

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held in The TOPS Building,
Salford Priors, on Tuesday 10th March 2015.**

Present: Councillors: K Littleford (Chairman), K A James, L Maude, D Penn, J R Stedman, & M Muldowney.

Also in attendance: Thirty members of the public were present.

Apologies for absence: Apology had been received from Cllr L Wright in transit to UK from holiday.

Introduction. The Chairman opened the meeting with explanation of purpose being to provide opportunity for debate and for Councillors to determine the Parish Council's response to Outline Planning Application 14/01126/OUT. This application was to be presented at Stratford on Avon District Council Planning Committee West on 11th March 2015.

401. Open Forum: The Chairman moved that the meeting be adjourned for the Public Open Forum and asked the Clerk to read out comments submitted by e-mail from 3 Parishioners and one Councillor, none of whom were able to attend the meeting in person. These were: Mr W Thomson (Chairman of the Neighbourhood Planning Development Group (NPDG)), Mr K Chandler (Chairman of the NPDG Housing Group), Parish Cllr L Wright and Mr P Rigler. Statements submitted by the named individuals are reproduced at Annex A.

Following on, other members of the public, including active members of the NPDG, commenced giving comprehensive account of their opinions about the Committee Report in relation to Application 14/01126/OUT. A bullet point summary of comments is listed in Annex B.

The Chairman closed the adjournment at 18.25hrs.

Cllr J Stedman raised a **Point of Order** indicating the need to complete formal Register of Interests.

Register of Interests: Members were reminded of the need to keep their register of interests up to date.

402. Disclosure of Interests: Members were asked to disclose any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the Agenda and their nature. Councillors with a disclosable pecuniary interest are required to leave the room for the relevant agenda item.

Members were asked to declare any other disclosable interests in items on the Agenda and their nature.

Cllr. Stedman explained that he had become aware of questions asked of the Clerk in relation to his business having contracts with Alamo and inference that this would adversely affect him making clear decision in the public interest. He explained that he had given the matter full consideration and concluded he did not have any interests to declare. Based on that conclusion he had drafted a statement which he read out at the meeting. This statement is reproduced at Annex C. A variety of strong objections to the Alamo application emerged. Cllr Stedman indicated his awareness of the Council Code of Conduct and the need to protect the integrity of the Council, his fellow Councillors and himself on the grounds of lack of public confidence in his objectivity in the matter under discussion. He withdrew

from the meeting. As a consequence, and for comparable reasons, Cllr's K James and D Penn also withdrew from the meeting.

- 403. Open Forum:** The Chairman moved that the meeting be adjourned to re-open the Public Open Forum. Open forum debate resumed. Summary of comments from members of the public at this stage of the meeting are added to other comments (Minute 401) in Annex B.

The Chairman closed the adjournment at 19.00hrs.

404. Planning Matters:

Planning Application for Consideration:

14/01126/OUT Proposed: Erection of up to 60 residential dwellings, new vehicle access from Station Road (involving demolition of existing commercial building to accommodate new access), internal access roads, and provision of open space, drainage attenuation features and associated works. At: Land West of Alamo Group Europe Ltd, Station Road, and Salford Priors.

The Chairman confirmed that a quorum existed such that formal debate could continue. Initial discussion centred on a first statement drafted in response to the Planning Application. Consensus of opinion was that a response should be based on valid planning reasons, avoiding non-factual elements. The Committee Report was thought challenging in this respect since it contained a number of indicators which advocated development which contrasted unpersuasively with other areas of the proposal. Some factors might be contested on the grounds of inaccuracy or were inconclusive. In particular, observations relating to Highway matters affecting Station Road and Alamo parking arrangements were not satisfactorily answered. It was not confirmed that earlier objections raised by the Highways Department had been withdrawn. Statement to the effect that the Salford Priors Neighbourhood Plan is still currently at a preliminary stage, and therefore has very limited weight as a material consideration, was considered a misleading assertion and was strongly disputed.

Parish Councillors summarized their collective opinion to determine the Parish Council response to Outline Planning Application 14/01126/OUT. A decision to object to Outline Planning Application 14/01126/OUT was proposed by Cllr K Littleford, seconded by Cllr M Muldowney and agreed by Cllr L Maude. The three participating Councillors continued to debate and record in detail the grounds for objection to be presented by Cllr K Littleford at the Stratford on Avon District Council Planning Committee West on Wednesday 11th March 2015. The statement of objections to be presented is reproduced at Annex D.

405. Date of Next Meeting:

- a. The date of the next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 18th March 2015 at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall, Salford Priors.

406. Closure of Meeting:

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.15 hrs.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____

407. Annex A

Open Forum Comment Submitted by E-mail

- a. “As chairman of the NDP I am sure you will understand why we must count on the support of the Parish Council to achieve our main aim of securing future development in the village is in the long term interests of the community as a whole. We are at the point of achieving a form of development of very real community benefit where houses will be in the right place and create a new village centre, a village green for all to enjoy. In our view the proposed Alamo development is no more than commercial exploitation which will have no community benefit. I trust we will have your full support in bringing to fruition all the hard work that has been achieved by the NDP so far”.

Thank you. **Walter Thomson.**

- b. “I agree totally with the view expressed by Walter and I would hope that our Parish Council affords the NDP the proper respect it deserves being an acknowledged extension of local democracy. I would be happy for my views as Chairman of the Housing Group to be conveyed to the Parish Council meeting emphasising my total support for the comments made by the Chairman of the Strategic Policy Group. I am afraid I am not able to attend on Tuesday evening due to an evening appointment I am not able to re-arrange. However, I do intend to be at the Planning Committee Meeting in Stratford on Wednesday evening”.

Regards, **Keith Chandler.**

- c. “Please accept my apologies for not being present at the meeting Tuesday night but I will be in transit back to the UK. I would be grateful if there is an opportunity for this message to be read out at the meeting. To my fellow councillors I simply ask the question 'what meaningful purpose is there to further delaying this planning application?' Alamo's statement of intent with regard to their application was made a considerable time ago, and they have consulted the Parish Council and parishioners when so required to do so. I cannot agree to a further implementation of objection causing a delay to their application on a site that has to be the most logical location for development within the village, by causing the least disruption to the majority of existing householders by being located so close to A46 and for the most part being screened from the majority of the village. We have to be careful that emotion does not overrule logic and whilst a minority of residents in Garrards Close and Station Road will be affected the majority of villagers will not. This application will potentially solve the parish's immediate housing requirement for some considerable time to come, which would then give time for the NPG to concentrate on identifying suitable sites for the next round of housing that will no doubt be required at a later date. I urge you not to impede this application”.

Sincerely, **Cllr Lindsay Wright**

- d. **Comments and objections for Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 10 March 2015.**
I have read the Planning Committee’s agenda for Wednesday 11 March 2015, specifically the documents incorporated under the Alamo application and the Planning Officer’s summary and recommendations. There is little further to add to my comments/objections made on line on 9 June 2014. However I disagree with the comment under Conclusions, which infers there will “...be support to the local economy from new residents.” As there is no footway access into the village from the North end of the development, new residents will be required to walk c.1 kilometre to the school or slightly more to the shop. This will not happen and new residents will substantially send/take their children to other schools (as they are doing at the moment) whilst the parents are on their way to work. There is no evidence to support this assumption, but likewise there is only common sense to support my conclusion. Likewise, I would disagree that the Welford Settlement Edge Appeal is not relevant in that the loss of versatile agricultural land is substantially detrimental, despite Alamo’s decision not to currently use it as such. I also disagree with the planning officer’s final conclusion that the benefits outweigh the identified harm. There appears to be no consideration given to the substantial progress made towards achieving an agreed local Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is not in its infancy, as inferred by Alamo in their documentation, although they have decided not to engage with the Strategy Group as the Plan has progressed.

408. Annex B

Summary of Comments about the Committee Report made by Members of the Public

- a. There is arrogant disregard for the now well advanced Neighbourhood Development Plan with which it conflicts. Note also, the SDC Core Strategy is not yet agreed
- b. Proposed development will have an adverse impact on the locality
- c. There are no proper indications of displaced car parking replacement; this will lead to unhelpful on-street parking
- d. Being outside the boundary of the village it will have the effect of reducing community cohesion
- e. This proposal is financially oriented and does not demonstrate benefit for the community
- f. There are better sites elsewhere and this large scale single phase housing development will not prevent further development taking place
- g. Contrary to Cllr's comments (407c) being out of sight is not a desirable objective. It will prove to be of no benefit to the community
- h. Decision about development on this scale should not be taken lightly.
- i. Focus on development on an appropriate site for maximum community gain
- j. Close vicinity to A46. Statement of logical addition is disputed
- k. There is no gain other than social housing but this is planned for the far edge of the proposed development in the most inconvenient spot and is therefore counterproductive
- l. Occupants will have to contend with extended indirect routes to access village amenities. Likelihood is that Bidford on Avon would become their preferred amenity centre
- m. No objection to housing development but must be sited logically. Alternatives have been assessed and consulted through significant public scrutiny and all have community gain
- n. Community development needs to have a strong sense of linking/central hub. Alamo development proposal is outside this scope of provision
- o. This development will contribute increased risk to pedestrian safety
- p. It's not good enough for the Alamo proposal to be accepted simply on the grounds that it is the first in
- q. Important listed building and wildlife issues have not been fully evaluated/followed up
- r. There is a sense of this application being pushed through as a Government policy
- s. It is important to have Parish Council support to underpin the groundswell of opinion which objects to this development proposal and perceives arrogant dismissal of the NDP

409. Annex C

Extraordinary Meeting Statement - Councillor J Stedman

“My registered pecuniary interests include my income from various sources including from a Company, in my control, which carries out tree felling etc. on a contractual basis. This Company carried out a small tree felling contract for Alamo some 6 months ago. I do not, and never have had have a disclosable pecuniary interest in the Alamo Group itself. Since the conclusion of that contract, neither I nor my Company have had any further contracts with Alamo and there is no commercial relationship with the Alamo Group. Common sense dictates that registered pecuniary interests, for contract work are only disclosable at meetings when the contract is currently still active. I consider that this past contractual relationship with Alamo does not need to be formally disclosed and will not cause me to have a biased view and I can make a clear decision in the public interest”. **Cllr J Stedman**

410. Annex D

Application 14/01126/OUT - Statement to Planning Committee.

Salford Priors Parish Council wishes to object to the application on the basis of the following:

- The narrow pavements and access to the site will result in a potential hazard to pedestrians accessing the centre of the village. There is no opportunity to widen the pathway on either side of the road which places doubt as to whether condition 5 can be met as laid out in the recommendations.
- The site location is in open countryside on the edge of the village. If approved this development will create a large isolated community.
- The planning report identifies an objection from WCC Highways on the grounds of the access and the displacement of cars from the Alamo carpark with no firm plans as to where they will park during and after the construction. It is not clear if this objection has been withdrawn in which case this needs to be clarified as a matter of urgency.
- The proposed development is not in accordance with the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan due to lack of community cohesion and connectivity to village services. The draft Neighbourhood Plan is scheduled for consultation May/June 2015, when it will be submitted to the District Council.
- There is a sense of unease in terms of the consistency of the Committee Report, such that the council have reached the conclusion that the harm significantly outweighs the benefits of this development.
- 60 dwellings would be a very large development within our parish. The council want to see dwelling numbers kept at 60 or below and enforced by policy and legislation. There is no mention of how future applications to develop within the initial outlying application will be controlled.