

Alderminster Parish Council

Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council

Wednesday 20th January 2021
Remote Zoom Meeting 6.00 pm

Present: Cllr Karen Jones (Chairman)

Cllr Lesley Casley

Cllr Mark Meadows

Cllr John Melville

Cllr Michael White

Mrs M Norman (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Also present: Cllr Izzi Seccombe and 1 member of the public

1	Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Penny-Anne O'Donnell.
2	Declaration of interests: Cllr Meadows declared an interest in respect of item 7 of the agenda and did not take part in the subsequent discussion or vote.
3	Questions from the public: There were no questions from members of the public
4	Minutes of the previous meetings: The minutes of the meeting on the 2 nd December 2020 were unanimously agreed as an accurate record. These would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.
5	Councillor co-option: It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Mr Christopher Mason-Bailey to fill one of the vacant seats on the Parish Council. Mr Mason-Bailey signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk and Council.
6	Draft Precept: It was resolved to request the sum of £10,800 as precept from Stratford District Council.
7	Proposed self build: The Council had received a copy of Rosconn's draft Design Code for the self build houses on land east of the Shipston Road, Alderminster (see Appendix A attached). The Council discussed its response to the document and resolved to make the comments appended in Appendix B attached.

8	<p>District and County Councillors' reports:</p> <p>Cllr Seccombe said that the vaccine roll out had begun in the Stratford area. Vaccination centres were open in Coventry, Warwick and Stratford Hospitals as well as Wellesbourne, Studley and Southam. A further centre will open in Stoneleigh on the 25th January and Cllr Seccombe hoped that the road closures in the area because of the work on the HS2 route would not affect access to the centre.</p> <p>This year's County Council budget will focus on recovery, particularly aimed at helping businesses and young people. There will be an increasing need to support Children's services, due in part to the backlog of cases awaiting hearing in the courts.</p> <p>As far as Cllr Seccombe was aware, elections were still scheduled to take place in May.</p> <p>Cllr White joined the meeting at 6.50 pm.</p>	
9	<p>Grant request Shipston Home Nursing:</p> <p>It was resolved to grant the sum of £500 as a donation to Shipston Home Nursing.</p>	
10	<p>Planning applications:</p> <p>The Council considered the following applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) 20/01335/FUL Caffeine and Machine: amendments to application. Revised site location plan and new site section plan to show the inclusion of 3 temporary tips. It was resolved to make no further comments in respect of this amendment. ii) 20/03518/LBC High Meadow, Alderminster: proposed internal reconfiguration of ground floor and installation of rooflight and replacement of windows and door opening with bi fold doors on the north elevation. It was resolved to make no representation in respect of this application. <p>There were no planning decisions to be noted.</p>	
11	<p>Any matters from the Chairman:</p> <p>The Chairman noted that Parish Councils had been invited to submit comments on the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation. She suggested that the Council held an extraordinary meeting to discuss its response to the consultation. The clerk was asked to request Cllr O'Donnell to give further information on the topic.</p>	
12	<p>Accounts for payments and finance matters:</p> <p>The following payments were approved and authorised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Clerk's salary - £** ii) HMRC (income tax) - £** <p>The supporting documentation would be signed by the Chairman and another Councillor in accordance with the agreed amendments to the Financial Regulations.</p>	
13	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>A letter of thanks had been received from Village Voices for the donation to its production costs. Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people SPD was now out for consultation until the 19th February. The green bin collection service would become chargeable from the 1st April. Residents could obtain a reduction to £35 per annum by booking early with Stratford District Council. Full details would be available on the Parish Council website.</p>	

14 **Councillors' reports and items for future agenda:**
No reports were made.

15 **Close of meeting:** The meeting closed at 7. 15pm

The next meeting would take place on the 17th March 2021

Appendix A

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 15 SELF/CUSTOM BUILD DWELLINGS
LAND OFF SHIPSTON ROAD, ALDERMINSTER

RESPONSE TO ALDERMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT DESIGN CODE

This response has been prepared to respond to the issues raised in the response from Alderminster Parish Council (APC) in their response to the Draft Design Code prepared by Rosconn Strategic Land (RSL).

1. Preparation of a Design Code

As highlighted, Policy SAP.6 of the Draft SAP states that applicants for Self and Custom Build proposals should prepare a Design Code or Plot Passport for a site, working with SDC and the relevant parish council, to ensure a high quality development and provide certainty for the local community. The Design Code or Plot Passport will then be approved by the District Council and form part of the planning permission for the site.

Prior to the initial virtual meeting with APC, RSL provided a copy of the draft Design Code with a view to seeking their input. As outlined in Policy SAP.6, any Design Code will form part of any subsequent planning permission so this is an appropriate time to seek the views from APC on the draft document before it is formalised, should planning permission be forthcoming.

RSL remain keen to discuss APC's thoughts on the content of the draft Design Code and remain willing to amend or revise the content of this document to ensure a high quality development that is reflective of the local character of the settlement is achieved.

2. Design Measures to reflect the existing character of the settlement

The current Planning Application is accompanied by a full suite of supporting documents that have assessed the local character of the village and the context of the site and its immediate surroundings, including a Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Heritage Assessment. The findings of these detailed assessments have been used to help inform the Design and Access Statement and in turn, the Design Code and accompanying Plot Layout and Parameters Plan. These have also had regard to SDC's adopted policy and supplementary guidance in respect of new residential development and best practice from research on other Self and Custom Build schemes permitted across the country.

The current application therefore demonstrates that a comprehensive understanding of the site and its surroundings has been undertaken, with the draft Design Code bringing these elements together to provide a framework to guide the design of individual plots at the Reserved Matters stage. This includes reference to broader design parameters such as

layout, form, massing and height, as well as more detailed design principles relating to access and connectivity, plot build area and build lines, separation distances, active frontages, corner plot treatment, materials, fenestration design, landscaping and boundary treatments, and parking and garaging.

RSL welcome any further thoughts from APC on the inclusion of further detailed design guidance within the draft Design Code in order to reflect the existing character of Alderminster.

3. Sustainability

The Design and Access Statement acknowledges that proposals will need to respond to climate change and that measures should include energy efficient technologies, low carbon and renewable energy sources, the use of local materials and effective water management. Specific reference is also made to the fact each plot will be provided with an Electric Vehicle Charging Point. The draft Design Code acknowledges within the Vision that the design principles within the document will provide a framework to ensure high quality and sustainable development is achieved, with energy efficient homes being identified as a key component of the broader vision for the development.

It is therefore clear that the issue of sustainable building design and energy efficiency will need to be a key consideration of future design proposals for each plot. Such matters are principally achieved through Building Regulations (Part L) which already require the conservation of fuel and power by requiring new dwellings to limit heat losses and excessive solar gains and ensuring that energy-efficient fixed building services are installed. It is clear that there is a move towards raising the bar to tackle climate change at Government level which is likely to result in current Building Regulations being revised shortly. This evolving aspiration is reflected in the emerging SAP with Policy SAP.6 seeking to pre-empt changes to the Building Regulations by setting a higher target for new dwellings to achieve a 31% reduction in carbon emissions through the installation of carbon-saving technologies such as use of low-carbon heating systems, renewable energy sources and better fabric standards. Whilst such aspirations are admirable, the targets have yet to be confirmed at a national level or tested in viability terms at a local level, as required by national planning guidance. Notwithstanding the draft status of the policy, it also strongly encourages proposals for zero carbon development.

Building Regulations clearly provides the national standards for achieving more energy efficient homes and the gradual ratcheting-up of these standards will no doubt be brought forward in due course and may well be in place by the time individual plots are developed. It is also apparent that many self or custom builders will have their own personal aspirations to build highly efficient or even zero carbon homes and this would clearly not be precluded in this instance. However, a higher level of energy efficiency than required by national standards cannot be enforced on developers, particularly where such issues could undermine the viability of a development. Viability will clearly be a key consideration for individuals looking to build their own home.

RSL are happy to include additional guidance within the Design Code on this matter to help encourage more sustainable homes and would welcome APC's further thoughts on this issue.

4. Time Guidelines and Construction Management

Reference is made to establishing time guidelines for the Self/Custom Build process. It is not exactly clear what is meant by this but if APC are able to clarify, RSL would be happy to consider this further. However, as detailed in our previous response to APC's questions in respect of timescales, due to the nature of this type of development, it is not possible to predict how quickly individual plots will be built out or when the overall development will be completed. Indeed, we are not aware of any Self/Custom Build scheme where timescales have been imposed to the build out or phasing of plots other than the standard time limits imposed on any Outline Planning Permission within which details of Reserved Matters are submitted and development commences.

In terms of Construction Management, as again clarified in our previous response, it is SDC's standard practice to impose a planning condition requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan (CMP) prior to the commencement of development, which will detail how the contractor will operate during the construction phase in order to ensure that the amenity of residents is protected. We would welcome any feedback in respect of site specific matters that would need to be considered in relation to the development of this site so that these can be considered to determine whether they are appropriate to be included in the Design Code or otherwise incorporated in a future CMP.

RSL are happy to consider any suggestions APC have in respect of Construction Management.

5. Plot Phasing

Reference is made to a self-build scheme permitted in Ettington in 2016 suggesting that the slow build rates of that particular scheme indicate that the proposed development will take over 30 years to complete. RSL does not consider this to be a fair assessment and our understanding of this particular scheme is that following the very recent investment by the landowner to provide services to the site, all plots have now either sold or are awaiting exchange.

RSL's expectation is that the site would be sold to a Custom House Builder or Contractor and at the point of sale, they would be incentivised to implement services to plots at an early stage in order to assist in the marketing and sale of individual plots. It is also apparent from SDC's Self and Custom Build register and the evidence base supporting the SAP that there is clearly demand for self/custom build plots within the District so it is expected that plots will be sold relatively quickly as a result.

RSL are happy to consider any suggestions APC have in respect of this matter.

Appendix B

Background Context:

January 2020: Rosconn Strategic Land (RSL) prepared Design Code (v1) for Land East of Shipston Road, Alderminster.

21st September 2020: Local Planning Authority received planning application reference **20/02636/OUT**.

30th September 2020: RSL issued Design Code (v1) to Alderminster Parish Council (APC).

9th October 2020: APC received responses to questions submitted to RSL after receiving Design Code (v1).

12th October 2020: APC provides RSL initial feed-back on its Design Code (v1).

October 2020: RSL amends Design Code (v1) as follows:

In section 3.0 Plot Parameter of Design Code (v2), the Application Site Boundary is changed to a solid black line.

RSL to provide APC guidance on the reason for this amendment.

3rd December 2020: RSL responds to APC's response dated 12th October 2020 and states:

“RSL remain keen to discuss APC's thoughts on the content of the draft Design Code and remain willing to amend or revise the content of this document to ensure a high quality development that is reflective of the local character of the settlement is achieved”.

APC values the condition of emerging Policy SAP.6 Meeting Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Needs which states:

To ensure a high quality development and provide certainty to the local community, the applicant, working with Stratford-on-Avon District Council and the relevant parish council, will be expected to prepare a Design Code or Plot Passports for the site.

These will be approved by the District Council and form part of the planning permission for the site.

APC recognises the development of the Design Code is likely to be an iterative process during the planning application process.

Whilst APC seeks to positively engage in the development of the Design Code, its continuing engagement in the process does not imply support of planning application 20/02636/OUT

Assumptions:

In developing this response, APC assumes:

1. it is RSL's intention to negotiate a sale of the site to a developer to work with individual plot purchasers on the basis of Custom Build (Ref: paragraph 1.3 of the Design Code).

For the avoidance of doubt, APC understands that “custom building” is when a property is commissioned by an individual from a builder, contractor or package company.

2. Plot Passports provide more detail and are considered important when plot owners intend to ‘self-build’.

As RSL is not preparing Plot Passports, APC assumes ‘self-build’ is not intended on this site.

3. RSL is aware that surface water run-off from this site has resulted in flooding to property beyond the boundary of this site.

APC assumes the Design Code will be amended in response to the work required to overcome the objection of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

For this reason, this response does not cover any drainage-related issues.

APC notes RSL is happy to amend the Design Code to address 'sustainability' of any new homes and it formally requests the Design Code addresses water (waste and flood mitigation) management when appropriate.

RSL to confirm if APC's assumptions are correct.

APC's understanding of the role of a Design Code:

APC understands the aim of a Design Code is to provide clarity over what constitutes an acceptable design quality for a particular site or area.

The intended benefit is to provide a level of certainty for developers and the local community.

A Design Code establishes 'must have' design elements without being overly prescriptive.

RSL's response to APC in December 2020 suggests the Design and Access Statement, the Design Code, Plot Layout and Parameters Plan are all informed by detailed assessment of the local character of Alderminster, the context of the site and its immediate surroundings.

APC's response focuses on the following issues as detailed in the proposed Plot Layout and consequent Design Code:

- Effect on properties on The Old Stour development.
- Public Open Space (POS).
- Outline framework for construction management.

Effect on properties on the Old Stour development:

The *Landscape and Visual Appraisal* document states the proposed development will have a major adverse effect to at least 9 properties on The Old Stour Development.

The document states that it will take approximately 15 years for landscaping to reduce the impact of the proposed development.

However, the proposed Plot Layout and its consequent Design Code do nothing to alleviate the adverse effect on these properties.

In fact, APC believes the proposed layout makes the situation worse as shared driveways border the gardens of many of the affected properties.

APC requests the plan is amended to offset the impact of the new development on adversely affected properties.

APC believes, an alternative approach to road layout could also facilitate a phased plot release in line with demand for this specific custom-build site.

The objective of this is to manage the build of the site as demand for this type of development is proven.

Public Open Space (POS):

The Design Code does not state the purpose of the current allocation of Public Open Space (POS).

However, the size and position of the POS suggests it is intended to provide benefit only to residents of the proposed development.

Any benefit to the wider community is not apparent.

Proposal SCB.2 Site Allocations Plan Preferred Options Consultation Version (October 2020) shows the total site to be 2.5 hectares.

APC request the Plot Layout makes provision for quality Public Open Space for the specific benefit of the health and wellbeing of the entire Alderminster community. This

could include allocating land for the restoration of natural habitats after loss of land to 40 new homes in less than 5 years.

Outline framework for construction management:

The ***Landscape and Visual Appraisal*** confirms properties on The Old Stour will suffer major adverse effects during construction of the proposed development.

APC requests the Design Code provides an outline framework for construction management.

The objective should be to ensure build is completed promptly to avoid the site becoming an “eye-sore” and management of construction materials, plant and site accommodation to reduce risk of crime and maintenance of share roads for safety of all users.

APC refers RSL to <https://righttobuildtoolkit.org.uk/briefing-notes/design-codes-andplot-passports/#> for an example of where timescales have been imposed to the build out of plots and construction management.