

Minutes of Abthorpe Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 31st August 2016 at 7:45 pm in the Old School, Abthorpe

Present: Councillors: K Fenwick (Chairman), A Hammon, M Hulbert, M Berry, M Perrigo, J Ford-cortes,

Clerk B Carter

There were three members of the public present.

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Cllr D Cambray tendered his apologies as he was working away from home.

All apologies were accepted.

2. Members' declaration of interest for items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Planning

The meeting has been called to discuss the following planning application:-

Application No. S/2016/2046/FUL

Proposal: Change of use of land from agriculture to extension of gypsy caravan site, including stationing of two caravans, erection of replacement amenity building and laying of hardstanding

Location: Mini Farm Blakesley Road Abthorpe NN12 8WB

The history of the site was explained. The current occupants of the site had submitted a retrospective planning application in 2009 so had been in occupation for over seven years. There had been a total of three previous planning applications seeking permission to increase the number of caravans/mobile homes on the site, add toilet blocks and remove various conditions restricting the use of the site. Two of the previous applications had been refused permission by SNC, but one of them had been overturned on appeal.

The current application was discussed. It requests a change of use of land from agricultural to an extension of a gypsy caravan site, two additional static caravans, the building of a replacement amenities block, and laying of hardstanding.

In the current application there was no apparent explanation as to what the new amenities' block is replacing. Under S/2009/0657/P (dated July 2009) a toilet block had been approved. It was not clear on this application whether this toilet block is to be replaced as the plan shows no new toilets.

It was questioned whether a septic tank was ever built for the old toilet block? During a public meeting, held on Tuesday 6 October 2015, the minutes recorded that that one of the residents stated that they used portable toilets which were being emptied commercially.

The original site map for this application had been amended.

It was questioned as to what connection the site owner, shown as living in Northampton, had with the site.

In the application narrative, on page 4, para 3, it states that two of the permitted touring caravans, (allowed under S/2011/1914/FUL) are currently being permanently occupied by younger relatives of the applicant. It was thought that these caravans should only be used for "touring".

Both Bradden and Slapton villages are currently considering legal advice to object to the application.

Minutes of Abthorpe Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 31st August 2016 at 7:45 pm in the Old School, Abthorpe

The application received by the Clerk dated 22 August 2016 stated that comments should be made in writing to SNC by 12 September 2016. Cllr Hulbert produced a paper dated 31 August 2016 stating that comments were needed by 21 September.

New Action Point Aug (P) – 001 Clerk to check date of required return of comments.

During discussion the following points were raised for inclusion in the comments/objections to be returned to SNC.

- 1) There is no indication of a septic tank for the existing toilet block. Neither the site of the septic tank nor the existing toilet block is shown on the site layout plan.
- 2) The application indicates that this will be a new multi dwelling site; if the septic tank exists, there is no indication that its capacity will be large enough to accommodate the waste water from the amenity block and the additional occupants of the site.
- 3) The Council expressed concern that there was not a report from Anglia Water in view of the proximity of the stream and the danger of pollution.

New Action Point Aug (P) – 002 Clerk to write to Anglia Water pointing out the proximity of the stream and the fact that they had not commented within the application.

- 4) There has already been an increase in the area of hard standing on the site, therefore should this application be retrospective?
- 5) The application quotes that it is “an erection of a replacement amenity building”. What is it replacing?
- 6) It was felt that there was a lack of detail of the layout of the amenities block, specifically the toilet facilities.
- 7) The size of the amenity block seems out of proportion with the needs of the number of residents.
- 8) The narrative, on page 4, para 3, it states that two of the permitted touring caravans, (allowed under S/2011/1914/FUL) are currently being permanently occupied by younger relatives of the applicant. It was thought that these caravans should only be used for “touring”.
- 9) It was questioned as to whether the present occupants of the gypsy caravan site could be classified as gypsies as they had resided on the site for over seven years and the “travelling caravans” are permanent static accommodation.. The glossary of the Department for Communities and Local Government document “Planning policy for traveller sites – August 2015” it states

1. For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

2. In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life

Minutes of Abthorpe Parish Council Meeting held on
Wednesday, 31st August 2016 at 7:45 pm in the Old School, Abthorpe

- b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life*
- c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.*

- 10) The Council objects to the change of use of the land from Agricultural to gypsy caravan site, as the site is clearly a "green field site" and permission would not be permitted elsewhere in the village. Development is restricted outside the village envelope.

4. Finance

As the meeting had been called to specifically deal with the planning application, this was not discussed.

5. Any Other Competent Business

The Clerk reported that following letters sent to the registered owners of the field in Brackley Lane, the owners had contacted a tree surgeon, who will reduce the height of the surrounding hedge to eight feet, removing two dead trees, and pollard the remaining trees. This should bring the job of maintaining the site within the capabilities of the owners.

The meeting ended at 8:30 pm