



Minutes of a meeting of Atcham Parish Council held on Wednesday 26th February 2025 at 7.30pm in Atcham Memorial Hall

25/014 REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE and APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Cllrs Laura Dixon (Chairman), Simon Adney, Gareth Jones, Martin Ruston.

Apologies: Apologies were accepted from Cllr Stephen Cook, Keith Daley and Rob Trow.

Clerk: Alison Utting

Also: SC Cllr Claire Wild, Helen Royall and Mark Agnew (National Trust), and 10 members of the public.

25/015 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Adney and Dixon declared an interest in item 25/019 (farming tenants of NT).

25/016 DISPENSATION – It was resolved to grant dispensation to Cllrs Adney and Dixon regarding the above interests, on the grounds that without a dispensation the number of persons prohibited from speaking and voting would impede the council's business (Localism Act 2011 s33), the dispensation to be for the duration of this meeting. (Prop: MR, Sec: GJ, *nem con*)

25/017 MINUTES - It was resolved that the Chairman should sign the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 8th January 2025 as a true and correct record of that meeting.

25/018 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Matters raised:

Why can't this application be considered at the regular parish council meeting on 12th March? We requested an extension from SC planning in order to do this, but they would only give us an extension to 3rd March.

Access and highway safety – Residents raised the issues of increased traffic to the new Hub, no proposed improvement to alleviate existing problems (Attingham Park entrance and exit), increased congestion in the village, no access from one site to the other by foot or bike, danger of Norton crossroads (already risky), danger to cyclists

and pedestrians attempting to reach the new Hub. These concerns were universal among those present. There was general support for the idea of the Hub in principle but it was felt that the plan as it has been put forward does not address these important issues and is therefore unacceptable.

Lack of consultation – There was anger that local residents had not been consulted in the pre-planning process. During discussion, several issues were raised that could possibly have been explored or even resolved through a proper consultation process. NT representatives admitted that they had fallen short in this regard.

25/019 PLANNING

a) The parish council considered the following planning application:

Reference: **24/04831/FUL**

Address: Attingham Park (site adjacent to Atcham Industrial Park)

Proposal: Creation of Outdoor Hub

The Parish Council took into account representations made by local residents both this evening and at the joint community meeting arranged by Atcham Parish Council with Wroxeter & Uppington Parish Council on 11th February. They also discussed various matters relating to the application with the NT representatives.

After consideration, the Parish Council resolved to object to the application, with the following comments:

“Atcham Parish Council supports the creation of an Outdoor Hub in principle, believing it would bring many benefits to the wider community and to the preservation of the natural environment. However, the Parish Council on behalf of residents OBJECTS to the current application on the following grounds:

“The proposal does not take into account the significant impact on both local residents and visitors in terms of highway safety and access issues. Although the proposal intends to relieve pressure on the main site, it is a stated aim of the project to increase visitor numbers.

“The main house site would continue to be accessed using the current entrance and exit, the use of which causes significant congestion problems in the centre of Atcham during peak visitor days. These problems are no longer associated only with sunny days or key Bank Holidays, but are becoming much more regular. The Parish Council considers that these issues affecting Atcham could reasonably be expected to worsen with the predicted visitor numbers to the planned Outdoor Hub, with the clear possibility that many visitors might visit both sites and that overall visitor numbers to the locality will increase significantly, the vast majority being in cars. This will add to highway risks, congestion, and pollution, all affecting local residents. With existing concerns about visitor traffic currently unresolved, the Parish Council feels it cannot support the plan for access to the Outdoor Hub as it stands.

“Parishioners are also concerned about the safety of the Norton Crossroads, which is already the site of regular near-misses between vehicles emerging from the side roads and vehicles travelling on the B4380/B5061 between Atcham and Uckington (60 mph).

“Concerns have also been raised about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists attempting to access the new Outdoor Hub, with the access roads in all directions being extremely risky for both. While the ambitions to improve Sustrans routes and bus services are laudable, they remain theoretical at this point in time.

“The Parish Council also wishes to point out that there was no consultation with residents of Atcham parish prior to this application being submitted. Atcham Parish Council in cooperation with Wroxeter & Uppington Parish Council arranged their own community meeting immediately on receiving notification of the planning application (which was after both PCs had met in January). This was the first that parishioners and parish councillors knew of the proposal. Had that meeting not been arranged, there would have been no contact at all between the applicants and local residents. It has been regrettable that many points raised in discussion should have been part of a proper pre-planning consultation with parish councils and residents.”

(Prop: MR, Sec: GJ, nem con)

- b) There were no further **planning applications** received in advance of this meeting.
- c) There were no new **planning decisions** published in advance of this meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 7.30pm.

Meeting dates for the rest of 2025: 14th May, 9th July, 10th Sept, 12th Nov.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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