

ERCALL MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2020 via Zoom at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillor K Connor (Chairman)
Councillor G Barrow
Councillor R Wickson
Councillor M Ward (arrived Minute 2020.11.057)
Councillor E Aston

In attendance: Katrina Baker, Acting Clerk
Paul Brine

2020.11.052 **Welcome & Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed members and thanked them for attending. The Chairman welcomed Paul and thanked him, once again, for his work regarding The Myttons Solar Farm proposals.

2020.11.053 **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor C Purves Family Commitments Received after the meeting

2020.11.054 **Declarations of Interest**

Application TWC/2020/0872 Councillor Purves

2020.11.055 **Minutes of the last meeting held on 13th October 2020**

It was proposed by Cllr Wickson and Seconded by Cllr Barrow, that the Minutes of the previous Planning Committee meeting, held on 13th October, be accepted. All were in favour and thus it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last Planning Committee be signed as a true record at the next available opportunity.

2020.11.056 **Matters Arising**

All are included on the Agenda

Councillor Ward arrived

2020.11.057 **Planning Applications for consideration**

TWC/2020/0920 Land North of Rodenhurst Business Park

Erection of 6 poultry units and associated structures and infrastructure

Whilst this application lies on land outside of the Parish, the entrance to the site is on Mill Bend between High Ercall and Roden and the site of the recently re-built bridge.

Whilst Members had no objections to the proposal which is not in Ercall Magna Parish, there were concerns regarding the additional traffic that this business would bring to the narrow B5062 and number of vehicle movements that would have an effect on residents in Roden and High Ercall.

RESOLVED that Ercall Magna Parish Council would raise concerns regarding the additional traffic and would request that Section 106 community funding be built into any permission that funding should be available to support the communities in Roden and Ercall Magna and this would be used for a raised platform crossing for High Ercall School children on the B5062 and for additional traffic regulations in Roden.

**TWC/2020/0872 Four Oaks Farm, Ellerdine Heath
Change of use of land and siting of two mobile homes for short term student accommodation, detached washroom and associated use of the paddock**

Members considered the implications of 'short term' and the need for any permission to be time limited and for term time use only.

RESOLVED that Ercall Magna Parish Council would support this application as long as conditions were applied that would ensure that this is for student accommodation, during term times only. There must be a requirement for this to cease in 2026 and a new application submitted if there remains a requirement for such accommodation.

**TWC/2020/0851 Land North of Roden Lane Farm, Roden
Installation of a renewable energy scheme comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with transformer stations, access, internal access track, landscaping, security fencing, security measures, access gate ancillary infrastructure.**

and

The Chairman updated Members on the actions taken to date, with regards to the need for Ercall Magna Parish Council to support the community of Roden and to ensure the best outcome of any permission granted for this large site at this location.

- The Application has been 'called-in' for determination by the Planning Committee at TWC – a suggested date has been January 2021. The main reason for call in is that the Parish Council had no confidence that the requirements under Policy ER1 of the TW Local Plan can be achieved.
- The Case Officer (TWC) had been invited to a meeting, but had declined (due to lack of suitable IT provision)
- It had been confirmed that there is no requirement for a planning application to SC for associated work. SC and S TPCs are aware of the application, but unlikely to comment as it is in Telford & Wrekin.
- There have been no responses from Shropshire's or TW Climate Change Partnerships.
- CPRE are investigating with a view to offering a response to the consultation.
- An extension has been agreed to 9th November, and a request for this to move to 19th November. However, it has also been confirmed that comments can be received up to 10 days before the date of the Committee meeting.
- A notice has been displayed in Roden to encourage residents to have their say online.
- A public drop-in session took place today (4th November) but the information provided by the applicants was poor and incomplete and the FAQs had been worded in a way that the answer only appeared to be positive. They had provided no forms for people to complete and the community had no opportunity to question representatives of the applicant or agent. A Zoom meeting would have been possible, but the opportunity was not taken up. It would appear that the applicant / agent have done the absolute minimum to engage with the community.

The Parish Council will inform the Case Officer of the situation regarding the consultation and the fact that the answers to previously asked questions had still not been received. It was agreed to write and include direct questions which would be copied to the Case Officer.

Members discussed further the 40 year life of the site, its ownership options, funding, management and most importantly the way in which it will be de-commissioned and how it will be guaranteed to return to green field / agricultural land, with resources and funding available to ensure the safe and legal disposal of all elements of the site. It is vitally important that the site (a prime location of 250 acres in a historic / picturesque rural aspect), at the end of the life of the solar plant, is not left derelict and an eyesore. A legal agreement, with finances attached, is an absolute minimum requirement for future assurances relating to the decommissioning process. This needs to be in a format that will be legally binding, regardless of any change of ownership or management. Under normal circumstances, the Parish Council would be fully supportive of renewable energy initiatives, however, the unanswered questions and size, scale and location of this 'industrial' solar plant cannot be supported and it was therefore proposed by Councillor Connor and seconded by Councillor Wickson, all were in favour and thus it was

RESOLVED that Ercall Magna Parish Council must object, in the strongest way possible, to this application in order to protect the area and support the local communities that will be affected by this large scale in appropriate industrial development which will bring no gain for Telford & Wrekin, Ercall Magna or Shropshire Council within the Climate Change Agenda. Reasons for the objection will include:

- No confidence that the requirements of ER1 in the Local Plan can be achieved
- The size, scale and location of this proposal is totally unacceptable
- There is insufficient guarantee regarding the decommissioning process and funding to ensure this site will return to green space at the end of its life, including the legal and appropriate disposal of all equipment
- Such a site will have a detrimental effect on the rural area - this is an industrial-style development more suited to a brownfield, urban location
- No benefits to EMPC, TWC or SC in line with the reduction in carbon footprint as required within the Climate Change Agenda.
- Insufficient and unsuitable offer of community gain - more thought should be given to services and facilities required in Roden - the offer of benefits must be proportionate to the size and scale of this development.

Unless acceptable details are made available, with appropriate mitigation and realistic legal and financial agreements are made available to answer the concerns of the community, Ercall Magna Parish Council is strong in its view that it cannot support this application.

Members then discuss some publicity, including Shropshire Star, Radio Shropshire and Facebook.

2020.11.058 Status of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Regulation 14 version of the Ercall Magna Neighbourhood Development Plan has entered the next stage with a copy sent to TWC for its comments. Whilst this is in progress, the Parish Council will consult widely with stakeholders and interested parties. Parish Councillors are asked to encourage local residents to comment, too.

2020.11.059 Climate Change Strategy

Members agreed that the Parish Council should be involved, although this item would be deferred until Councillor Purves was in attendance. It was agreed that regular news items and useful tips can be added to the website and included in the local newsletter and on social media to raise awareness and that a Working Group will be formed including representatives from local organisations, groups, the schools etc.

2020.11.060 Local Plan – Consultation – Issues and Options

Members agreed that this is an opportunity for the Parish Council to ‘have its say’ in this important document. This is especially so because of the status of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. All Councillors, as with the public, are encouraged to respond to the consultation. A draft Parish Council response will be circulated for consideration, based on the need to strengthen the rural area and to ensure respect for the importance of our rural identities.

2020.11.061 Other Matters

Concerns were shared regarding work at Roden Hall which may be having an effect on the TPO trees.

Regarding the new builds, adjacent to Roden Nursery site, Councillor Wickson had visited and confirmed that it could be seen that the roots were not affected by the works. The services are coming down the road. David Jones, the Enforcement Officer, has visited the site and James, the site manager, had explained the route of the services, close to the boundary.

Councillor Aston has a copy of the TPO site map and will check out the work in the coming days.

2020.11.062 Date of the next meeting

To be advised.

There being no further business, the chairman thanked everyone for their important contributions to a successful meeting, and closed the meeting at 9pm.

SignedDate