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Parish Clerk Helen Butcher

## Minutes May 4<sup>th</sup> 2023 Planning Meeting

30/23 **Public Open Forum (under adjournment);** 7 members of the public attended

31/23 **Attendance and apologies;** Councillor Holland {Chair}, Councillors Hockley, George & Goodger attended. Councillor Eastwood joined the meeting at 19.55. Clerk Helen Butcher

Apologies received from Councillor Jones

32/23 **Members Interests;** Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Akeley Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Hockley declared an interest as his property backs onto the area being discussed.

33/23 **Approval of Minutes;** Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the planning meeting held at Akeley Village Hall on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

34/23 **Environment**

a- **Footpaths – Council considered a response to HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 - SECTION 119 PROPOSED DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO. 6 (PART) PARISH OF AKELEY**

Councillor Holland outlined the proposed plans for the footpath diversion being discussed. The developers had recently been made to re-site the footpath sign by the County Council having moved it without permission before this consultation process had been completed. Councillor Holland also updated the council about the discussions that have been had with the County Council Highways and rights of way departments regarding the footpath leading onto Church Hill being too steep for people with wheelchairs, Motability scooters etc. and potentially dangerous in icy conditions. Discussions are underway to resolve this and also to ensure some sort of safety barrier is put at the end of the path where it exits onto Church Hill. It was also noted that the concrete edging has not been put in yet and the footpaths are just 1.25m in places whereas the plans state they should be 2m wide. There is a section on the plans between points B & D which would be left as grass but has been gravelled, however this was felt to be better surfaced as it now is.

There was much discussion about the pros & cons of the new footpath and the existing footpath. Council **RESOLVED** to ask for more clarification about the reasons for needing to move the footpath. The given reason of utilising the land for horse grazing and making the paddocks private was not considered to be valid as there is no area of the field now suitable for horses that is not crossed by a footpath or adjacent to the gardens of the new houses, regardless of whether this one was moved or not. It was also reported by a member of the public that the existing dilapidated stable is about to be demolished. It was agreed by all those present that the new gravelled footpath does make it much easier for residents to cross the field from Leckhampstead Road to Church Hill.

If the footpath were to be moved it would need to be sign posted properly opposite to the exit from the back lane footpath to ensure it was clear that the path had moved.

The Councils response is copied below.

35/23 **Date and time of next meeting; Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm - Date to be confirmed**

Pursuant to the 1960 Public Bodies Act (amended), the Chairman advises that the participants & proceedings of this meeting may be reported upon (filmed, recorded, photographed, blogged, tweeted or streamed) but verbal reporting may not take place whilst in session. Non-participating attendees not wishing to be subject to such media should indicate this by sitting to one side.

**Akeley Parish Council response to HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 - SECTION 119 PROPOSED DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO. 6 (PART) PARISH OF AKELEY**

Akeley Parish Council does not currently feel able to commit to either supporting or opposing this proposal. Whilst the new footpath, already permitted under previously approved planning applications, is a welcome asset which does indeed benefit the residents of Manor Road, it does not necessarily benefit the broader range of footpath users. The Parish Council disputes the developers suggestion that the old footpath needs to be re-sited to utilise the land for horse grazing and make the paddocks more private. There is no existing paddock, menage and stable as detailed on previous plans that have been submitted. The dilapidated stable on the other side of the site is we understand due to be demolished. Regardless of whether this path is diverted or not there are no areas on the field large enough to house a horse without being dissected by at least one footpath. Therefore, that reason for the diversion does not exist.

In the interest of open and reasoned discussion the Parish Council would appreciate full disclosure of the real reasons for needing to divert this footpath so that proper consideration of the facts can be taken into account.