

Notes from the Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 5th July 2010

Public Forum

3 members of the public joined the Parish Council - points raised:

- *Will Grundons proposals be discussed with the public as well as council prior to planning application? Yes, see below.*
- *Clay Lane needs refilling again. Is it possible to get its BOAT status changed? A local resident will canvass residents on whether they want to contribute to cost of resurfacing*
- *Church Lane - reminder to WBC to ask for it to be resurfaced*

Planning Matters

Decisions from the Planning Authority

| | | |
|-----------------|--|------------------|
| 10/00629/HOUSE | 24 Mallard Way, Aldermaston Extension | Withdrawn |
| 10/00957FUL | Land off Back Lane, Beenham Parking areas & access for allotments | Approved |
| 10/01136/NONMAT | 1 Mallard Way, Aldermaston Minor amendment to roof | Approved |

Reviewed Planning Applications

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------------|
| 10/00450/HOUSE | 57 Stoneyfield, Beenham Fence to front of property | Objection |
| 10/01235/FULD | | |
| 10/1236/LBC | Barn conversion to create a dwelling | No Objection |
| 10/02221/FUL | Demolition & rebuild to garage & workshop and home office | |
| 10/01230/LBC | | |
| 10/01462/LBC2 | New outbuilding for car port and store | |

- Proposals for organic waste composting at Grundon - visit to Norwich site has taken place and bio-filter appears to work. However, not fully representative of proposed development in Beenham so alternative site visits being sought. (See separate note below for further update)
- Hall Place - garden landscaping - ongoing

Highways

- Signage at the A4 - ongoing
- Cllr Leijten will continue to investigate sat nav directional systems as relating to Beenham industrial estate access.
- Assistance from businesses in industrial area to be requested, to assist in vehicle directions.

Environment

- Allotments - planning consent given, approx setup cost £21K with some monies (up to £12k) from S106 developer contributions and the rest from grants.
- Dog bins - finally on order from WBC
- Ideas on playground improvements to be sought from the young of the Parish.

Parish Plan

- The Presentation Plan to be completed over the summer ready for presentation to WBC and for official adoption. There is still a need for interested parties to help form working groups to take identified actions forward. Please contact Cllr Leijten for more information.

School Hall

- In view of the School's requirements for storage of PE equipment in the Hall and safety considerations it would no longer be possible to hire the Hall for badminton.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Monday August 2nd at 7.30pm in the Community Room.

Your Parish Councillors are:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Dick Russell, St Mary's Farmhouse (Chairman) | Tel: 9712269 |
| Linda Wright, Valley View, Webbs Lane (Vice Chair) | Tel: 9713883 |
| Alistair Rolfe, Springfield, Wickens Corner | Tel: 9712928 |
| Alison Whittenbury, Stocks Farm | Tel: 9712559 |
| Philip Leijten, 1 Awberry Fields | Tel. 9714020 |
| Sonia Buchanan, 17 Back Lane | Tel. 9710203 |
| Alex Cother, 1 Mallard Way | Tel. 9714697 |

Parish Clerk:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Bill Goudge, Nova, Coppid Hill, Barkham Road, Wokingham | Tel: 9773553 |
|---|--------------|

Changes to the Rec - What would you like?

As part of the Parish Plan initiative the Parish Council would like to improve the Rec. In order to do this we need to understand what Parish residents would like to happen, as well as what not to happen.

We would especially like to hear from young people aged 10 to 16 years.

If you would like to express a view please contact:

**Linda Wright at Valley View, Webbs Lane
Tel: 9713883
Email: linda_beenham@yahoo.co.uk**

UPDATE ON PROPOSALS FOR ORGANIC WASTE PROCESSING AT GRUNDON

Since the proposals for organic waste treatment facilities at Grundon were first made public in the spring there have been two public meetings with TEG, the proposed operators of the facilities, at which they have explained their proposals and answered questions. Members of the Parish Council have done further research on facilities of this nature, and a small group from the community have been to visit the TEG facilities near Norwich. I thought that at this stage I should update you all on the position.

I should start by making two things clear. Firstly, no planning application has yet been made. I have no information as to when it will be except that it is not imminent. It is possible that the current proposals may not proceed. Secondly, the Parish Council has not yet considered the proposals in detail and has therefore not come to any conclusion as to whether it would wish to oppose an application. Because the Parish Council has not made any decision, any views expressed in this note are my own, not those of the Council as a whole or of any other member of it.

By way of background, Grundon currently operates a materials recovery facility (MRF) which sorts rubbish of various sorts into those which are recyclable - tin, glass, paper etc- and those which are not. This operation is carried on within the MRF building and in general has not caused any major nuisance to local residents. Grundon also operates a green waste composting facility which has caused considerable odour nuisance from time to time, particularly for residents on Beenham Hill; the odour problems are less than they were, partly because of better management and partly because the operation is running at a far lesser volume now, but do still occur from time to time. The liaison meetings which Grundon have with local residents and representatives of the District and Parish Councils, the Planning Department and the Environment Agency have been helpful in addressing problems.

The new proposals are for TEG to install on Grundon's land two new plants. A large building for the in-vessel composting of organic waste (put in the simplest terms its like a series of huge compost bins which generate enough heat in the material to kill harmful pathogens and turn it into useable compost). And an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility, also for the treatment of organic waste but turning it into a liquid compost and as a by product producing methane which can be used to generate electricity. Both facilities would be taking in a mix of green waste and general organic waste including foodstuffs of all sorts.

These new plants would be situated on the area of Grundon's land currently used for green waste composting. They would therefore be within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which industrial development of this nature would not normally be

allowed. However, the grant of planning application for the current green composting use has possibly set an unfortunate precedent for the land to be used for waste purposes, although there is all the difference in the world between a low level green waste composting facility requiring very little infrastructure and the large buildings required for the proposed new operations.

The buildings would be very large. The in-vessel composting operation would be carried out in a building which is approximately the size of a football field and some 11 metres high. The AD plant consists of silos of a similar height. They would therefore be very visible from Beenham Hill and from some of the properties on the ridge, and radically change the visual approach to the village from the A4. While there is some landscaping there already, and more would be required as a condition of planning, the buildings would be visible for many years to come. The industrial appearance and size of the facilities in the landscape will be of great concern.

An even more serious concern is that odours will affect the community. The material which will be brought into the facilities is by its nature very smelly, and during the composting operation becomes even more so (those who went inside the Norwich building can testify to this). Considerable efforts are made to control the escape of any odour, with extracted air being passed through a bio-filter. When we visited the Norwich plant we were impressed by how little odour was apparent even a few yards downwind from the bio-filter. However, we cannot assume that everything will always work as well as it should, and if the plant were not to operate as efficiently as it should to control odours escaping the results could be devastating for those living downwind - and not just those nearby.

Following a detailed investigation of another TEG plant, including discussions with planners and the Environment Agency, I have prepared a report on it which has been circulated to Parish Councillors. It highlights a number of concerns about the operation of the plant, detailed in Environmental Agency Compliance Reports. The clear lesson from these is that one cannot rely on the Agency or the local planning department to control problems if they arise; and it is also clear that they may arise frequently. (If you would like to see a copy of the Report please let me know).

There are of course other potential problems such as noise, increased and possibly smelly transport, and vermin. However I have no doubt that it is the sight and the smell of these facilities which will mainly concern us when they are considered by the Parish Council (assuming that the current proposals proceed). I envisage that we will hold a special meeting for this purpose and will ensure that ample notice is given so that all who wish to attend may do so.

Dick Russell, Chairman

