

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD on TUESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021 AT 7.30pm in the VILLAGE HALL  
*Draft minutes for approval at the next meeting***

**Present:** Paul Williams,(Chair), Julia Hunter (JH), Oliver Dowding (OD), John Sykes (JS), Margaret Bowden (Clerk), Robin Bastable (District Councillor). Also present were Paul Rawson (PR)(Emily Estates), and 2 members of the Parish.

1. **Apologies for absence:** were received from Richard Reed and Anna Groskop(County Councillor)
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Approve the minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 2.3.2021 were approved as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising:**
  - **Horns Lane:** in a very poor state. Clerk to establish if Highways have been to inspect.
  - **Fingerposts:** JS reported that delivery time on the various parts ordered from the foundry is 6 weeks.
  - **Cheque signatories:** Clerk is still exchanging correspondence and forms with Lloyds Bank.
  - **Bus Shelter:** JS has repaired this and was thanked by all.

**Planning Application 21/01706/FUL Robin Cottage and 2 Vernigore, Welham**

Paul Rawson (PR) from Emily Estates was present at the meeting and explained that the two cottages, now owned by Emily Estates, would continue to be occupied by long-term residents. The proposal is to straighten the boundary wall and build two back-to-back garden rooms of glass and steel construction sharing this back wall and a new chimney so that each room can have a wood-burning stove. The buildings have been positioned as far away from the other cottages as possible. Each garden room will provide a space separate from its house for the residents to enjoy (sitting in, growing plants etc.). PR said the garden rooms were each the size of a single garage and that the buildings would be similar in construction to the glasshouse at The Newt but the metalwork would be a colour more in keeping with the surroundings.

Council noted that neighbours had expressed concerns about the materials to be used being unsympathetic to the surroundings and also about the height of the buildings. In particular, the dominance of the brick wall and chimney which intrude into the view from the gardens and houses. The plans show that the wall is 16ft high and the chimney is 22ft. and that these heights are exacerbated by the way the ground rises away from the cottages. The resident of the adjoining Welham Cottage was concerned that her garden and outlook were being completely hemmed in by the height and proximity of walls and buildings and the proposal would further reduce the light to her garden and her sight of the tree line. In response PR said that it may be possible to relocate the chimney and possibly reduce the height of the brick wall.

Questions were also raised about the necessity of the wood-burning stoves, and hence the chimney as the garden rooms are to have oil-fired under-floor heating.

PR explained that these were for the enjoyment of the residents and wood is a plentiful resource on the Estate.

Council resolved to send the following comments to Planning:

*The application was discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 29th June and comments were heard from the Applicant as well as from the residents of the adjoining properties (Welham Farm Cottage and South Vernigore). Members concluded that the adjoining residents have legitimate concerns and the Parish Council would wish to add support to their objections to the proposal. These are largely to do with the height of the proposed brick wall between Robin Cottage and 2 Vernigore and the additional height of the chimney, both of which will severely impact on the outlook from the neighbouring properties and the light into the garden of Welham Farm Cottage. The proposed brick wall is roughly 16ft tall and the double chimney 22ft. jutting up into what is currently clear sky and therefore creating an unwelcome visual intrusion. The impact of these tall structures is increased by the fact that the ground rises up at the back of the properties. It was noted that the chimney itself would appear to be an entirely unnecessary addition as the proposal includes oil-fired under-floor heating for the proposed garden rooms and the wood burning stoves therefore serve no practical function. The representative from Emily Estates suggested that the chimney could perhaps be re-located and that it may be possible to reduce the height of the brick wall. (It was suggested to him that the garden rooms could be sunk down a little to reduce the height.). The Parish Council would encourage the Applicant to look at ways of reducing the height of these buildings and therefore addressing much of the concern.*

Paul Rawson was also kind enough, whilst present, to answer members' questions on other issues concerning The Newt:

It had been noted that the new kerbstones on the corner at the Welham Farm development were unrounded granite sets and therefore had the potential to damage tyres. It was felt that Highways would insist on rounded kerbstones for this reason. PR said he will address this issue.

The Chair stated there were concerns in the village about the growing size of The Newt project and asked if there were an endgame or grand plan. PR replied that there was none. The Newt is a thriving business, now employing nearly 300 people (mostly local). The Newt is still interested in buying land but not people's houses. Should a farm come up for sale that is contiguous with the Estate then they may be interested in buying it as the business is still developing and maturing.

PR said he did not know what the proposals for Lily Farm were.

PR said that the Estate had no design on Aviaries Farm that he was aware of.

With regard to the proposed wedding venue in Yarlinton, this had been dropped following representations from Yarlinton residents.

The Chair re-iterated that Shepton Montague Parish Council wants to have open communication with The Newt/Emily Estate and that this seems to have broken down somewhat recently. PR said he was happy to attend Council meetings as was helpful. He explained that the new CEO with responsibility for 'The Newt in Somerset' was Ed Workman. PR worked alongside him, being responsible for Emily Estates. The Chair thanked PR for taking the time to attend the meeting and answer all the questions.

- 6 **Planning Application 21/01723/S73A The Old Vicarage, Knowle Bridge Road, Shepton Montague** Richard Farmbrough (Applicant) explained the proposal. Council had no objections. Clerk to notify Planning.
  
- 7 **Parish Footpaths** OD said no progress had been made due to lack of time. He had not had a response from Eve Wynne at County for a site visit so would follow this up. He said there are volunteers in the Parish who would be willing to help with work needed but the specific requirements needed agreeing with EW. It was thought that County will supply gates (instead of stiles at roadsides).
  
- 8 **Fete update** JS reported that this will be held (COVID Delta dependent) on 4<sup>th</sup> September at Robert and Christina Dimond's garden. It is not possible to sell tickets outside Morrison's this year. Please all collect bric-a-brac.
  
- 9 **Correspondence** There are to be celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Further information to follow.
  
- 10 **Aob** JS reported a large pothole a foot deep at the junction of Cattle Lane with A371, on the left hand splay. Clerk to report to Highways.
  
- 11 **Open discussion** RB gave some useful information about the recent referendum for 'One Somerset' or 'Stronger Somerset'. The results will not necessarily be taken into account by the Minister.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_