

Clerk to the Council: **Joy Pegrum**

37 Westbourne • Honeybourne •
Worcestershire • WR11 7PT

☎: 01386 830995

email: clerk@coughton.plus.com



**Minutes of the
Extraordinary Meeting of Coughton Parish Council
Tuesday 17th July 2018
held at the Old School Nursery, Sambourne Lane, Coughton**

Present: Councillors John Gittins (in the Chair), Len Carter, Maureen McTavish, Roy Piddington & Lynne Stanton;
The Clerk, Joy Pegrum and 26 members of the public in attendance

This meeting was called by Council Chairman John Gittins to consider the following motion:

What should the Council's response be to recent planning applications lodged with Stratford District Council by [Coughton Lodge Farm, Sambourne Lane](#) as follows:

- **18/01603/FUL** - Two agricultural buildings (retrospective): workshop and drying store
- **18/01604/FUL** - Change of use: part agricultural building to mixed agricultural and B8 storage use

Application details and plans were available to view on Stratford District Council's planning portal at <https://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanning> by entering the application numbers given above OR by contacting the Parish Council's Clerk.

- 1) **There were no apologies for absence**
- 2) **There were no Councillor disclosures**
- 3) **Public Participation**

A. The Chairman explained the role of the Parish Council in planning consultation, and the purpose of the meeting. He described the 3 options for response open to Council, being to actively support or oppose the applications or to offer no objection. The meeting had been called because a majority of those residents who had expressed their views to Councillors objected to the applications and any formal objection from the Parish Council must be approved at a meeting of the full Council.

B. He then outlined that the format for public participation at this meeting would be for two representative speakers to make their case: one in support and one in opposition to the planning applications in question. He advised that each speaker would have 2 minutes on the floor and that Councillors would then be invited to ask clarifying questions. He warned that there should be no interruptions from the public at any

time. He invited objections to this format and none were raised, although one member of the public suggested that Mr Stiley should speak first. Mr Stiley declined and so Mr Stephen Spencer was invited to take the floor.

- C. Mr Spencer** introduced himself and explained that his main objection was to the B8/mixed use status applied for (he explained the term as 'industrial use'). He said that Sambourne Lane is too narrow and therefore not suitable for industrial traffic, with road wear and damage already evident from the "massive increase" in traffic that recent activities at the farm had generated. He further explained that this increase in the flow of and type traffic/vehicles was already resulting in excessive noise nuisance to residents, often experienced at unsociable hours.

D. Questions from Council:

Councillor Piddington asked if Mr Spencer had discussed his concerns with Mr Stiley: he replied that he had, about a year ago.

Councillor Stanton pointed out that it is a legal requirement to have vehicle warning/alert sound systems fitted for safety and Mr Spencer agreed, but said he was familiar with such vehicles in his own business and could not understand why the noise should carry as it does. He wondered if they could be adapted in any way.

Councillor Gittins asked if the noise nuisance and traffic issues were his only objections: he agreed that they were, but added his concern that acceptance would set a precedent for further similar applications to expand in the future. It was his opinion that the planned buildings were too large to be commensurate with the farm's agricultural activities.

Councillor McTavish reminded that this meeting could only be concerned with current applications.

Chairman Councillor Gittins summed up that neither construction noise nor speculative concerns could be put forward by the Parish Council as valid objections to planning applications and reminded Council and residents that the application stipulated that the B8 permission was for just 25% of the applicable building.

- E. Mr Oliver Stiley** of Coughton Lodge Farm was invited to take the floor and introduced himself. Mr Stiley explained the nature of his business based in Bromsgrove, being a largely mail order operation selling tractor parts. He wished to dispel rumours that he was planning to gradually move this business to the farm: he had no wish, he said, to have an industrial set up and his 40 staff at his home. He explained that he was only planning to use up to 25% of one building as overflow pallet warehousing storage for the tractor business and that all other buildings were required for his agricultural activities at the farm. He assured that there would be no regular increase in traffic as a result of this storage; current increase in the nature and flow of traffic is only temporary as it results from the construction work under way. He reiterated that he had no plan to begin trading from the farm but conceded that the B8 category was not ideal to reflect his planned mixed use, but it is however the nearest option. He said that this was now common practice for agricultural operations in Warwickshire.

Answering the challenge regarding the excessive noise thought to be from the farmyard and generated by warning devices on reversing fork lifts and tractors, Mr Stiley explained that this was a safety issue that could not be avoided without unacceptably putting lives at risk. **Another resident** volunteered that forestry work had been ongoing in the surrounding Coughton Park lands and that the sounds of their heavy plant and vehicles in both the early and late hours, deliberately planned to minimise clashes with school traffic, would likely have been contributing to the noise problem.

F. Questions to Mr Stiley

Councillor McTavish asked for confirmation that the goods stored would be pallets and Mr Stiley confirmed that it would be stacked pallets of excess product brought home and transferred back by van when required – not HGV.

Mr Spencer commented that a company had called him looking for a delivery location for Yew Tree Tractors.. Mr Stiley confirmed that this is one of his several businesses and that it was his general practice to use his home address and not the trading address as the 'registered' business address.

4) Councillors discussed the motion

Councillors Piddington, Carter, Stanton and Gittins stated that they had visited the farm, as all residents were invited to do, and that they could see no valid reason to object to the planning applications. Councillor McTavish said that she had not been able to visit but that her impression from those who had visited and other Parish Councillors, and a review of other agencies' published consultation reports was that Mr & Mrs Stiley had been transparent and co-operative and she had no objection.

The Chairman agreed with Councillor McTavish that a response of 'No Objection' would be the most appropriate for both applications and this was agreed unanimously. The Clerk was instructed to forward the agreed response to SDC on behalf of the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm, but a member of the public complained that the meeting was supposed to be an open meeting to hear public opinions. The chairman explained that it was not an open meeting but a meeting of the Parish Council. He confirmed that the Council had made its decision on the motion and concluded its business. A Coughton resident asked that the person be heard and the Chairman agreed, instructing the Clerk that these further proceedings should also be minuted.

The speaker, a Sambourne resident, did not introduce himself. The speaker countered that an objection to any B8 application in the Green Belt is a valid planning objection. He voiced his own concerns that Mr Stiley's undertakings regarding nature of his B8 use might not be upheld by future owners of the farm.

Another Coughton resident then asked Mr Stiley about his plans to plant a screen of trees as per an earlier approved plan. He said that it was still on the development plan. The resident further questioned the necessity for the use of farm vehicles and equipment during unsociable hours but Mr Stiley replied that this was necessary to feed livestock. She had also experienced inconsiderate parking that had blocked access to her house and Mr Stiley apologised if that was by construction workers at the farm and agreed to investigate to ensure that they were aware that this was not permissible.

Signed: