

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS AT CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 12th April 2021 at 7pm.

Given the current lockdown situation with Covid19 virus, this meeting was undertaken by Councillors and Clerk via Google Meet.

Present on Meet : Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), A Newton, C Smith, J Harris, C Smith, T Gilham, George Simcox, P Blake. Apologies for absence received from S Creed (family commitment).

County Cllr Steve Manion, District Cllrs Richardson and Bates also in attendance together with Community Warden.

Members of public attending included: Brendan and Talina Wells; Christine Waterman; Jennie Whitaker; Margaret Davis; Sandy Liggins; Sue Slaughter. Representatives from Holloway Studios: Guy Holloway; Graham Wilks; Tony Marsden.

Public participation:-

Resident expressed thanks for the work being undertaken on Reach Road Pond. She queried whether volunteers might be required - Cllr Gilham that future plans included installing a new pond liner, to be followed by landscaping/planting and probably new fencing. After the initial heavy work has been undertaken, he will look for volunteers.

Mr Brendan Wells reported on group formed recently to link together concerns re developments and the preservation of the Conservation Area. He cited recent work at Pine Edge where the property is now on its fourth planning application and now has a "stop" notice placed on the site. This has seen debris/rubble on site, together with noisy work being undertaken through the week and on Saturdays and Sundays. Mrs Wells had already sent emails re trees being removed in the Conservation Area, copied to the Head of Planning and local MP Natalie Elphicke.

Mr Wells stressed residents' very real concerns re future of Bay Hill and any potential future developments. There is already huge pressure on Bay Hill with visiting tourists, ramblers, residents, services, bin lorries, together with visitors to the Pines Calyx and the Coastguard pub. There is the possibility of many possible planning applications coming to the fore in the next few months, not least the current application in place for Coastguard Cottages.

The Conservation Area already in place places obligations on the Local Authority to preserve and protect that space. The special character of the Conservation must be addressed and protected by them. Removal of trees is an ongoing problem and protection of these must be given greater weight.

As a proposal, Mr and Mrs Wells and interested parties would like to set up a Conservation Area advisory group, to liaise and report to the Parish Council - Councillors felt this to be a good idea and an item will be added to next agenda. All emails re roads to go to Steve Manion as KCC Councillor re highways issues.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held 8th March 2021

The minutes, having been circulated to all members, were duly confirmed as a true record.

2. **Declarations of interest** - none declared on agenda items.

3. **Clerk Report**

- St M Players, J Claringbould Inspiring and PCC re Church volunteers - all grants paid.
- Acknowledgement received re PC response to Draft Local Plan.
- Email from resident re netting at King George V Field - holes appearing - advised to Club who will try to resolve.
- Plumbing problems at King George V Field - work authorised to be carried out.
- Clerk attended the seminar re the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- Question received re PCSO involvement in Parish Council meetings etc - responded to Cllr Martin Bates.
- Car park hedging removed but DDC may have gone too far - large gap now created to Heath Court.
- Idverde instructed to undertake pitch-marking at Alexander Field at cost to PC.
- Further letters/emails sent to Bay Trust trustees + Charles Bicker + David Hannent - Mr Hannent had responded.
- Jane Driver at Braeside very happy with PC reducing grazing fee to £1,000 for this year - payment to come.
- Re litter bins in Bay - DDC response - not considered that more bins are the answer to overflowing bin problem.
- *Response from PROW - "Looking on CAMS there are only three outstanding fingerposts for the Parish. We are only a little behind on this type of work having been short of a member of staff for a year and less so to do with the pandemic. That said we have someone new starting in a week and should be able to get back on top of these things relatively soon.*
- *Also the new financial year is near so I may well put a works package together myself for the surrounding area. It is more problematic to collect the fingerpost from our depot which is East Brabourne and currently a closed site and also banding the finger blades to the posts. If you can wait a little longer I will put it at the top of a works package list for Dover."* It was agreed that PROW be asked to undertake initial work, with PC then to follow up.
- Ross Purchase and Ian Miller - have sent confirmation to both re maintenance for 2021-22.
- DDC have finally realised their error re Reach Road toilets and confirm nothing is outstanding from PC for 2020-21.
- Loose/broken manhole cover in Sea Street reported to Highways.
- Give way sign at Glebe Close installed - payment to J Kirby under Finance.
- I am aware of issues re groynes in Bay - reported - reply from DDC received.
- Further email sent to Mr M Payne at KCC re opening dialogue with Parish Council/Gridlock Group.

Clerk to monitor

Clerk to advise

4. **Reports from County and District Councillors**

- County Councillor Steve Manion:-
- Encouraged all residents to get Covid testing done - 2,500 additional cases found in Kent through this process (asymptomatic).

- Re Kent Highways 5 year road plan, 2 roads included in this area, namely A258 to be resurfaced (from St Margarets turning to the Kennels; Granville Road will see surface preservation.
- Pothole filling continues.
- Reported that 98% of those questioned were happy with the booking system in place for waste/recycling centres as this seemed to produce fewer queues.
- KCC Trading Standards are looking at illegal tobacco distributors.
- Will further investigate flooding on Reach Road.
- Cllr Blake noted poor state of Sea Street from dip to Bay Hill - broken manhole cover reported by Clerk.

District Councillor Martin Bates:-

- Reported on pandemic roadmap - from today, shops, gyms, hairdressers to open, with pubs allowed to serve outside. 30 people now permitted at a funeral, with 15 people at a wedding. Speedwatch groups can now operate.
- Vaccinations at the large centres are limited re first jabs, second jabs not affected during April.
- Waste/recycling collections for some residents have changed with updated diary collection brochures given out.
- Inland Border Facility at Whitfield - update meetings are on hold at present - decision likely to be mid May at the earliest.
- Community funding grants now being advertised - £100 - £2,000 available to community groups - applications remain open until 24th May with successful applicants notified in July.
- Advised of Government stance on holding of remote meetings - no longer permissible beyond midnight on 6th May. There is currently a court challenge on this with decision yet to be made re extending this date.
- Re PCSO's - advised that he had been in liaison with Parish Councils who had advised that PCSO's rarely attend meetings or provide reports. River Jarvis local PCSO hopes to attend in future. A brief report had been provided ahead of the meeting.
- Larkspur development - this is due to go to full Planning Committee (no date yet).
- Coastal erosion - large pothole fixed.
- Mermaid Cottage - certificate of of lawfulness provided.

Re bin request for The Bay - DDC feel that more bins are not necessarily the answer (7 at present). Rebecca Simcox asked if recycling facilities, i.e. for glass and paper cups could be considered. Cllr Bates will take this request forward.

- Re imposition of parking charges from 1st March - Cllr R Simcox advised that little notice had been given re the increased charging dates for The Bay. The large notice previously there had been removed (not replaced) and a very small notice which was easily missed was the only information available). The PC had placed its own warning notice in place.

- Church wall - DDC Property Services and Conservation Officer are in liaison with the Diocese to take forward any remedial works.
- Hedge/vegetation cleared in car park.
- He had been included in the emails from residents re development in Bay Hill area - he will liaise with Lois Jarrett who is currently on leave.
- Upper Road - continued problems with parking near NT site - has written to Paul Valek at Kent Highways re extending yellow lines to Sherleys Farm (request logged and to be investigated).
- Mrs Liggins advised that the Church will next to the Reach Road car park needs to be looked at - Cllr Bates will investigate.
- Cllr Blake asked re position of damaged groynes in Bay - Cllr Bates advised that Keith Watson had made a site visit and in his opinion this did not present a problem at present.

Community Warden:-

- Advised that patrol work continues.
- Reports of suspicious persons following dog walkers locally - he has been in contact with those concerned and will place an article in the Parish magazine next month.
- Number of emergency service events during the last month, including a worker falling from scaffolding and an incident in Chapel Lane - Police investigated with an arrest made - culprit charged and remanded in custody.
- Advised that PCSO is on leave today so unable to attend PC meeting.
- Pop-up cafe hoping to come back to the village hall in June.

5. Planning

Mr Guy Holloway gave a short presentation as the Architect for the current applications 21/00317 and 21/00318 in respect of Coastguard Cottages. Points made as follows:-

- Site is in a unique and prominent position.
- Cottages are modest properties.
- Previously cottages were Coastguard accommodation.
- Cottages are tenanted, shorthold, but with some protected tenancies.
- Properties have seen a lack of investment over some years.
- A lot of investment is needed to bring properties up to standard.
- Application discussed with DDC Planners/Conservation Officer.
- Need to renovate to preserve historic buildings.
- Cottages would have modest extensions to the rear.
- Flats are new build.
- Have planned for no overlooking to adjoining properties - views would look to sea.
- Parking would be to left of current entrance - landscaped and screened.
- Would look to restore allotments on site.
- 2 cottages have tenants with protected rights - asked by developers if they want their properties renovated.
- Looking to develop whole site sympathetically.

Clerk was delegated to deal with the following applications, received since publication of the agenda:-

- 21/00503 Erection of a single storey rear extension, first floor extension incorporating Juliette balcony and front porch, cladding and alteration to fenestration (existing conservatory to be demolished Sea Mist, 30 Lighthouse Road
No objections but some concern re overlooking from side of property
- 21/00405 Erection of a single storey rear extension with 2no. rooflights and patio |
High Spirits, St Vincent Road *No objections*

Re response from DDC to complaint from Parish Council on planning application 19/0112 for White Cliffs Hotel - Cllr Fielding asked to be allowed to give this response some more consideration with the possibility of approaching an independent planning consultant in this regard.

Cllr Smith reported on planning decisions received - application re 20 Kingsdown Road (21/00034) had been refused on grounds of loss of privacy. Applications approved - Mermaid Cottage (21/00172); 12 Roman Way (21/00167); Chattel; South Goodwin House (21/00193); 8 Lighthouse Road (21/00216); Pauldene (21/00101); Curfew House (2101534).

Cllr Fielding to deal

6. Finance and Accounts

The following payment were approved:-

Castle Water	£119.00
St Margarets PCC - grant	£100.00
Jackie Claringbould Inspiring Charity - grant	£1,000.00
St Margarets Players - grant	£500.00
Aber Services Ltd - Pond soil analysis	£276.00
Aber Services Ltd - trench in SF Valley	£90.00
R & B Engineering - power drill	£210.00
Viridian Energy Solutions Ltd - KGV Pavilion insulation	£840.00
JJM Electrical - hand driers at Alexander Pavilion	£560.00
Ian Miller - end of year invoice	£1,896.00
NEST - Council + Clerk pension	£180.83
Google Ireland - monthly subs	£41.40
Wight Computers Ltd - website fees	£171.59
R Purchase - March invoice	£1,000.00
Mr J Kirby re give-way sign	£64.95
Jane Cook - March salary	£1,219.19
Jane Cook - office expenses	£43.69
HM Revenue & Customs	£239.19
KALC - annual subs	£1,183.63
Mrs R Simcox - L/Reg fees	£30.00

	£9,765.47

- (a) The Council considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-21. The Chair and Clerk signed and dated the Statement on behalf of the Council.

(b) The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements and supporting documents as provided by the Responsible Financial Officer who had prior to the meeting signed and dated Section 2 of the AGAR 2020-21. The Chairman signed and dated the Accounting Statements on behalf of the Council.

Clerk to deal

(c) IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the quotation received from Zurich Insurance for the year commencing 1 June 2021 in the sum of £2,765.32.

(d) Cllr R Simcox provided idea of having a screen for the PC to use in the village hall. Cllr Fielding will speak to the Hall Committee in this respect. It may be that screen will need use of a trolley given that Council meetings may have to commence in the main hall. IT WAS RESOLVED to allow up to £900 budget for this expenditure.

Cllr Fielding will liaise

7. Correspondence

- DDC re election guidance.
- KALC re upcoming events.
- Mr and Mrs Morris re 12 Roman Way.
- James Franks, Little Kickers - request to use field facilities - approval given.
- Mr C Hale re use of fallen tree branches in South Foreland Valley - approved.
- Mr D Hannent - response to request re Glebe Field. Clerk was asked to write again to Trustees and Mr Hannent giving a deadline of 1st September for opening of dialogue with Bay Trust.
- Kent Highways re ongoing planned maintenance / highways work.
- Mrs T Wells re ongoing issues surrounding development / removal of trees.
- Mrs T Wells re removal of trees on land on Bay Hill.
- Martin Hunt re trees in Bay Hill area.
- KALC re cessation of permission to hold remote meetings.
- Dover and Deal GP co-ordinator - response to draft Local Plan.
- Request by Mr J Burnell for email contact for resident.
- Mr J Barker (forwarded email) re parking in the Valley.
- Stephen Noddings re COVID19 roadmap from 29 March.
- Lois Jarrett Head of Planning - response to complaint re White Cliffs Hotel planning applications.
- Report from PCSO. River Jarvis.
- KALC re subscription information for 2021-22.
- Chris Little re volunteer clearance days in the Valley for April.
- J Whitaker - re planning / traffic problems.
- Thank-you card from Sandy Liggins for PCC grant.
- RBL re moving of Dover Patrol Centenary event to July 2022.
- N Cook-Priest ownership enquiry re Blue Birds.

Clerk to dal

8. South Foreland Valley

- Cllr Newton had written to Natural England applying for permission for 2 gates and 6 benches and showed where they would go on the map - reply awaited. She had walked the area with Melanie from WCP and volunteers had agreed with proposed siting.
- Re any locks to be placed on proposed gates - Jon Barker had suggested using same locks as they do.

- Following previous discussions re suggested “land grab”, it is clear that the tree house has been erected on SFV land and must be removed as this is a SSSI. It was agreed that Community Warden will approach resident to check ownership.
- Cllr Newton reported another visit by a group of Dutch naturists - Dover Harbour Police had been involved when visitor got lost.
- Steel wall will be in place by next week. Dover Security Services have been asked to be on site during initial stages.
- ER40 - at end of Lighthouse Road - collapsible bollard - Jon Barker will invoice at reduced cost and invoice the Parish Council (end closest to the Lighthouse). At section passing by NT land would like to install a gate going two-thirds of the way across (NT will meet cost).
- Report received from Melanie Wrigley re work last month - tree trunks near turning area replaced, central field cleared. One juniper in the Valley - cuttings taken to provide further saplings/trees. The Valley is looking really good at present with all the work undertaken by WCCP and volunteers. Mel had offered to take small groups of Councillors around when time/circumstances permit.
- Cllr Blake advised that he had looked at costs re benches - cost of bench delivered £1,300 with installation further £100. Maintenance at 25 years would be around £1,000. Also, to site a bench in the Valley would need a concrete plinth at further cost of say £200. £2,600 overall (no inscriptions are permitted by Natural England).

9. **Reports from Councillors**

(a) Cllr Blake:-

- Play Area inspection undertaken by Cllr Blake and provided to Councillors. Points of note:-
- Trail unit - rope almost worn right through.
- Rota bouncer - weld has split - item barriered off and Cllr Blake will liaise with local welder to see if this can be repaired.
- Boundary wall - Cllr Blake will again approach adjoining land owner re site visit.
- Tunnel complex and swings now re-opened.

(b) Cllr R Simcox asked that Councillors let Cllr G Simcox know of any issues with operation of Chromebook system.

(c) Cllr R Simcox re broadband - 79 people have now registered - she will continue to investigate.

10. **Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish**

- Clerk asked to arrange an accompanied ROSPA visit to the Play Area.
- It was decided, given the Government’s intransigent attitude to remote meetings, that May meeting be moved to Tuesday 4th May in order that this can be held remotely.
- Cllr Gilham noted a lot of vehicles parking near the pond opposite the village hall causing traffic hold-ups and asked if double yellow lines could be put here. Cllr R Simcox advised re likely cost and need to undertake greater discussions with Kent Highways.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to note

- Cllr G Simcox asked re possibility of placing double red lines outside village shop

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to stop drivers parking on the lines already in place. Community Warden will liaise with parking enforcement re this problem.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.59 pm.

Confirmed:

Chair

12th April 2021

Appendix 1

Response to planning applications re Coastguard Cottages:-

Planning applications 21/00317 and 21/00318 Coastguard Cottages

Response from the Parish Council of St Margaret's at Cliffe

The applications are to renovate the dwellings in the main building, to add further dwellings through restoration of the "boathouse" and the addition of a three storey new build in the existing car park. Outbuildings are also to be renovated and improved.

The existing main building is Grade II listed and the whole site is within the Conservation Area. The NPPF requires any works to listed buildings to conserve their special heritage value and to enhance their siting. Development in Conservation Areas is also required to enhance the site.

Summary of Objections

The new block would be visually dominant and significantly harm the character of the site of the listed building and harm the character of the Conservation Area in this location.

The installation of a large car park in the grounds of Coastguard Cottages would harm the open space setting of the listed building and significantly harm the character of the Conservation Area.

There appear to be no plans to take this opportunity to improve the sustainability and energy efficiency of the listed cottages, three of which have G and F energy ratings, which are below the legal threshold for renting.

21/00317

The new block is to be sited in the current car park and would add five apartments to the site so increasing the total from 13 to 18 dwellings. It is a very contemporary design, sharply contrasting with the heritage building.

The plan showing the side elevation of the new build indicates that the upper apartment has a sloping flat roof. If the scale of the drawing is correct then the interior height reduces from about 2.4m at the front window to 1.5m at the rear. Clearly designed for vertically challenged residents!

The proposal for the new building will result in a mostly glazed East facing front aspect that will detract from the view of the heritage building, particularly on sunny mornings when it will act as a very large light reflector.

The Design and Access Statement claims the pre-planning advice from DDC has supported the design of the new build with its emphasis on horizontal lines in contrast to the verticals of the listed building. Although on its own it has some interesting and clever design features, our concern is how it fits in with characteristics of the heritage site and this Conservation Area. Adjacent to the Coastguard Cottages site is 1 and 2 St Margaret's Road, which was the subject of planning application 19/01489. This application also claimed to have support from pre-planning advice from DDC but subsequently the application was refused. On March 3rd this year the appeal was also dismissed for this application, so it seems pre-planning advice does not offer any guarantee of planning acceptability. In the notice of dismissal the planning inspector for the appeal noted that the new build (3 houses) on this site would not "respond positively to the character or appearance of the existing development that characterises the area, and corresponding to this, would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA." The same could be said of the proposed new build in application 20/00317 which provides a sharp contrast rather than a complement to the listed building. The Coastguard Cottages terrace is broadly symmetrical with vertical lines dominating. The boathouse building to the side has visual echoes of features of the listed building and so fits in well. But the new build on the other side is in stark contrast and with bold horizontals and its large, reflective front aspect it would detract from the visual character of the site and so harm the Conservation Area and the heritage setting. The new build and the boathouse would in effect frame the listed terrace but because of the design contrasts the existing appearance of symmetry would be adversely affected. The planning inspector's report on application 19/01489, on the plot that is to the rear of Coastguard Cottages, noted that although it is at some distance away the "built development would be detrimental to both the character and appearance of the setting of the Listed cottages, as well as their special interest, and therefore the proposed development would be harmful to their significance". Since the proposal in this application would be closer, larger and more significant it can only be concluded it would be even more harmful to the heritage site and the Conservation Area.

21/00318

The application indicates removal of the existing car park area to make space for the new build. It is proposed to locate a large parking area at a lower level within the open space. It is not clear at how much lower level this will be, if an embankment will be constructed to make it level or if it will follow the steep contour of the site. The size will inevitably cause great visual harm to the wide open space and therefore to the Conservation Area. The Design and Access Statement claims that there is a requirement for one parking space per dwelling. But DDC uses the KCC 2006 design guide for parking spaces which prescribes 1.5 parking spaces for one and two bedroom dwellings and 2 spaces for larger dwellings. The plans propose 16 one and two bedroom dwellings and 2 three bedroom dwellings. This produces a requirement for 28 spaces for residents. More would be required for visitors. Therefore the minimum should be 30 spaces. The plans for the car park indicate only 20 spaces, significantly inadequate. It would need to be 50% larger, although this would then cause even greater visual harm to the open space setting. There are further problems with the parking area. Placing it well away from the buildings and at a lower level will make it impractical. Consider parking near the lower end of the parking area and having to carry shopping loads up to the apartments. This is an exposed site and in the winter experiences the full force of wind and rain in the stormy weather that is common along the coast. This would impact on the wellbeing of future residents. It is proposed to cordon off the road that runs across the front of the main building. Where will the postman be able to park, where can tradesmen or delivery drivers with large loads go or supermarket deliveries be able to service the dwellings? The parking

proposals in this application seem unsustainable and impractical and the design looks more like a car park for an office block or school than a residential solution. The problems created by the proposed car park remain significant and the existing car park site seems the best option to retain.

Conclusion

The planning applications would result in the loss of homes for many St Margaret's tenants. Some tenants have protected tenancies and could opt to remain. The application says in this circumstance their dwellings would be left and those around them rebuilt. This could raise serious health and safety issues for those tenants during the proposed rebuild.

The designs would harm the heritage setting and the Conservation Area, offer few gains in wellbeing or sustainability for occupiers, offer inadequate and impractical parking amenity. It appears that the only opportunity taken here is to maximise profit from the site for the benefit of the developer and to the detriment of the community. Therefore a very strong objection is registered to both applications.