

**Minutes of the Rowney Green Association meeting on Tuesday
5th March 2024 at 7:30pm**



Attendees: Michael Corfield, (Acting Chair), John Cypher, Andy Dunkers, Cllr Barry Thornton (Alvechurch PC), Cllr Alan Bailes (Bromsgrove PC), Maggie Moore, Pete Cain, Tim Edwards, Brian Jones, Richard Woodward, Tom Webb, Pauline Knight, Brian Jones, Wendy Easter, Sandy Jenkinson, Steff Affleck, Graham Affleck, Dorothy Snaddon, Tina Cross-Watson, Karl Cross-Watson, Andy Ballard, Liz Ballard, Mike Stilwell, James McManus, Elisa Bailey, Ann Galletly, Maggie Rollason, Tim Hawkeswood, Martin Miller (Secretary).

Apologies: Nigel Jealous, Wendy Jealous. Michael Corfield expressed satisfaction at the excellent attendance for the meeting.

1. Approval of Minutes. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting on January 9th 2024

2. Matters Arising from the Meeting on Jan 9th 2024. The Arosa development planning for 6 apartments was still under consideration.

3. Update on Highways Issues.

3.1 20 mph speed limit. John Cypher had written to Worcs CC cabinet member for highways Cllr Rouse for information about the request for a 20mph speed limit in RG, having had no reply from contacting Cllr Luckman. He had then received a reply from Cllr Luckman saying only to communicate with him and he would only reply when there was further news.

3.2 HGVs in Storage Lane. Cllr Luckman had replied to Michael Corfield that a change in the signage was now scheduled to be implemented imminently.

3.3 Flooding by The Dell. Work to rectify this has been approved but there is no further news on when it is to be implemented.

3.4 The Holloway. Improved road signage and foliage clearance had been approved and action was awaited.

3.5 Drains on RG Lane. These have been overflowing for weeks and have been reported on the Worcs CC highways issues website. The top drain has already been marked for rectification. Any further problems, such as the sink hole opposite the Village Hall, should

be reported on the website.

3.6 Michael Corfield indicated that Rowney Green Lane (from The Holloway to Gravel Pit Lane) will be closed for 3 days from Monday March 18th for highway surfacing.

4. Planning Issues.

4.1 Meeting with Wain Developers re Bordesley Hall. John Cypher, Michael Corfield and several residents along with Cllr Bailes met with Mr John-Rhys Davis of Wain Homes, the site developers on February 26th to look at the site and discuss issues. The project was originally instigated by The West Midlands Division of Wains, but this had folded and it was now taken on by their Bristol Division. With some concerns about the original proposal, Wains now propose 6 apartments in the Hall rather than 3, as the original apartments were excessively large. They would then need to change the housing configuration from 46 houses to 43 to stay within the overall envelope of 49. A change in the distribution of the sizes (number of beds) of the properties was currently being discussed. Wains are aware of the request by Alvechurch PC and Bromsgrove DC for more smaller properties to be affordable and suitable for people downsizing.

Cllr Bailes had been directly in touch with Wains and said this was an opportunity to engage with them as they were amenable and had accepted (i) they had mistakenly demolished the Heritage Wall and would make amends, and (ii) the boundary markers and undulating nature of the site was not favourable for the originally proposed houses and gardens. Wains were also sympathetic to preserving more of the adjacent woodland. Pauline Knight asked if Wains had to obtain new approval for any changes and Cllr Bailes said they can apply to BDC under reserved matters change of conditions arrangements. Andy Ballard asked if the footprint would stay the same and Cllr Bailes indicated that the outer site boundary was fixed but the layout could change. Tim Hawkeswood pointed out that because of some steep gradients on the site the layout had to change to accommodate suitable gardens for the properties. Andy Ballard asked if the 106 conditions might be affected but Cllr Bailes indicated these had agreement subject to conditions and would check that this is the case (**Action**). Andy Ballard requested that during any later Public Consultation it would be helpful to see the old and proposed configurations side by side (**Action**). The Chair asked the assembly if they had a preference for smaller properties. Wendy Easter indicated that an outcome for fewer cars was desirable.

The issue of street/footpath lighting was raised and the RGA 's position was for no street

lighting as RG is a dark skies area with no street lighting elsewhere. Cllr Bailes indicated that the road on the Bordesley Hall site is not Council adopted so there is no statutory requirement for lighting. Additionally bat surveys on the site and nearby had found at least three varieties and this will influence decisions about lighting. A further bat survey is now indicated and Tim Hawkeswood mentioned that an Ecologist had been on site last week.

The development is not going to be a gated site and public open spaces are in the plans. Cllr Bailes indicated that the main drive has no passing bays and tree roots will limit this possibility. Tim Hawkeswood pointed out that the traffic to site should be lower than with the previous industrial traffic, which had not caused any issues, so there was no need for any extra access.

4.4 Heritage Wall. Wains accept that this kitchen garden wall had been demolished contrary to the BDC planning approval provisions. Tim Hawkeswood said that reinstating the wall would prevent properties being placed in this area and it would protect that ground. About 50m of wall had been lost and the bricks had been removed. John Cypher stated that Bordesley Hall had a heritage designation and the wall was regarded by the WCC Archaeology officer as worthy part of the historic estate. Wains have agreed to some reconstruction of the wall. The assembly was asked for views on this and attendees strongly favoured the wall being reinstated, as opposed to any other form of reparation that may or may not be offered.

4.5 Road System outside Bordesley Hall. Worcestershire CC had argued during the planning application stage that the Holloway was unsuitable for supporting the Bordesley Hall development but Bromsgrove DC had overridden this. It was agreed that the existing 60mph speed limit on the road at the junction with Bordesley Hall was inappropriate and ideally should be reduced to 30 mph. The small triangle island did not limit speed at this point. Ann Galletly wondered if a chicane in the road, as per Radford Road approach to Alvechurch, might help. Cllr Bailes suggested we might be able to influence the developers to help pay for the necessary 20mph and 30mph signage needed to improve this junction. Ann Galletly asked for the RGA to prioritise the requests for the developers. It was restated that Wains had engaged very well with the RGA so far and there was an opportunity to work positively with them on these issues. We were not in a position to negotiate but to make reasonable suggestions.

4.5 Planning House Extension limit of 40%. John Cypher asked whether the RGA committee should take a view on planning applications that significantly exceed the current limit of 40% increase above the original size (dating back to July 1948) and where this is to the detriment of the openness of the green belt. Andy Ballard thought the RGA should uphold whatever were the existing rules.

5. Repair to Bridleway/Footpath from RG Lane to Alvechurch Lodge Farm – path number AV-588.

We are awaiting action from the Worcestershire CC countryside service.

6. Crime Issues. The Drift had been burgled in January and there had been a theft of an electric bicycle from a garage a few weeks ago. In the latter case the criminals had managed to open an electrically operated roller door to the garage. It was advised that turning the power off from such doors might help prevent this from happening. The Police and Crime Commissioner will be answering an RGA question at the forthcoming meeting (vide supra) about the results of the study on Automatic Number Plate Recognition in several Shropshire parish areas.

7. Treasurers report. The RGA held £ 2,426.83 in the bank, £ 394.51 as cash, totalling £ 2821.34. This was £158.25 up from last meeting.

8. Any Other Business.

8.1 Cllr Bailes asked people to answer the current survey on their requirements for public transport in the Alvechurch Parish area which was posted in the magazine The Village.

This can be done on line :

- <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AlvechurchTransportSurveySpring2024>.

Currently there is a subsidy for the local but limited bus service between Bromsgrove and Redditch.

8.2 Maggie Rollason requested that any plants/bushes which obstructed the small amount of pavement we have available in the village should be cut back. Richard Woodward stated that if the problem persisted, she should request the Bromsgrove DC to cut it back who would then charge the owner.

The meeting was closed at 9:04 pm.

The RGA AGM and next meeting will be on Tuesday May 7th 2024 at 7:30pm – Chair: Andy Dunkers