

BURROUGH GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Karen Peck, email: clerk@burroughgreenparishcouncil.org.uk

Chair: Tom Rusk

Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting

NOTICE OF MEETING: Burrough Green Parish Council
TIME: 7pm
DATE: Wednesday 11th February 2026
VENUE: Reading Room

MEMBERS 6
VACANCIES 1
QUORUM 3

MINUTES

In attendance: Councillor Rusk -Chair (TR), Batting (MB), Way, Monks (AM), Emms (GE) and McClenaghan (PM).

110226/1 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

110226/2 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Way – prior commitments. Apologies accepted.

110226/3 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were made.

110226/4 OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (15 minutes)

No members of the public were in attendance and no matters were raised.

110226/5 COUNCIL BUSINESS

a) Consultation for a new Autism ERB" at Burrough Green Primary Academy

To open the floor to member of the community and to discuss and approve the Parish Councils Response to the consultation by the deadline on 13th February 2026

The Parish Council discusses the Consultation in-depth and it was noted that one member of the Parish Council had also attended the Schools Consultation Events which took place on 5th February 2026.

The Parish Council unanimously **approved** to respond as follows:

Introduction

Burrough Green Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposal to establish a 10-place Enhanced Resource Base (ERB) for pupils with Autism (ASD) as their main presenting need at Burrough Green CofE Primary Academy. We recognise the increasing need for high-quality Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) provision across Cambridgeshire and support efforts to ensure that children with additional needs receive appropriate, specialist support.

At the same time, the Parish Council must also consider the wider implications for the school, the village, and surrounding local community, both in the short-term and for future generations. Having reviewed the consultation documents, attended both consultation events, and engaged with residents, we raise the following points for consideration before any decision is made.

1. Lack of Evidence and Unproven Nature of the Proposed ERB Model

No suitable evidence has been provided, either in the consultation documents or at the consultation events, to demonstrate that the proposed model (a 10-place ERB in a small rural

school) has been successful elsewhere or is supported by research. No data, comparable case studies, evaluation reports, or outcome measures were presented to show that this configuration leads to positive educational, social, or developmental outcomes for either ERB pupils or mainstream pupils.

At the consultation events, presenters referenced:

- A recently opened ERB unit at a Primary school near Ely, but no data was shared and a one-year period is too short to draw meaningful conclusions.
- Allen Edwards Primary School in Lambeth, which has a much larger Autism unit (opened with 15 places, now 30) and a mainstream roll of 375. This is not comparable to Burrough Green due to the scale, demographics, socio-economic context, and with only up to 4% of its roll within the autism unit at opening; Burrough Green would have up to 16% of the roll within the unit (based on the current roll numbers).

Lambeth is a dense, inner-London borough with high deprivation, major housing pressures, and a young, highly diverse population. Burrough Green and surrounding villages are rural, older population, and largely affluent. These fundamentally different contexts make Lambeth an unsuitable comparator for understanding the needs or impacts on a rural community such as ours.

The Parish Council requests:

- a) Evidence from comparable rural ERBs (or similar units) demonstrating that a small, mixed-age ASD provision can deliver strong outcomes.
- b) Data on the impact of similar ERBs on mainstream performance, admissions, behaviour, and staff workload.
- c) Information on how the Local Authority has evaluated the effectiveness of ERBs (or similar), including any independent assessments, and in comparison, to that of a standalone school for children with SEND needs.
- d) Details of how success will be measured, what baseline data will be collected, and how outcomes will be monitored and reported publicly.

Without this evidence, the proposal represents an **untested model whose impact on both mainstream and ASD pupils is uncertain**. Decisions of this importance and scale must be grounded in demonstrable best practice and data, not assumptions.

2. Long-term viability of the mainstream provision

During the consultation events it was noted that the school assured attendees that the future of the school was secured when it converted to an academy, part of the ACT trust, in 2024.

The proposal does not provide sufficient assurance regarding the future of mainstream provision at Burrough Green. The school currently has a roll of 54 pupils against a capacity of 105, which will reduce to 90 (plus 10 ERB places) due to the conversion of a classroom into staff and office space.

The school intends to train all mainstream staff to provide enhanced support for SEND pupils. Indeed, it was stated during the consultation event that this change is likely to be of help to parents in gaining EHCPs / diagnoses for the children who meet the criteria. While this is positive, it is likely to make the school more attractive to families seeking additional support for children with neurodiverse needs, including those without an EHCP. This may shift the school's profile over time.

The proposal also confirms that ERB pupils may have secondary needs such as Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). While integration into the mainstream classes will be supported by dedicated TAs, there remains a risk, perceived or real, of increased disruption in mainstream classes and communal areas.

Although the school has stated its intention to grow mainstream numbers and improve outcomes, there is a real risk that the school could gradually transition into a de-facto specialist destination for children with a wide range of SEND needs. This could make the school less aligned with the needs of local neurotypical pupils (c. 4 out of 5, as stated in the consultations), with significant implications for the wider community.

Allen Edwards Primary school in Lambeth was also mentioned as an example of a school that had maintained its mainstream roll numbers, following the introduction of a similar Autism unit in 2018. Again, this is not a good comparable, as per the socio-economic reasons previously

stated, and because the school at the time of establishing the unit, was rated 'good' by OFSTED with a roll vs capacity of 92%, compared to Burrough Green at 51%.

The Parish Council requests:

- a) A published strategy setting out how the school will maintain a balanced mainstream intake and avoid unintended drift towards a predominantly SEND-focused profile.
- b) A full safeguarding and behavioural impact assessment, including mitigation plans.
- c) Thorough engagement with East Cambridgeshire District Council to understand future housing development opportunities and population growth within the catchment.

The school is a cornerstone of the village and wider community's sustainability and identity. Any substantial changes to the mainstream provision could have **significant consequences for the long-term prosperity and cohesion of the community**, and would potentially impact other local institutions, such as Burrough Green Playgroup.

3. Parking and Transportation

Parking Capacity:

The ERB will require additional staff (potentially 5 or more, depending on the needs of the children), as well as having more visitors, such as therapists, yet the school site does not have sufficient parking capacity (2 free spaces currently). With limited public transport, most staff will travel by car. No provision has been made for additional on-site parking, with the likelihood that these additional cars being parked on Bradley Road.

The addition of +3 parked cars on Bradley Road would remove those spaces from parents who drop-off and pick-up children at the school. There is currently only capacity for around 12 cars, and therefore any reduction is likely to lead to high degrees of frustration from motorists trying to navigate this section, from parents trying to drop-off or collect their children, and gives rise to additional significant safety concerns due to a minority of motorists who decide to drive on the footpath and the village green to overcome the congestion.

The suggestion that staff could use the pub car park, via agreement with the landlord, is not a reliable or long-term solution, and would displace pub patrons to park on Bradley Road.

Transportation of ERB Pupils:

ERB pupils will arrive in up to 10 separate taxis at different times from mainstream pupils. While staggered timings reduces some aspects of peak congestion, risks remain:

- Safeguarding concerns when taxis drop off children at the roadside rather than within the school grounds.
- Significant congestion peaks and safety risks during school events, such as parent assemblies, or when events are being held at the Village Hall.

The Parish Council requests:

- a) Revised development plans including sufficient additional on-site parking for all new staff / visitors and a taxi drop-off zone.
- b) A full highways impact assessment and approval from Cambridgeshire County Council Highways.
- c) A detailed transport plan for all children, including safeguarding for ERB pupil arrivals and departures.

4. Consultation process and supporting documentation:

The consultation did not formally include Brinkley, Westley Waterless, or Carlton-cum-Willingham Parish Councils, these parishes being equally reliant on Burrough Green Primary School. This omission represents a significant failure of due process and undermines democratic engagement.

The documentation provided lacks key assessments, including community impact, equality impact, and alternative options appraisal. Given the scale of the proposed changes, these should be made available for public scrutiny.

The Parish Council requests:

- a) Publication of all relevant assessments before any decision is taken.
- b) A repeat of the full 30-day consultation period, with the following Parish Councils formally included:
 - Brinkley
 - Westley Waterless

- Carlton-cum-Willingham

Conclusion:

Burrough Green Parish Council supports the principle of expanding SEND provision within Cambridgeshire, and is delighted with the reassurance provided, that the future viability is already secured following its conversion to an Academy within the ACT trust. However, the current proposal raises significant concerns regarding the long-term future of the mainstream school, the suitability and evidence base of the proposed ERB model, parking and road safety, and the adequacy of the consultation process.

We wish to emphasise that our perspective takes into account the needs of all children, and recognises the implications for our local community, both in the immediate future and over the longer term. The rapidly evolving technological landscape is bringing about significant and unpredictable changes in the global employment market. In this climate of unprecedented uncertainty, it is entirely understandable that all parents are focused on securing the best possible prospects for their children, especially in a region of such significant opportunities. We firmly believe that only by achieving the highest standards of educational outcomes, **utilising comparable and proven models**, can we ensure that all children are equipped to thrive, whatever the future may bring.

We ask Cambridgeshire County Council, the ACT Trust, and the school's leadership to provide the assurances and evidence requested before proceeding further. The Parish Council remains committed to constructive engagement, to growing the pupil base via sustainable housing development, and to ensuring that both SEND pupils and local families receive the high-quality education provision they deserve, both now and for the generations to come. Motion carried.

Proposed TR Seconded MB

b) Nomination renewal - Asset of Community Value

The Parish Council unanimously **approved** to submit the Asset of community Value nomination for The Bull, Bradley Road, Burrough Green, CB8 9NH. Motion carried. **Proposed TR Seconded MB**

110226/6

DIARY DATES -16th March 2026 6.30pm Burrough Green Reading Room

Meeting closed at 19.30

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K Peck

Clerk and RFO

Burrough Green Parish Council

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T Rusk

Chair

Burrough Green Parish Council

Dated: in draft format and to be signed at the next meeting of the Parish Council in line with legislation