**Minutes of the meeting of Fringford Parish Council,   
held on Monday 19th June 2023 at 7.45pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Ginny Hope (Chair), David McCullagh, Phil Davids-Austin, Hayley Ryder, Les Harris, Robert Gue.

**Also present:** R. Damerell (Clerk) and 38 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence**

* Apologies were received for Cllr MacKenzie

1. **Requests for Dispensations and Declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality**

* Cllr Davids-Austin declared an Interest for planning Application [23/00741/LB](https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/23/00741/LB) - Hall Farm

1. **Public participation**

* Cllr Hope explained the background planning application 23/01368/F Land at Hall Farm, Part Of A4221 Bicester Road, Fringford: proposed change of use for a 4 pitch gypsy traveller site and stables. Cherwell District Council will make the ultimate decision, the Parish Council is a consultee. Currently the application states a change of use from Agricultural Land and to build 4 pitches, each would have static caravan, a touring caravan hard standing a Day Room and 2 parking spaces. The site is currently surrounded by agricultural land and the A4421.
* The Parish Council needed to consider the application taking into account the policies relating to gypsy traveller sites which are different to residential planning policies. None of the Councillors have experience in this matter and therefore sought professional planning advice to understand the relevant policies and have used a planning consultant who is familiar with similar applications.
* The Parish Council’s response has been based on the following policies of the Cherwell Local Plan:
* BSC6 – which includes the sequential test criteria to assess the application against.
* ESD6
* ESD7
* ESD10
* ESD13
* ESD15
* It is worth noting that all Local authorities need to have identified the needs for gypsy travellers in their local plan and to have undertaken a needs assessment.
* The Parish Council discussed the sequential test criteria and unanimously determined that the proposed site is not a suitable location for a gypsy traveller site for the following reasons;
* Access from the site to the highway for vehicles including slow moving caravans and pedestrians would be via a farm gate and a well-used lay-by on to the busy A4421 road would be dangerous. Speed limit is 50mph. Within approximately 150 metres of the proposed access gate the A4421 has double white lines denoting no overtaking due to the dangers of the road. The application contains no visibility splays for the site onto the highway.
* Fringford is not a sustainable location for such a development due to lack of services such as shops and healthcare services. There is no public transport or sustainable transport options, residents of the site would have to use private vehicles for all journeys to and from the site.
* No access to GP and other health services, the closest  services are 5km away in Bicester.
* Fringford Primary School is currently oversubscribed, there are no safe walking or cycle path options from the site to the school therefore all journeys would be by private vehicles.
* Part of the site is at risk of flooding and in a surface water flood risk zone.
* Access to utilities such as water and electricity, mains drainage are a significant distance away from the site bringing into question the deliverability of such a site in a sustainable way which is doubtful in this location.
* The detrimental effect on the ecology and biodiversity of the site itself plus negative impact on the neighbouring farmland and woodland that contains a pond and potentially providing habits for wildlife such as owls, bats, newts.
* Negative impact on the open countryside, the urbanising effect of concrete driveways and hard standings, static and touring caravans and numerous vehicles. The site would be clearly visible from Waterloo Farm and from public footpaths close to the site therefore the visual amenity would be negatively impacted.
* The current site is a greenfield site not a brownfield site.  It’s currently Agricultural land and should be retained for that purpose.
* The applicant has not included any consideration of alternative sites.
* For all these reasons the application is contrary to the Cherwell Local Plan policies, including those policies pertaining to gypsy traveller sites. The application therefore should be refused.

**Sequence of Events**

* If you wish to submit objections via the Cherwell online planning portal, click on the “comment on this application” tab of the application. https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/23/01368/F  
    
  Or you can write to Cherwell Planning Department, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA.
* DEADLINE is 29 June. Your views really do make a difference so please take the time to submit.

**Questions and answer session;**

The following questions were raised

* Q. Is the area short of sites?
* A. This is about the proposed site not being suitable.
* Q. Are they required to have water and sewage?
* A. The Environment Agency recommend connection to mains water and sewerage.
* Q. Do you know what the availability is of travellers’ sites in the area?
* A. The decision will be based on whether it is suitable to have a traveller’s site on the proposed location. We will need to articulate a valid rationale why this is not suitable site.
* Q. Could it not be proposed as it is only be four dwellings, that these could be added to other sites in the area?
* A. It is something we could include in our response.
* A resident stated that it will need a mobilisation of local views to show Cherwell District Council the level of feeling against the development and make them understand the level of opposition.
* Q. Are you able to share the points that have been raised with the public?
* A. Yes, and it is also incumbent on all residents to help others submit responses, inform any residents who have not been to the meeting, not on the WhatsApp Group or mailing list about the application.
* Q. Is the road part of the designated route for HS2 HGVs? Would this increase the level of traffic being pushed through and around the village?
* A. It is a very real possibility.
* Q. Do they have to show evidence to be able provide utilities and Waste Management
* A. We believe that deliverability over whether utilities should be made clear. The applicant has not given any details on how utilities would be installed, or removal of waste managed.
* Q. Has any consideration been given to the welfare of the animals?
* A. This is of course important and worth making clear to CDC
* GH to make public the Parish Council comments, as a guide for residents when making their own comments
* Q. How will this be made available?
* A. As stated before, it will have to be a combination of mailing list, WhatsApp group and fliers to each door. Linda M confirmed she would be willing to help with the creation of the fliers if she were given the necessary wording.
* Q. Is the motive for the application stated?
* A. No
* Q. What is the size of the site?
* A. Approximately 5 acres.

A show of hands form members of the public present was carried out of those in favour and those against.

* For the site – 1
* Against the site: 37

1. **Updates from County & District Councillors –**

* No update received, but it was confirmed that the Annual report from Cllr Corkin had been placed on the website for any member of the public to view.

1. **To approve the Minutes** **of the last Parish Council Meeting**.

* The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

1. **Finance**
2. **To receive the monthly bank reconciliation.** 
   * + The Bank reconciliation was reviewed and approved by the Council.
3. **To consider invoices for payment.**
   * + All invoices were reviewed, approved, and signed by the Parish Council.
4. **New Policy for online Parish Council payments**
   * + The Council reviewed and Approved the Policy for making online payments
5. **Approval of Annual Governance statement**
   * + The Council received the Annual Governance Statement and it was unanimously approved
6. **Approval of the Accounting Statement**
   * + The Council received the Accounting Statement and it was unanimously approved
7. **Approval of the Certificate of Exemption**
   * + The Certificate of Exemption was approved and signed by the Council
8. **Receipt of the Internal Auditor’s report**
   * + The Internal Auditor’s report was received by the Council and placed on the website
9. **Parish Matters**
10. **HS2 Grant Applications** 
    * + Cllr Hope confirmed that the draft lease has been received by the Parish Council’s solicitors from the Landowner. Cllr Hope to contact the solicitors for an update and when it will be ready to sign.
      + Cllr McCullagh confirmed the County Council have completed the tender process. The letter of consent has been sent to Greenford as the preferred contractor. The Parish Council is still waiting for the confirmation of the cost.
      + Cllr McCullagh to contact HS2 to ascertain if they would be willing to increase the grant should the costs have increased. The Council to also contact the landowner once the costs are established to state what the shortfall is.
11. **20 is Plenty proposal in the village**
    * + No update to report
12. **New Vehicle Activated Sign for the village**
    * + Cllr Hope confirmed that the galvanised pole and Speed sign have been delivered. The next step is to arrange for the post and sign to be installed
13. **Village Hall update** 
    * + Cllr Gue updated that two new members have been appointed to the Village Hall Committee
14. **Parish Council Insurance Renewal**
    * + The Parish Council resolved to agree to renew the Council’s insurance
15. **Planning**

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| Reference | Location | Proposal | FPC Decision / Comments |
| 23/01444/F | Fringford Cottage, Main Street, Fringford, OX27 8DP | Demolition of infill extension, conservatory, raised terrace and first floor dormer extension.  Installation of dormers to rear roof slopes, erection of two storey infill extension, two  storey side extension and single storey rear extension, conversion of existing double  garage to annexe, internal refurbishment of existing cottage and associated fenestration | No Objection |
| 23/01410/F | Hall Farm, Main Street, Fringford, OX27 8DP | Construction of a private all weather riding area including Change of Use of the arena  area (800sqm) from agricultural to equestrian | No Objection |
| 23/01368/F | Land At Hall Farm, Part Of A4221 Bicester Road, Fringford | Change of use of land to a 4 pitch travellers caravan site and erection of stable building | Objection |

1. **Correspondence Received / AOB**

* The Council expressed its thanks to Cllr Davids-Ausitn for fixing the picket fence in the playground.
* The Council also expressed its thanks to Cllr Hope for all the work and preparation for planning application: 23/01368/F - Land At Hall Farm, Part Of A4221 Bicester Road, Fringford.

1. **Items for next Agenda**

* All items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by 9th July 2023.

1. **Date of next meeting:**

* The date of the next meeting as 17th July 2023 at 7.45pm.