

# MARCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Held on: Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7.30 p.m.  
At: Marchington Woodlands Village Hall

Present: Chairman Cllr. Gordon Whitehead  
Cllrs. Brian Darby, Robert Parkes, Richard Ford  
Cllr. Jeanie Crowe  
Several village residents  
Parish Clerk Mrs L. Hoptroff

### ACTION

1.	<b><u>APOLOGIES:</u></b> Cllrs. Paul Nixon and Andrew Mann	
2.	<b><u>DISPENSATIONS:</u></b> Cllr. Whitehead declared an interest in the Jacks Lane development application because he had attended meeting of the Marchington Development Action Group.	
3.	<b><u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:</u></b> <b><u>Mr Darron Hayes</u></b> – raised the problem of potholes outside Sowley Farm Cottage, Thorney Lanes in Marchington Woodlands he stated that the potholes had been repaired so badly they had opened up again. He also informed the Councillors that work had now started on repairs to the Footbridge on Footpath No. 15/17 Marchington Woodlands.	
4.	<b><u>Mrs Julia Hayhurst</u></b> – informed the meeting that the St. Peter's School Parents Association had discussed the needs for the children in the Silver Lane Playground with the school and would be contacting the Parish Council in due course.	
5.	<b><u>MINUTES OF MEETING ON 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015:</u></b> Minutes accepted. Proposed: Cllr. Parkes Seconded: Cllr. Crowe.	
6.	<b><u>MATTERS OF REPORT/DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u></b> The clerk thanked the speakers and said she would re-report the potholes. No other matters were raised.	Clerk
7.	<b><u>PLANNING:</u></b>	
7.1.a	<b><u>Planning Applications Received:</u></b> <b><u>P/2015/00266</u></b> – Erection of 16 dwellings, formation of new access to Jacks Lane and associated open space on Land at, Jacks Lane, Marchington, Staffs. <b>The Parish Council wish to make the following comments:</b> <b><u>Timing &amp; Strategy</u></b> The fundamental issue is that the timing of this application is intended to sidestep (and therefore undermine) the preparation of the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Following extensive evidence collection and consultation (including the engagement of landowners and developers) a Consultation Draft of the NP will be issued in late June and the NP will be submitted to ESBC in September. Approval of this application would be prejudicial to the success of the Marchington NP. In addition, in relation to the emerging ESBC Local Plan (LP), the timing of the application is opportunistic. It has been made at this time to exploit the current 5 year land supply position in ESBC and the delay in the hearing sessions (inquiry) into the LP. The landowner and applicants are aware that the LP will be adopted later this year. The scale (site area and numbers of houses) of the application is considerably larger than the proposal to amend the settlement boundary at Jacks Lane in the emerging Local Plan to accommodate 7 houses on the frontage of the site. It is understood that the landowners and applicants are maintaining their objection to the Local Plan and are still advocating an increase in the dwelling requirement for	

Marchington from 20 to 40 houses and are promoting an enlarged development on the application site at Jacks Lane as the most suitable land for development. The current application could therefore be seen as a "Trojan Horse" for a larger development.

Approval of the application in advance of the Neighbourhood Plan (consultation and submission) drafts and the emerging LP, is contrary to the principles of Localism and will remove the local influence and choice on the location, form and appearance of new housing development, which is intended to be at the heart of the new planning system and the Localism Act 2011.

### **The Principle**

The Parish Council (PC) has consistently objected to the principle of built development on the application site based on the fact that it would be prejudicial to the setting and character of the village and the conservation area and because of the loss of landscape and native conservation assets including ridge and furrow, mature trees and established hedgerows and (species rich) unimproved grassland which would result.

However, as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, the PC has been systematic and inclusive in examining options for future development in and around Marchington village and has undertaken a sites assessment and a built environment/landscape characterisation study. It has also considered the recent draft Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) by ESBC and the Historic Environment Assessment (HEA) by the County Council, in connection with the emerging Local Plan.

Based on these pieces of work, the PC considers that:

- The loss of open farmland established hedgerows and trees, which would result from the proposed development, would adversely affect the character and setting of the village undermining the critical relation between it and the countryside which is a key feature of the historic Needwood landscape.
- The development would adversely affect the setting of the Conservation Area (CA) by building suburban style houses close to the boundary and through the conversion of existing **pasture** into a small area of difficult to manage open space within the CA itself. This is contrary to the statutory requirement that new development should "preserve and enhance" the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.
- The development would adversely affect "Gateways" on Bag Lane and Jacks lane identified in the Draft CAA. This is again contrary to the statutory requirement that new development should "Preserve and enhance" the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

These views have been validated at a public exhibition on the draft conclusions of the Sites Assessment and Landscape Characterisation which was held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015. This was attended by over 100 people and 102 copies of the associated questionnaire were returned.

The exhibition text included the following material on the application site and its surroundings:

Landscape Characterisation

***Area 3 - Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and B5017*** This is an area of well-maintained farmland with mature trees and hedge boundaries which forms a natural buffer at the western gateways to the village, including parts of the Conservation Area on Bag Lane. A few houses (2 on Jacks Lane & 3 on Bag Lane) exist. There are 2 public footpaths crossing the land offering views into and out of the village. ***Overall, the land is part of the attractive rural setting of the village and it is a gateway to the conservation area and as such it is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.***

Site assessment

**Jacks Lane Available.** Capacity for 48 houses (exceeds net allowance by 31). Current application for 16 houses and open space. Outside Settlement Boundary, but adjoins it (Jacks Lane & Woodland view) North of site in Conservation Area. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land south of Bag Lane and beyond newer parts of the village, linking to adjoining open countryside. Locally valued trees hedges and ridge & furrow on site. Requires on site works for drainage and creation of access. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities. **This site is not favoured for development because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village & Conservation Area.**

Clerk

#### Responses

The definition on the landscape characterisation sub-area was supported by 87 respondents (85%) with only 2 people disagreeing and 13 non-returns.

The conclusion that Jacks Lane is **not appropriate** for development was supported by 56 respondents (55%). 22 people (23%) said that it is suitable, but in response to a supplementary question on how many houses could be accommodated, the average was only 11 units.

Clerk

Clearly, the majority of local people do not consider the application site to be suitable for development in principle and the minority who would accept new housing want a lesser number of dwellings. However, **the critical point is** that the local community has identified alternative locations for development and that the level of engagement in the NP process is indicative of a strong desire by local people to see the future form of the village determined through a properly produced Neighbourhood Plan rather than through a pre-emptive planning application.

#### The Details of the Application

Clerk

In addition to the above matters of timing and principle, the PC has concerns over the impact of the development on local infrastructure including roads, drainage, flooding and water supply. It is hoped that ESBC will ensure that these matters have been considered **in detail** by the County Council, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and South Staffordshire Water.

In terms of runoff and flooding issues, it is acknowledged that the proposed development is designed on the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) such that the run off from the site should be no more than it is in the current (greenfield) use. However it is felt that this results' in a design and layout which is contrived and reinforces the (in principle) harm that development in this location would have on the setting and character of the village and the Conservation Area. In particular, the use of a large balancing pond on the site at the frontage will result is an unnatural suburban type landscape on what is currently an unaltered piece of pasture.

This feature, taken together with the avoidance of built development in the CA section of the application site, means that the site is effectively divided into three sections which do not relate well to each other or to the character of the village. There is also the significant question about the maintenance of the balancing pond and the proposed open space. The retained land to the NE of the site and a maintenance access across the open space is also a matter of concern in terms of appearance and the possibility that it could serve future (inappropriate) development.

Cllr.  
Ford/Mann

The slope of the site means that even 2 storey detached houses will be imposing and the 2.5 storey unit particularly so. This is not appropriate to the character of the village and the taller houses will be over-bearing when viewed from Jacks lane and from the Conservation Area gateways.

The length of driveways and the positioning of detached garages in the rear gardens (especially for the houses to the rear of Woodland Views) will result in extensive hard surfaced areas, a gappy and fragmented street scene and an unsatisfactory relation with existing houses.

The predominance of larger houses (2 x 3 bed, 12 x 4 bed & 2 x 5 bed) all but two

of which are detached, do little to address the ageing structure of the local population and the need for houses for older people to downsize into and results in a very suburban (rather than village or rural) form of development. As such, they reflect marketing and profit maximisation motivations rather than any desire to provide a form of development that would be appropriate to Marchington.

The degree of connectivity provided by the layout is poor. The retention of land by the applicant/landowner and the lack of attention paid as to how the proposed public open space might function means that an opportunity has been lost to make a connection to the public footpath to the south west which runs north/south between Bag Lane and Jacks Lane. This also means that the proposed open space does not relate well to the rest of the village.

**In conclusion**, the scheme for 16 dwellings is contrived in terms of scale and design. It is just under the net figure of 17 required for the LP development allowance and compromised by infrastructure needs. This results in a development in a location that is not appropriate to the setting or character of the village or the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding the comments on designs details above, some of which could be addressed by amendments, the Parish Council remains of the opinion that the site is not suitable for development in principle and that approval would completely undermine the approach to the scale and location of development that the local community wishes to see reflected in the emerging Local Plan and critically, the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan.

**P/2015/00262** – Erection of a 2m high brick wall, 1m high brick wall and a 900mm high post and rail fence (Revised Plan Received 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015) at The Pesbytery, Hall Road, ST14 8LE. **The Parish Council wish to make the following comments:**

#### **Detrimental to the Conservation Area**

The loss of an established bank, hedgerow and trees, which has resulted from the development of this wall, has adversely affected the character and setting of the village.

The wall has also adversely affected the setting of the Conservation Area. This is contrary to the statutory requirement that new development should “preserve and enhance” the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

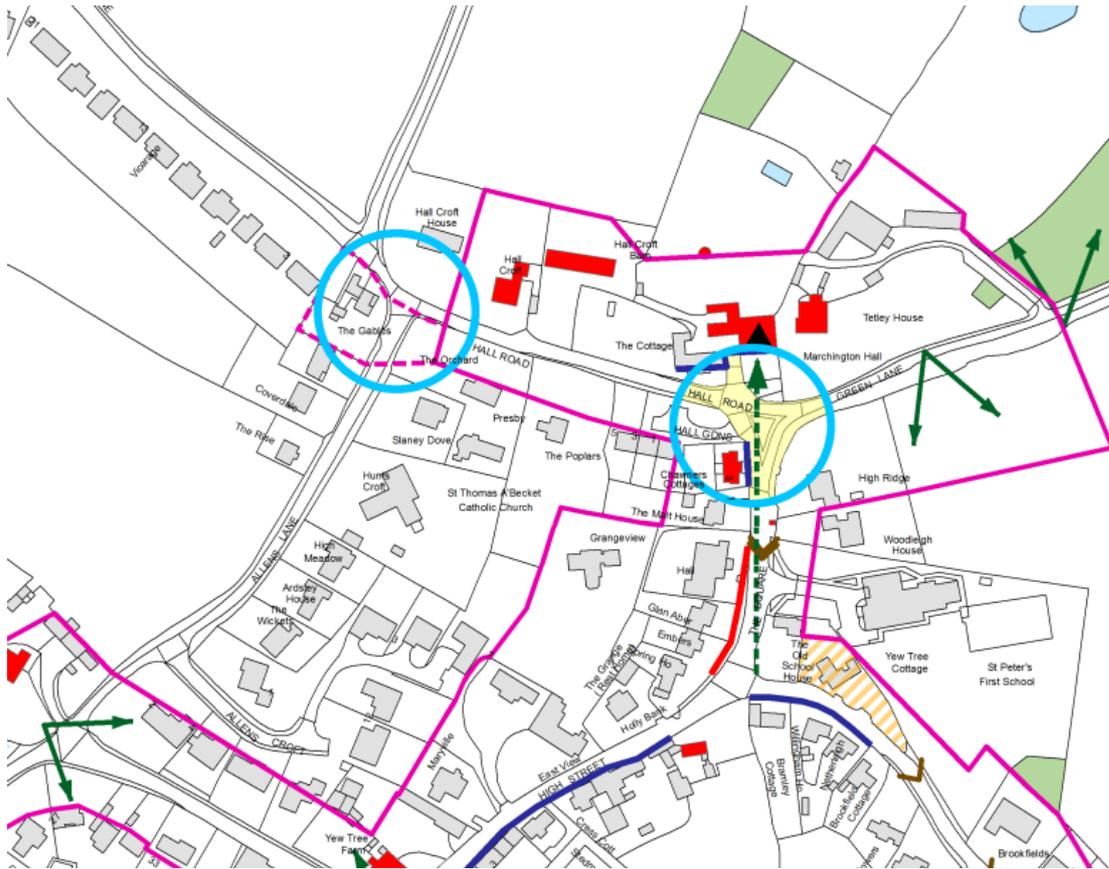
The wall has adversely affected the “Strong Gateway” on Allens Lane and Hall Lane identified in the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal. Also shown on the attached map taken from the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal prepared by ESBC and presented to the Parish Council by Ben Williscroft on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015 (prior to the hedge removal and wall being built) is a proposed extension to the Conservation Area which will include the area covered by the wall. This is again contrary to the statutory requirement that new development should “Preserve and enhance” the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

Residents’ objections to the bank and hedge removal and the new wall built were validated at a public exhibition on the draft conclusions of the Sites Assessment and Landscape Characterisation which was held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015 as part of the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Excerpt from the Conservation Area Appraisal**

7.3 A key character of the village is that of the lanes, these are characterised by high hedges and sunken lanes, creating tight spaces enclosed by vegetation and this helps capture the rural character. In places the lanes become like tunnels where the trees overhang above creating a distinctive gateway to the village.

Below is section of *Figure 8: Marchington Townscape Analysis (page 20) Marchington Conservation Area Appraisal* showing the proposed extension to the Conservation Area and Strong Gateway.



The Parish Council request the removal of the wall and the reinstatement of the bank and hedge.

- 7.1.b** P/2015//00332 – Installation of automatic irrigation system including sprinklers and above ground water tank at Marchington Bowling and Tennis Club, High Street ST14 8LD. **The Parish Council wish to make no comments.**
- 7.1.c** P/2015/00464 – Construction of a 5.1 MW Solar Farm with ancillary development including solar panels and fraes, inverter cabins, switchgear enclosure and metering point and security fencing (Non-Material Amendment – amendment to the Photo Voltaic Layout to take into account of water pipe and electricity line) Land South of Moisty Lane, Marchington. **The Parish Council wish to make no comments.**
- 7.1.d** P/2015/00528 – Formation of a manege – Field 9332, Moisty Lane, Marchington. **The Parish Council wish to make the following comments:** They would like it made a condition if approved that the Manege is for private use only and no lighting will be installed on the site.
- 7.1.e** P/2015/00220 – Outline application for a mixed use development comprising the erection of up to 170 dwellings and up to 30 live/work units with associated business support offices (Class B1), erection of a care home providing up to 45 care units of which up to 7 will be bungalows, up to 1,000 sq. m of office floorspace (Class B1), a community hall (Class D2), including details of access, the demolition of all existing buildings, the formation of natural play space, creation of a local nature reserve and community orchard and associated enhancements to ponds.

Although this application does not come under Marchington Parish it was discussed and decided that Marchington Parish Council needed to comment on the application due to its close proximity to the Parish boundary. The clerk was asked to contact Draycott in the Clay Parish Council to ask what their comments would be on the application. Clerk also to contact application for hard copies of Plans etc. Cllr. Darby pointed out several statements in the documentation that the Parish Council would need to challenge/comment on. Clerk to contact Planning Officer to be put on

contact list.

**7.2 Decision Notices Received:**

**7.2.a P/015/000079** – Erection of an extension to an existing agricultural building Land Opposite, Forest Hills, Moisty Lane, Marchington, Staffs. ST14 8DX – **Permitted**

**7.2.b P/2015/01525** – Outline application for residential dwelling for up to 6 dwellings including details of access, appearance, layout and scale, and demolition of existing buildings at Riddings Farm, Moisty Lane, Marchington, Staffs ST14 8JY – **Refused**

**7.3 Planning Committee Meeting Notices:** None

**8. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION:**

**8.1 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:**

***April 2015***

**Monies received:**

Western Power Distribution – Annual wayleave	£25.70
Interest	£11.82
Parish Garden rent	£40.00
Defibrillator Donation	£1,265.00

**TOTAL RECEIPTS**

£1,342.52

**Invoices/Money Paid Out:**

Clive Keble Consulting Ltd (Neighbourhood Plan)	
ESBC – Roadsweeping and Litter picking etc. April to June 2015	
ESBC – Trade Refuse – Village Hall – April to June 2015	£1,939.28
Community Council of Staffordshire – Subscription renewal notice.	£335.40
Marchington Village Hall – Hire Charges (N.P.)	£68.90
Staffordshire Bespoke Joinery Ltd (Village Hall Doors – refundable from V.H.C.)	£25.00
Staffordshire Parish Council Assoc. Subscription renewal notice	£64.00
Mr H. Hall	£1,380.00
Clerk Salary, N.P. Work and Expenses	£321.00
H.M. Revenue and Customs	£242.46
Midlands Safety Training	£1,499.11
	£181.00
	£709.20

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**

£6,765.35

Proposed: Cllr. Darby Seconded: Cllr. Parkes

**8.2 PROPERTIES/GROUNDS:**

**8.2.a Silver Lane, Marchington:** Cllr. Whitehead presented his playground inspection report. He had noted panels on the children's area were off, the clerk informed the Cllrs that Henry had already put back several panels and secured whole sections that had been disconnected presumably during the school holidays.

**8.2.b David Share Memorial Playground, Forestside and Football Pitch:** The Chairman read out the report received from Cllr. Mann he reported that the fence had been repaired connecting the adjacent garden, albeit badly. Frost damage had occurred to the wall, Clerk to discuss with Henry on Thursday when measuring the Playarea ground repairs. The Football Pitch is ready for cutting. The clerk reported she had spoken to Mr Beaumont today to agree the cutting for this year.

**8.3 Green Lane:** Nothing to report.

**8.4 Village Hall:** Cllr. Crowe updated the meeting on the improvements currently being made to the village hall and the future plans. She gave thanks to Cllr. Mann for arranging the new doors.

**9. HIGHWAYS AND GENERAL PURPOSES:**

**9.1 Highways:** The Clerk stated the hedge in Silver Lane had now been cut and the curb stones in the High Street had been repaired.

**9.2 Neighbourhood Highways Team:** The clerk reported that she had been contacted by the Team who would be in the area soon and requested any problems be reported so she could pass them onto the team.

**10. OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**

**10.1 Police:** The clerk reported that the next Police Surgery was scheduled for Saturday

	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> May at the village shop between 9.30.-11.00a.m. She understood notices would be distributed beforehand.</p>
10.2	<p><b><u>HM Prison, Dovegate:</u></b> The clerk reported that the next Prison Liaison meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, at 6p.m. in the training room. Cllrs to attend to be decided after the election results.</p>
10.3	<p><b><u>Flooding Committee:</u></b> Nothing to report.</p>
11.	<p><b><u>GENERAL:</u></b></p>
11.1	<p><b><u>Land at Marchington Woodlands:</u></b> Nothing to report.</p>
11.2	<p><b><u>Defibrillator in Village:</u></b> Cllr. Ford updated the council on progress and stated that through a contact at the Fire Station it was hoped to have the Defibrillator installed before the end of April. He requested a cheque to cover the costs of a cabinet etc. Clerk to organise. Clerk circulated a poster from the D &amp; P to raise funds. It was agreed clerk to contact the fund raisers at the D &amp; P to see if they would mind any surplus funds being put forward to a defibrillator in Marchington Woodlands, should the Village Hall Committee agree. Proposed: Cllr. Whitehead. Seconded Cllr. Parkes.</p>
11.3	<p><b><u>Cricket Club:</u></b> The Chairman informed the cllrs. that a meeting had been arranged between the Trustees, the Solicitors, himself and the clerk for 13<sup>th</sup> May at 2.p.m. to progress. The future of the ground was discussed.</p>
11.4	<p><b><u>Fish and Chip Van:</u></b> The clerk highlighted an email from the village hall committee regarding a complaint they had received from the Marchington Singers regarding the van taking disabled parking spaces. She also highlighted the emails she had received from residents requesting the van be allowed to continue on Wednesday evenings. This was discussed in detail and it was agreed the clerk would draft a response to the village hall committee and circulate for approval. It was agreed that the Parish Council would allow the van to continue to visit the village.</p>
11.5	<p><b><u>Forestside Footpaths and Garage Area:</u></b> The clerk reported on the meeting between herself and Cllr. Mann and Andrew Griffiths. They had walked the footpaths and garage areas at Forestside and agreed that following the elections a meeting would be arranged with SCC and ESBC to try and progress adoption of the footpaths.</p>
11.6	<p><b><u>Best Kept Village Competition:</u></b> The clerk reported that the childrens' posters were ready for the cllrs. to choose the winners (at the meeting). Presentation were to be made on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April by Cllr. Darby. Clerk to arrange prizes etc. The clerk reported that she was meeting Henry on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April to put up the village signs etc.</p>
11.7	<p><b><u>Broadband:</u></b> The clerk reported that Katrina Manegold, Connectivity Officer; SCC had been at Marchington Woodlands Village Hall on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March from 7.p.m. to discuss Broadband problems/upgrades. She reported that this was an informative session and questions from Woodlands residents were highlighted. Follow-up emails from Ms. Manegold, SCC and Ian Binks, BT had been circulated.</p>
11.8	<p><b><u>New items for discussion:</u></b> None were raised.</p>
12.	<p><b><u>CORRESPONDENCE:</u></b></p>
12.1	<p><b><u>Came &amp; Company Council matters leaflet:</u></b> This was offered to Cllrs.</p>
12.2	<p><b><u>BT Adopt a Kiosk leaflet:</u></b> It was decided this was not wanted by the village at this point.</p>
12.3	<p><b><u>Community Council of Staffordshire:</u></b> Subscription renewal. This had been passed for payment</p>
12.4	<p><b><u>Email from Tony Bulter:</u></b> Mr Butler had emailed the Parish Council about the problems with dog faeces being left in his fields by dog walkers and the effect this has on livestock. It was discussed and agreed that this would be brought to resident's attention in the Parish Magazine and signs would be put up.</p>
12.5	<p><b><u>Grant Thornton</u></b> – Audit Forms – Completed by clerk.</p>
12.6	<p><b><u>Staffordshire Parish Councils Association</u></b> – Subscription renewal. This had been passed for payment.</p>
13.	<p><b><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS:</u></b></p>

13.1	<b>Ward Councillor:</b> Chairman Whitehead requested the clerk send a letter of thanks to Robert Hardwick for his hard work and support during the last eight years he has been our Ward Councillor.	
13.2	<p><b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:</b></p> <p>There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10p.m.</p> <p>Marchington Parish Council's next meetings are planned for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at Marchington Village Hall</p> <p>The AGM will commence at 7.p.m. and the Parish Meeting will commence at 7.30 p.m.</p> <p>(Please check the agenda in case there are any alterations to these details.)</p>	

SIGNED.....

DATED.....