011-2031 which together with the NPPF and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Area) Act 1990, collectively seek to ensure that special account is taken of a site’s location within a Conservation Area and that the siting, scale and bulk of the development should enhance or at the very least maintain the character of the area.

- The proposal shows an additional 8 parking spaces on the site. This would equate to a potential 16/20 additional daily vehicle movements on and off the site. This will involve vehicles accessing The Mount, which is a very narrow virtually single-track road, before having to move onto the main B1368. The access onto this B1368 road and where there are two such accesses have in each case poor sight lines creating already potentially dangerous junctions for existing traffic movement. The additional vehicle movements resulting from this proposal if approved, would make these junctions even more dangerous not just on the completion of the development but during the construction phase. We note and are very surprised that Hertfordshire County Council Highways have not raised any concerns in this regard nor about access from the site onto The Mount despite noting in their comments that the required visibility splays are not shown on the application drawings and which in any event, would be limited by existing trees and hedges. We would ask that HCC Highways reconsider their position regarding this proposed development.
- No provision is shown on the drawings for household waste disposal/collection arrangements, nor are there any turning circles shown for emergency or other large vehicles to demonstrate that they can safely access and exit the site or to turn round once on site to ensure they can safely exit in a forward direction.
- The site lies adjacent to open fields and substantial hedgerow and tree screen planting along the whole of the western boundary. No biodiversity conservation or enhancement proposals are included as part of the application. The application states that the applicant does not consider such measures are required. Having regard to the location of the site and its current use as open garden area and the nature and use of the adjoining land to the west we disagree with that statement. We believe a full biodiversity net gain assessment is required. The proposed development if allowed would result in excess of 50% of the site being covered by solid hard standing or buildings with very limited mitigating measures being taken to offset the loss of soft grass or other landscaping. These building and hardstanding areas will also significantly increase the amount of surface water run-off.

We are aware that not only do Barley Parish Council object to this application, but that North Herts Council have received numerous objections from virtually all the neighbouring and other local residents including from two different professional Planning Consultants employed by two of the residents whose comments we fully support. We ask that all of these objections and comments are fully taken into account by North Herts Council when determining the application. For all of the above reasons, we urge North Herts Council to refuse this application.

6.2 Reference: 24/00935/FPH Full Permission Householder: 20 Picknag Road, Barley, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8HP. Single storey front extension and erection of front porch canopy. The Council considered this application and had no objection in principle but raised a concern that the proposed new porch projected in front of the building line of the property and adjoining properties. It was the Council’s view that the whole of the proposed extension to the front of the property including the porch should not project beyond the existing front elevation building line. The clerk will advise the planning officer concerned accordingly.

6.3 Cllr Carlisle advised the meeting that North Herts Council have granted permission for the change of use from agricultural land to garden land at Sells Close House but have removed future Permitted Development Rights on that land.

6.4 The Clerk also advised the meeting that the two pieces of land put forward for Community Garden Use in The Plaistow has been approved.

7. Finance RFO report

7.1. To consider and approve payments for the Council.

Barley Parish Council

EXPENSES

Payee	Amount	For
Alice Robertson	£26.00	BPC0015
Alice Robertson	£140.92	Fast host expenses
Lynn Brett	£775.92	Gross pay/expenses
HAPTC	£337.05	Internal Audit
TOTAL for approval	<u>£1,279.89</u>	TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT

For Information

Alice Robertson	£400.00	S/O paid as agreed with PC
Peninsula	£223.45	Paid via DD
TOTAL for information	<u>£623.45</u>	PAID/Previously Approved

INCOMES

VAT refund	£1,886.74	
Club Room	£2,250.00	Rent & Ins BBP
NHDC precept	£16,000.00	First half precept
CTRS Grant	£271.51	
CDA Grant		
Other incomes	£165.00	Allotments
Interest	£0.00	
Barclays Bank	£100.00	Compensation
TOTAL BPC Incomes	<u>£20,673.25</u>	

Bank Balances Held

Barley Parish Council

Main	£44,308.23
Savings	£0.00
TH Sinking Fund	£13,793.63
TOTAL BPC Banks	<u>£58,101.86</u>

Other Sections

Barley Show Profit	£1,004.06	Final
Barley Show	<u>£12,820.98</u>	
Barley Tennis Club	<u>£13,019.60</u>	Bank balances

Precept Requested 23/24	£32,000.00
CTRS	£543.02
Total	<u>£32,543.02</u>

Proposer Cllr Turner, Seconder Cllr Cayford

7.1.1 The RFO read out to the Council each item in “Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement”, and “Section 2 - Accounting Statements” of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3, for the purposes of acceptance and agreement by the Council. Council agreed each of the statements.

7.1.2 The RFO then presented the AGAR for approval and signature by the Chair for submission to the external auditor.

- 7.1.3 The RFO had previously circulated to all councillors the 2023/2024 Internal Audit Report dated 24th April 2024 prepared by Hertfordshire Internal Audit Service. The RFO highlighted the comments and recommendations made by the Internal Auditor which the council and council officers noted. It was agreed that where necessary these would be addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.1.4 The RFO advised that we have received the first half of this year's Precept, along with the Club Room rent and Allotment rents.
- 7.1.5 The RFO advised we recently received an updated Financial Risk Assessment Schedule. This will be reviewed by her in the next couple of months following which she will report on any changes to the Council.

8.0 To consider and approve payments for The Town House Charity (as Sole Trustee)

EXPENSES

Payee	Amount	
Nick Shaw	£458.06	Expenses Cleaning/Gardening/Materials
TOTAL TH for approval	<u>£458.06</u>	TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT

For Information

PNET	£28.04	paid by DD
NHDC	£37.00	paid by DD (none Feb/march)
Octopus		Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Octopus		Electricity supply DD Est £865 outstanding
Everflow Ltd	£44.52	Water supply DD
Barley Community Group	£100.80	Public Liability Insurance
Gallagher	£28.59	Hiscox ins 01/05/24-14/04/25
TOTAL TH for Information	<u>£210.36</u>	PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

INCOMES

Town House YTD	£2,750.00
Bank Interest	£0.00
TOTAL TH Incomes	<u>£2,750.00</u>

Bank Balances Held **Balance**

Barley Town House

Main	£28,204.39
Deposits	£4,010.00
Savings	£5,926.02
	<u>£38,140.41</u>

Deposits

Opening balance	£4,010.00
Received	£0.00
Refunded	£0.00
Trf to main ac	£0.00

Closing Balance £4,010.00

Proposer Cllr Cayford & Cllr King

- 8.1 The RFO requested confirmation that she should now submit all necessary financial documentation to the Charities Commission. This was agreed by the Council.

9. Reports from County/District Councillors

9.1 To receive a report from County Cllr Hill

Cllr Hill paid tribute to Gerald Morris and his work over the years as District Councillor for Ermine Ward, and congratulated Cllr Martin Prescott on his new role as District Councillor.

The closure of Barley Post Office was shocking news. Cllr Hill spoke with the village sub-postmaster and has fed back the issues he experienced to Sir Oliver Heald as a lot of the reasons for the closure are financial issues arising from changes to the way the Post Office fund local sub-post offices.

The street signs in Picknag Road that need replacing will be completed in the coming months.

There will be rolling road closures on the A10 and around the villages on the 24th May for the UCLA Ride London Women's Road Race.

Cllr Hill made a visit with Sir Oliver Heald to Barley School where the children have been working on an Eco project to protect our local chalk streams and asked Sir Oliver Heald to give a letter of complaint regarding sewage overflows into the streams to Steve Barclay, the Minister of the Environment.

Cllr King asked Cllr Hill if the Deer warning sign on the road to Royston could be replaced and/or a new longer pole installed, following it being knocked over recently.

Cllr Carlisle advised that it has come to the PC's attention that double yellow lines and the potential need to cut back or remove a neighbouring hedge might be required at the entrance of the Draytons development to improve lines of sight onto the High Street. Lines of sight were something the Parish Council raised as an issue at the time of the planning application but were assured measures were not needed at the time. Cllr Carlisle requested Cllr Hill to look into this further as we have no yellow lines anywhere else in the village, and no one to police them if they are there.

The Clerk asked Cllr Hill about the possibility of trimming the foliage in Shaftenhoe End Road and along Smiths End Lane as sight lines were becoming compromised. Cllr Hill advised she will investigate.

9.2 To receive a report from Cllr Martin Prescott

Cllr Prescott introduced himself as the new District Councillor for Ermine Ward, and said his door is always open for help. He also advised that he hopes to be on the Planning Committee at North Herts Council given his experience in this area at a previous London council.

10. Reports from Working Parties, Committees and Portfolio Holders

10.1 Town House Charity

10.1.1 Cllr Cayford, in Nick Shaw's absence, advised that there were no issues except for a fire alarm call point fault on the first floor landing that is not working properly. Engineers have been called and will attend on the 14th May.

10.1.2 Cllr Carlisle advised that as requested, he had received a quote for the windows to be replaced at the Town House which amount to approx. £35,000. This needs to be discussed by the Town House Management Committee and whether they all need replacing at once and whether additional quotations should be sought.

10.2 Plaistow & Green Areas

10.2.1 Cllr Cayford carried out weekly checks on the playground and Plaistow and confirmed that there were no issues other than minor decay on the chairs and tables in the playground as previously reported.

10.2.2 There is loose straining wire that has been damaged around the Tennis Court hut following recent vandalism. Cllr Turner advised he will recommend that The Tennis Club repair or replace this.

10.2.3 The Clerk raised the question of Health and Safety of the current Football Goal net in the Plaistow. The Council recommended we speak with Peninsula about the best course of action for this and any future football goal equipment for the community.

10.2.4 We have received a request to make the Plaistow gate at the High Street entrance, more wheelchair friendly. Cllr Cayford agreed to investigate what the best option would be.

10.3 Tennis Club Update

Cllr Carlisle has sent copies of the Fields in Trust Management Agreement and the 1939 Plaistow Charities Deed to the Tennis Club Chair to help with finalising arrangements for the management of the tennis courts.

10.4 Scout Hut Update

Cllr Carlisle advised there has been further discussions with The Scouts regarding their proposals for replacing the existing hut, however issues relating to means of escape need to be resolved.

11. Clerks Report

The Clerk reported that:

- 11.1 The Annual Village Meeting is being held on 15th May at the Townhouse, 7.30 for 8pm start.
- 11.2 The Freedom of Information Act policy is being revised at the suggestion of the recent Internal Audit report.
- 11.3 A Safeguarding policy and procedure is being prepared for children and adults at risk.
- 11.4 There have been a few issues migrating to .gov email addresses with only Cllr Turner needing to implement this.
- 11.5 The Drayton's Developer has confirmed on email that a Management Company has been created for the effective management of the common parts of the new development including surface water drainage by its new owners/residents which will form part of the individual purchase contracts of each property.
- 11.6 We still haven't had a response from the Probation Office from the email sent about the viability of the village footpath bench replacement project. The Clerk will follow this up.
- 11.7 Cllr Turner has made progress with The Armed Forces Covenant and can provide a further update at the next meeting.
- 11.8 The apple trees over hanging the wall beside the footpath from Church End to the Plaistow have been pruned by the owners of The Manor as requested, in a bid to help reduce the apple drop onto the path this year.

12. Parish Council Vacancies

- 12.1 As advised earlier in the meeting, the Clerk advised that Brian Haughey had resigned as Chair and as a Parish Councillor on 8th May 2024. The meeting acknowledged and thanked Brian for his contribution over the years to the Parish Council.
- 12.2 Cllr King then advised the meeting that following conclusion of this meeting, he would be resigning as a Parish Councillor. The Council thanked Cllr King for his contribution during his years as Parish Councillor.

13. Items of for future discussion.

- 13.1 The future of the Speed Cameras.
- 13.2 Vacancies for Parish Councillors.

14. Date of next Barley Parish meeting and items for the agenda

- 14.1 The date of next Parish Council Meeting which will be 3rd June 2024 commencing at 8pm.

Contact: Alice Robertson, Clerk to Barley Parish Council
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