

Hawksworth Parish Meeting

10th February 2022 at 7.30pm

Chairman: Chris Bradwell

Parish Clerk: Anne Dunn (as temporary stand in for Neil Smith)

Electors Present: Brian Asher, Jane Baker, Fi Barton, Paul Bramley, Alison Clarke, Chris & Jane Clayton, Gary Cooke, James & Rosie Counsell, Ron & Di Edmonds, Crombie & Yvonne Glennie, Steve & Sarah Hadfield, Andrew Harris, Vikki Hart, Jeremy & Sarah Hemmings, Alistair & Trisby Henderson, Sallie & Andrea Lloyd, Nigel Madison-Rowe, Andy & Chris Matthias, Robert Monk, Doug & Lynn Ross, Suzze Sowka, Geoffrey Spence, Krys Szpakowska, Colin Tompkins, Bob Wilson & Sarah Flanagan.

Other people present (not on the electoral register): Jade Mason, Steve Drew, Greg & Pam Stevens

Apologies: David Parr

OVERVIEW

A parish meeting was held to discuss planning application 22/00061/FUL for a new farm track with access off Main Road Hawksworth at the north end of the village opposite WB Stubbs works.

In a ballot, the majority present voted to object to the application since the village has significant concerns about a number of issues including safety, potential flooding, loss of hedging with effect on the Conservation Area and displacement of parking.

INTRODUCTION

A special parish meeting was held on 10th February 2022 at the request of a member of the village to discuss a planning application for a new farm track with access off Main Road Hawksworth opposite WB Stubbs premises. The application 22/00061/FUL has been made by the trustees of the late Readett-Bayley's. The full application 22/00061/FUL may be found on the Rushcliffe Planning website at <https://planningon-line.rushcliffe.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=R5L21LNLILZ00&activeTab=summary>

The Parish Clerk Neil Smith did not attend the meeting. The Chairman Chris Bradwell explained that since Neil has a vested interest in the application, he will have no parish involvement in this issue and Anne Dunn, as immediate past Parish Clerk, had been asked to stand in as a temporary replacement. The meeting gave their support to this change.

The Chairman explained that the reason for the short notice for the meeting was because Hawksworth had not received notification from Rushcliffe BC due to an error in the applicant's information which gave the planning site as Newfield Lane in Sibthorpe. This was compounded by Rushcliffe Planning Department failing to correct the error meaning no information about the planning application appeared on the council website under Hawksworth. Because of these errors, Rushcliffe have extended the deadline for parish responses from 14th to 24th February.

DETAILS OF THE APPLICATION

The Chairman outlined the details of the plan to the meeting illustrated by large scale plans and other documents. In summary, the proposed entrance is opposite WB Stubbs works and from here the field track would lead in a roughly westerly direction, passing Dove Cottage on the left, to meet up and turn left onto an existing farm track which travels to the large grey storage barns at the back of the Philips Farm barn complex. The new part of this route is shown in red on the plan at the back of these minutes.

There has long been a field gate at the side of the application site for access to the field. However, the application is for both a much larger access and a hardcore track to "T" into the side of an existing farm access route 200m away to the west. This new 200m track would be across an agricultural field. Relocation of the farm gateway (it is to be moved North by a few metres) does not need planning consent as this is an unclassified road. However, any engineering works (kerbs, hardcore etc) do need planning consent.

The applicants' current access track to the grey storage barns runs from opposite the church, with a right of access over the shingle driveway to a gated track between the 1820 House and Manor Farm House. This shingle area is owned by 2 separate properties, both of which have the agricultural access right stated in their deeds.

There is a second existing access to the grey storage barns from Main Road further to the north of the village across land that was recently sold. The village understands that the applicants inserted a clause in the sale particulars to retain a right of access across this land.

DISCUSSION

About 40 people attended the meeting, a very large number for such a small village and the highest number in attendance for 20+ years which is a strong indication of the depth of feeling about this planning application. There was lively debate.

Many people raised concern about the intended use of the track, in particular that it would open up the area at the back of Philips Farm barns for housing development. The Chairman reminded the meeting that any village response must be limited to what is in the application. Any speculation about the intended future use of the track was not appropriate for discussion since the planners cannot take this into account and will only judge the application as it stands.

All the remaining significant points raised during discussion are given below and these will be put forward as issues of concern to Rushcliffe Planning Department.

DECISION

A secret ballot was held and the vast majority voted to object to the application. The meeting requested that the following reasons for concern were forwarded to Rushcliffe BC.

1. Safety

- a) **The meeting felt strongly that a new entrance in this proposed location on Main Road Hawksworth would cause a significant danger to road users, including many horse riders and cyclists, because of the limited visibility from around the bend to the north of the access.**

Although Highways Department have been consulted as part of the application process, due to the following errors of site location in the application, **Hawksworth Parish Meeting is requesting that Highways study the site on the ground.**

- The application documents identified the site incorrectly as on Newfield Lane which is in Sibthorpe. The site is in fact on the main road through Hawksworth (Main Road).
- The application documents incorrectly showed an image of the entry signage into the south entrance to Hawksworth which is approximately ½ mile from the application site. The correct approach is shown in the photo below. This shows quite clearly that the site is just round a bend which has limited visibility due to hedging and the narrowness of the road.



View of the north access road into Hawksworth.

The application site is just beyond this bend

This is a regular route for horse riders and cyclists. Although the road is subject to a 30mph speed limit, this is often not adhered to by traffic entering the village at this point. This is an application for an agricultural access so tractors drawing long trailers must be expected. The meeting seriously questioned whether the length of these vehicles had been taken into account when considering the braking distances for vehicles coming around the blind bend and coming upon stationary tractors and trailers waiting to turn in.

It was said that previous applications for access onto this section of Main Road have not been approved on the basis that the access was too dangerous. The proposed track is in a position significantly more at risk of collision and the proximity of the electric substation increases the risk of serious consequences. Considering the corrected location and the need for a safe stopping distance before the access, the village would like a further assessment by Highways.

b) The Parish Meeting questioned the need for a 3rd access to the storage barns and field.

There are already two current access entrances, a 3rd would have a big impact on the village:

1. The route through the Phillips Farm barns opposite the church has been continuously and regularly used for agricultural access for at least the past 35 years. The day before the Parish Meeting there were at least 6 occasions when lorries and trailers travelled this route. Six months ago, the grain harvest was taken out on large lorries via this route.
2. The village understands that the applicants retained a right of access over the land that was recently sold from a field entry point further north outside the village.

2. Flood risk.

The application states incorrectly that the area is NOT in an area at risk of flooding.

When the electricity substation was installed in 2016, the engineers removed a soil bank across the gateway which had prevented heavy rain flowing off the field and flooding the road. The consequence was that the road drain (which was not blocked) could not cope with a heavy summer shower and this flooded the road to approximately 250mm / 10" in the middle. Photographic evidence of this event in June 2016 can be supplied.

On request, the engineers rebuilt the bank and there has been no subsequent flooding here.

From a personal recollection over 46 years, June 2016 was the only time this road flooded due to the reason given above.

The proposed track has no drainage and makes no reference to it.

The village requests that a flood risk assessment is carried out to quantify this. In particular to look at the risks associated with removing the soil bank which acts as a flood bank across the gateway.

3. Harm to the character and appearance of a conservation area / Visual impact of the entrance.

The proposed access is a very large opening and it will impact on the character of the landscape. The current stone wall is not shown as being removed but according to the plan, 14.4m of hedging will be removed. **The hedge falls within the Conservation Area boundary**

4. Displacement of parking.

Requirement 4.4 of the Highways report states that *"The grass verge on either side of the access will need to be kept clear of any vegetation above 0.6m high to maintain visibility."* Cars exceed this height so the access would be unsafe if cars were parked there.

WB Stubbs employees have parked there, initially with horses and carts, for 186 years so removal of the parking area would leave up to 8 cars looking for somewhere else to park.

It was acknowledged that there is no right to parking but any displaced parking would create a hazard or an impact on living conditions.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that planners pay more regard to a response from a parish than just individuals, but responses from both the Parish and from individuals do make the biggest impact on planners' decisions. If you wish to make a comment, clicking on the following link will take you to the relevant section of the application:

<https://planningon-line.rushcliffe.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=R5L21LNLILZ00>

Location plan of the proposed field access and track, marked in red, taken from planning application 22/00061/FUL

