

Witham on the Hill Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Witham on the Hill Parish Council (Min
23-05) 8 January 2024 at 7.00 p.m. held at St Andrews Village Hall,
Witham on the Hill

Present: **Councillors:** Charles Henriques, Duncan Brock, Paul Smith, Sue Pennant-Jones and Richard Burbidge.
 Residents: Gene Plews, David Haydon, Valentino Calabrese, James Trevor (proprietor Six Bells) and Simon Thompson (Farm Manager J W E Banks Ltd)
Others: Bernard Champness – Clerk. District Cllr Penny Robbins

	Open Forum
	<p>The residents who were present wished to express their views regarding Planning Application S23/1876 which was being dealt with under Agenda Item 68.1. James Trevor, proprietor of the Six Bells and Simon Thompson, Farm Manager for JWE Banks Ltd were attending so they could answer any questions in relation to their planning application for part of the field adjacent to the pub to be used for car parking. They wanted to ensure that their plans were sympathetic to the character of the village and they were keen to work with the community. Cllr Smith (who took part in this discussion as a resident) expressed concern that the proposed site was substantially larger than what he had originally been told and as a result his privacy as direct neighbour would be adversely affected. Mr Calabrese also said that he was unhappy with the proposal as this would replace an unobstructed rural outlook from the front of his property with what he considered would be an urban site full of cars. He had many other objections and concerns such as a possible devaluation of his property, who would police potential noise and litter and any lighting arrangements that would be incorporated. He also said that he was sceptical about any reassurances given by the applicants, given the outcome of a previous planning application for guest accommodation in the pub garden, which wasn't being used for this purpose. Mr Plews felt that residents were in a difficult position because while they would benefit from fewer cars parking on the road near the Pub, the proposal would adversely affect some people and that there would be no compulsion on pub patrons to use the new carp park proposed. It appeared that overall, the council might be in favour of the application but recognised that there were issues such as boundary screening and size. The question of reversionary use back to agricultural, in the event that the pub ceased to trade was also discussed. The Clerk said that anyone who had comments or objections should make their views known in writing, directly to the Planning Officer. Cllr Henriques thanked all who attended and said that the Council would consider its formal response during the meeting to follow, as it was on the agenda. He explained that it would be easier for councillors to discuss the matter more freely in closed session.</p>
	The meeting was formally opened at 20.06
62.	Apologies for absence, acceptance of Apologies
	62.1 No apologies were given as all Parish Councillors were present.
63.	Declaration of Interest – To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests, as set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the nature of those interests relating to any Agenda item
	63.1 No one else declared an interest in any matter that was on the agenda, but Cllr Smith recognised that his views on the planning application S23/1876 would be influenced to a degree because the site was adjacent to his property.
64.	Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6 November 2023 (23-04)

	64.1	Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 6 November 2023 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.
65.	Matters to Report	
	65.1	There were no matters to report.
66.	To receive a report from the County and District Councillors.	
	66.1	County Cllr Charlotte Vernon was not present and had not sent a report
	66.2	District Cllr Penny Robins was present and said that she had no update to give.
67.	Clerks Report and Correspondence received.	
	67.1	The Clerk had circulated in advance notice of the various e-mails received since the last meeting. If anyone wanted to see any e-mails they should let him know and he would forward.
	67.2	<p>The Clerk wanted to explain the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In June 2023 he had received a letter from the Pensions Regulator. This was dealt with at the June meeting, and he then completed the necessary forms and received a letter to confirm it was all up to date. In November and December, he received reminders saying that the update needed to be done. He telephoned the Regulator and explained that he had a letter in June confirming that the information was up to date. He was told that he still needed to complete an update for 2017 and this present year. In view of this he had completed the forms online and had received an acknowledgement for both, confirming the information was now complete and up to date. 2. The forms for the 2024-25 Precept had been completed and acknowledged by South Kesteven District Council. 3. An email had been received from SKDC regarding the new purple lidded waste bins and the date for the collection for all bins throughout the year.
68.	Planning applications:	
	68.1	<p>Planning Applications to Approve: S23/1876 - Proposal: Change of use agriculture land to car park including creation of hard standing to serve as a car park to the Six Bells public house at The Six Bells, Main Street, Witham On The Hill. Response extended to 9 January 2024. Resolved: that we would like to make the recommendations/comments set out below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council resolved that additional car parking for patrons of the Six Bells is required to alleviate the high level of on street parking at busy times. This often reduces the traffic to one way only near the pub and there is concern this impedes access for emergency vehicles. It is also highly inconvenient for residents and other road users, particularly large farm equipment and commercial vehicles. 2. The proposed site is outside the natural curtilage of the village but adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area. It is also highly visible on approach to the village from the road leading up the hill from the A6121 crossroads. It was therefore felt that the size of the proposed car park is too large and that a 50% reduction in the area proposed would be more appropriate. As there will be no compulsion on pub patrons to use the facility proposed and street parking will continue, even a small reduction should make an appreciable difference. 3. In order to limit the impact on visual amenity consent should be conditional on a) the provision of adequate screening with shrubbery and other planting around the boundaries

		<p>of the proposed site, so that it is not visible from the road or other parts of the village. b) that only natural materials be used to surface the area such as chippings or gravel and there to be no concrete, asphalt or any materials of a permanent nature incorporated. c) Any lighting to be at low level and only in use during opening hours.</p> <p>4. In order to ensure proper security from improper use, consent should be conditional on the provision of a lockable gate at the entrance, to be kept shut outside opening hours.</p> <p>5. In order to protect the site from any further development, consent to be limited to use as a car park for the exclusive benefit of patrons of the Six Bells Pub during opening hours only and in the event that this use ceases for a period of more than two years, then the site is to be reinstated to agricultural use.</p>
	68.2	Planning Applications approved: - S23/1990 - Proposal: Section 211 notice to remove fractured branch and reduce subsiding branches on Yew tree. Reduce crown on Oak tree by 25% at Witham Hall Preparatory School
	68.3	To note any Planning Applications refused or withdrawn: there were none to note
	68.4	To note any Application appealed or any decision made regarding an appeal: a) Planning Appeal: Carlby Hawes Wood Off Stamford Road PE10 0JG - Mr & Mrs Walker has appealed to the Secretary of State against the Council's refusal of planning permission for: -Application to obtain a lawful development certificate for the creation of a single dwellinghouse (the Property) including associated infrastructure (utility, decking, woodstore and septic tank) (together, the Development) in woodland off Stamford Road, PE10 0JG (the Site). b) Appeal A Ref: APP/E2530/W/23/3318042 and Appeal B Ref: APP/E2530/Y/23/3318046 at Palace Farm, Main Street, Witham On The Hill, Appeals dismissed
69.	To receive an update on proposed/suggested works at the Bywells and Bottom Street.	
	69.1	Cllr Henriques confirmed that a meeting facilitated by County Cllr Charlotte Vernon, took place with Mike Brown,(LCC Senior Highways Officer) on 12 th December with local residents and Cllr Duncan Brock present, in Bottom St to discuss remedial works. He had researched the background to the gully pot drainage system which was originally installed to alleviate spring water flowing from Witham Hall and over the road. Following the meeting he provided an outline plan for works starting with cyclic gully cleansing, although this was not expected to have much effect, followed by jetting to see if this clears any blockages, prior to more substantive investigation of the problem. Meanwhile it was understood initial temporary filling of the worst potholes would take place this week. The matter is ongoing and updates would be communicated to those residents most affected.
70.	To receive any data from the reactive sign	
	70.1	Cllr Henriques confirmed that the reactive sign had been removed from East Green and recorded data downloaded. It has now been reinstated at the other end of the village opposite the entrance to the school. Cllr Brock had prepared another draft report which was circulated, although this suggested no change to average traffic speeds which were comfortably within the speed limit at the pub end of the village. He mentioned that a resident had requested the sign be moved to a location closer to the start of the speed limit at the Little Bytham Rd end of the village as they felt this was particularly affected by speeding traffic, and Cllr Henriques said he would investigate options.
71.	To confirm Expenditure []denotes those payments paid between meetings, which have been approved by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Parish Council or at a previous meeting but not listed	

	Payments made by Direct Debit - £
	71.1 There were no payments to approve.
72.	Any other business – <i>Reminder – by law no decision can be made under this item only information exchanged.</i>
	72.1 There being no other business the meeting was formally closed at 20.50
73.	The date of the next meeting – to be held on Monday 4 March 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill