

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Ashley Green – Hog Lane Development

8th April 2026

Purpose	Emergency public meeting to brief residents on the unauthorised development at Hog Lane, Ashley Green, and the associated legal proceedings
Chair / Lead Officer	Mark Broschomb (Ashley Green Parish Council)
Also Present	Members of the Parish Council, Buckinghamshire Unitary Councillors; Members of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill Parishes and Community Association; Members of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill parishes
Apologies	Local MP (notes taken on her behalf)

1. Background and Planning Context

Mark Broschomb summarised the events leading to the meeting:

- Unauthorised development had been carried out on a Green Belt site off Hog Lane, Ashley Green, over the Easter bank holiday weekend, outside normal working hours.
- A Temporary Stop Notice had been issued on 3 April 2026. Despite this, further works were carried out in deliberate breach.
- The registered landowner had previously applied for, and been refused, planning permission for apparently similar development in 2024. A second planning application had subsequently been submitted on 23rd March 2026. Awaiting validation, reference nr PL/26/02447/FA
- Works were understood to have continued continuously from the evening of Thursday 2nd April 24 hours through to Friday night, with operations resuming from approximately 06:30 on Saturday morning.
- Buckinghamshire Council (the claimant) obtained a High Court injunction on Saturday evening; this was served on Sunday afternoon at 2.45pm. By that time the site was assessed substantially complete and capable of habitation.

On the planning policy background, it was noted that:

- Buckinghamshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation sites; there are no public sites in Buckinghamshire.
- A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment published in July 2025 identified needs over the next 20 years. The emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan (Helaa document) indicates a projected shortfall will remain. Further detail is expected in July 2026.

2. High Court Injunction – Terms and Timeline

The injunction, effective until the Return Date hearing or further order, prohibits the defendants (whether personally or through others) from:

- Carrying out any further works on the land, including building or engineering operations, land clearance or levelling, and laying of hard standing or hardcore.
- Bringing any further caravans, mobile homes or structures for residential or other unauthorised use onto the land.
- Enabling anyone not living on the land at the date of service to move onto it.
- Depositing further waste materials, hardcore or similar substances.
- Forming or creating further paths or roadways.
- Installing further services or utilities (water, sewerage, electricity, etc.), and specifically not commissioning the septic tank/cesspit brought onto the land on or around 3 April.
- Subdividing the land or creating further plots.
- Bringing further vehicles, plant or machinery onto the land.

Key Dates

- By 4:00 pm, Friday 10 April 2026: Deadline for the claimant (Buckinghamshire Council) to file any further evidence of injunction breaches.
- By 4:00 pm, Monday 13 April 2026: Deadline for defendants to file and serve any evidence they wish to rely on.
- 11:00 am, Tuesday 15 April 2026: Return Date hearing, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand. Time estimate: two hours (to include judgment). The community intends to send a representation.

3. Likely Legal Process Following the Return Date

Simon Colbert (PC) outlined the possible outcomes at the 15 April hearing:

- The court may find a breach of injunction and issue an action (enforcement) order, which will be served on site with a stated compliance period.
- Alternatively, the court may adjourn if it requires further evidence.
- If defendants fail to comply within the compliance period, the matter returns to court for committal proceedings (contempt of court), which can result in a fine or imprisonment.
- Parallel planning enforcement by Buckinghamshire Council continues throughout.
- Defendants have rights of appeal at various stages; the process is therefore likely to take years rather than months.
- The chairman advised that the landowner is expected to engage professional consultants and legal representatives.
- The planning officer's evidence statement references possible "very special circumstances" (e.g. welfare provisions) and human rights and equality considerations, which the defendants may raise.

4. Planning Enforcement and the Current Application

- The Parish Council emphasise that Buckinghamshire Council will be pressed to issue a formal Enforcement Notice and to run enforcement proceedings concurrently with the determination of the retrospective planning application.
- The planning application submitted in March 2026 is unlikely to be validated for several weeks yet, given resourcing pressures on planning departments.
- The new application is materially similar to the refused application; the principal differences noted were the removal of proposed tree planting and bin/recycling stores from the site plan.
- There is nothing in law to prevent a similar application being submitted, even following a refusal and a breach.
- A concern was raised that the absence of a demonstrable five-year Gypsy and Traveller site supply could weaken the council's position on appeal. This was acknowledged as a genuine risk.
- Individual planning objections from residents should be factual and planning-relevant. Buckinghamshire Council has changed its practice so that the content of individual objections is no longer publicly visible (only the total number is shown), to reduce community tension.

5. Utilities – Water, Electricity and Drainage

The following was reported regarding utilities:

- Water (Affinity Water): A councillor reported speaking with Affinity Water that morning. Affinity Water have confirmed there is no registered lawful water connection to the site. They were sending an operative to investigate. Affinity Water also confirmed that, given the injunction, they would not agree to a new lawful connection.
- Electricity (UK Power Networks): A councillor had spoken to UK Power Networks, who agreed to investigate whether an unlawful electricity connection had been made. A further follow-up was to be sent by email. A resident noted that an electrical supply had been physically observed being laid some years ago, with utility ducting added approximately two months ago.
- Drainage/Sewerage: A package treatment plant had been brought onto the site. It was noted that such a plant requires an electricity supply and either field drainage or discharge to a ditch, and may require an Environment Agency permit. It was agreed that the Environment Agency should be notified.
- It was confirmed that all underground works and infrastructure installed to date are unlawful.
- Stealing utility supplies (water or electricity) without right constitutes a criminal offence separate from the planning breach.

6. Evidence Gathering

The meeting emphasised the importance of continued, disciplined evidence gathering:

- Evidence of any breach of the injunction (e.g. arrival of further caravans, mobile homes, gravel, machinery, or new persons) should be reported promptly to Buckinghamshire Council Planning Enforcement:
planningenforcement@buckinghamshire.gov.uk quoting reference number PL/26/02447/FA

- Evidence must be factual and without emotive comment. It should not be shared on social media or circulated within the community; it should go directly to the proper authority.
- Reporters will need to provide their name and address to the planning enforcement team; submissions are treated as confidential.
- A suggestion was made that drone footage could provide a systematic photographic record of site changes. This was noted for the proposed community group to consider but this may not be possible due to GDPR.
- Residents were asked to be particularly vigilant for any signs of new utility connections being established, which may not be as visible as vehicle movements.
- A Councillor confirmed he would maintain contact with Affinity Water and attempt further contact with UK Power Networks to be informed of any developments.

7. Community Action and Next Steps

Community Coordination Group

It was proposed, and agreed by those present, that a core community group be established within days (target: by mid-April 2026), comprising:

- One or more members of Ashley Green Parish Council
- Representatives of the Community Association
- Affected residents from both Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill

Residents wishing to register their interest should contact Mark Broschomb (contact details available on the Parish Council website <https://www.ashleygreenparishcouncil.org.uk/>)

Skill sets particularly welcomed include planning knowledge, communication, and the ability to collate and manage information. The possibility of commissioning specialist planning or legal advice (e.g. King's Counsel) at a later stage, to complement Buckinghamshire Council's own proceedings, was noted positively.

Communications

- Updates will be published on the Ashley Green Parish Council website.
- David Harmer's community bulletin (reaching approximately 300 households) will be used to distribute links and summaries.
- Residents are strongly advised to refrain from social media activity regarding this matter.
- These notes will be published on the parish council website.
- All residents are asked to pass on the key messages to neighbours who were not present.

Neighbouring Parishes

It was noted that Cholesbury and St Leonards Parish Council had experienced a comparable situation. The chairman confirmed the parish council would seek to make contact with them.

8. Other Matters Raised by persons in attendance

- Animal welfare: A member of the public reported an incident the previous summer involving apparent neglect of horses on the site, which was reported to the RSPCA and acted upon. It was noted that such matters are unlikely to carry significant weight in planning proceedings but were recorded.
- Untaxed vehicles: Several untaxed vehicles were parked on the public highway during the works weekend. These have been reported to the DVLA.
- Land adjoining the site: A concern was raised that an equestrian property immediately adjoining the site had been listed for sale on social media. The potential implications for future site expansion were noted and will be monitored.
- Land ownership and due diligence: A member of the public suggested that Buckinghamshire Council conduct due diligence regarding the ownership of bricks-and-mortar properties by those involved.

9. Summary of Key Messages to Residents

- The ultimate goal is the removal of the unauthorised development and restoration of the field.
- This process is likely to take years, not weeks. Patience and discipline are essential.
- Do not be aggressive towards those on the site; this is counterproductive and could provoke a stronger reaction.
- Report evidence to the proper authorities (planning enforcement, utilities, police) — do not self-publish or circulate it.
- Respond individually to the planning application with factual, planning-relevant objections.
- Look out for elderly and vulnerable neighbours in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- Stay informed via the parish council website and David Harmer's bulletin.

Note: These minutes are a summary of the meeting for community information purposes. They are not a verbatim record. Speaker attributions from the floor have been anonymised.