



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 10 March 2005 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, K Davies, C Lewis, J. Morden, Mrs A Philips, T Shorrocks, A Smith, Ms S Harding, A Thorpe, P Challis, S Clark Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), K Lock (District), 11 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

Apologies: None

Declaration of Interest: None

05/32 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of Meeting of 10th February 2005 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's new website is up and running www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk and that a letter of thanks should be sent to Mr John Hannawin of i-next for setting up the web site, his kind contribution to the community and for all the help and training support his company has given to the Clerk and Chairman. At present approximately 40 per day are visiting the site.
- The Chairman made a formal apology to Mrs Edna Challis for the upset caused to her over an incident on the Fairground 12 months ago. The apology was made from the Parish Council as a whole. Having investigated the incident the chairman felt that not one individual was responsible and consequently felt that a unequivocal and universal apology was appropriate.

05/33 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock gave his report to the Parish Council which included a report on West Berkshire's budget which is to increase by 3.9%, the second lowest in Berkshire and the new average Bank "D" tax is £1,062.90 an annual rise of £39.90. Fire Service, Police and Parish Council precept charges will be extra. The Education Capital Programme has been set just below £4m, this includes £250,000 for classrooms at Willink and smaller sums to expand Mortimer St Mary's and to modernise Mortimer St Johns.

05/34 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 14th February and 2nd March 2005 when 11 plans were considered.

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| 04/03087/FULD | 6 King Street. Demolition of house and workshops; erection of two pairs of semi-detached houses. No objection |
| 04/03064/HOUSE | Redwoods (formerly St John's March), The Street. Change of fenestration to earlier application. No objection – applicant has taken note of earlier concern. |
| 05/03064/HOUSE | 60-62 Victoria Road (Spratley's Garage – rear single storey extension to replace office space removed by showroom. No objection |
| 05/00099/HOUSE | 6 Church Farm Barns. Extension to provide disabled bathroom facilities and equipment storage. Object: Whilst fully sympathetic to the need for this facility we must object to the encroaching onto agricultural land as to permit this development would set a precedent. |
| 05/00257/TELE56 | Burghfield Water Tower, Padworth Road. Addition of 6 antennas and 2 dishes (0.6m) to existing 35m tower on new head frame with 2 small cabinets at ground. No objection. |
| 05/00329/OUTD | Land adjoining 37 Stephens Close. Chalet bungalow with new access, garage, a new shared access and replacement garage to serve 37 Stephens Close (for Sovereign Housing Association). Object: The Parish Council do not object in principle to the development of this land but object to this proposal: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Out of keeping with adjacent properties. 2. The garden of No 37 is reduced out of all proportion to the land available. 3. Access is inadequate. The hammerhead is already over congested by parked |

- vehicles.
4. The site would be better served by access from Stephens Firs.
- 05/00331/OUTD Land adjoining to the rear of 14 Stephens Close. Construction of 3 residential units (for Sovereign Housing Association). No objection.
- 05/00340/FUL Wheats Farm, Nightingale Lane. Boarding kennels and cesspool change of use.
No objection:
1. Would accept the officers' recommendation as to whether this is an acceptable change of use of agricultural land.
 2. Architecturally uninspiring. Would look for a condition requiring landscaping and tree screening.
- 05/00375/HOUSE 6 Orchard Road. Conservatory to rear. No objection.
- 05/00363/HOUSE 29 Groves Lea. Conservatory. No objection.
- Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:
- 04/02502/HOUSE 20 Windmill Road. Detached garage. Approval
- 04/02135/FULMAJ 34 St John's Road. Demolition of existing property and re-develop with 14 (all 3 bedroom) dwellings). Refusal.
- 04/02657/HOUSE 29 Stephens Close. Two storey side and rear extension. Refusal.
- 04/02837/FUL Land adjoining Mortimer Hill Farm. Re-location of path and cycle tract to east of site. Approval.
- 04/02862/HOUSE 29 Stephens Close. Porch to front. Approval.
- 04/02927/FUL 72 Victoria Road. Extension to doctors' surgery. Withdrawn.

An application has been received – 05/00226/DEMO to demolish the Mortimer Mens Club under section 31 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Cllr Morden has spoken with the case officer at WBC, Rebecca Tripp, who is endeavouring to see whether the building can be listed. Although it is of little architectural merit it has nevertheless been part of The Street scene since 1890's it is doubtful that listing will be achieved. Assuming that Englefield Estates intend to re-develop the site there seems little that can be gained by the removal of the club. Do they still intend to push a road onto the Street, wider perhaps than the existing proposal? It was felt it would still cause a considerable traffic hazard and the development of the site, retaining the club would require access from Pitfield Lane. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Sir William Benyon stressing the Parish Council's grave concern at this proposal to demolish the Club building as this will appear to achieve little if anything.

Appeal Decision: 03/02414/FUL Land to the rear of Serena, Birch Lane. Four bedroom dwelling with attached garage. The comments from the Planning Inspector were "Overall I conclude that in a built up settlement such as Mortimer, where development and infilling has taken place over a long period, no significant harm would be caused to the living conditions of neighbours by the proposed development in this secluded area at the end of Birch Lane. The appeal has been allowed and planning permission should be granted.

Tree Preservation Order 2004: Land at Squirrels Lodge, West End Road. No representations or objections have been received in the statutory time. The T.P.O. is now effective from 8th March 2005. Trees protected 3 oak and 3 beech.

Mortimer Hill Development: The Chairman reported:

1. The Parish Council contacted West Berkshire Council asking for confirmation that the ecological protection measures relating to the planning consent had been carried out relating to the newt proof fencing, directional posts for bats and the protection of trees. West Berkshire Enforcement Officer confirmed that the above measures are all in place to the satisfaction of the Ecology Officer and Countryside and Environment and no further action is necessary. The Parish Council are still not convinced the correct protection had been put in place, especially following discussion with Kennet Valley that afternoon. It appears that newts are likely to have become active and migrate towards ponds for breeding recently. The work already done by the developer was felt to have already impacted the newt population. Cllr Lock is to investigate this and report back to the next meeting.
2. The Parish Council contacted the Enforcement Officer at West Berkshire Council as it was a pre-condition on the planning approval for the Mortimer Hill Site that a roundabout be installed prior to work commencing on the site. The reply received from WBC was that the roundabout has yet to be put in place because of conditions imposed by the Highways Authority in respect of the ES Pipelines gas installation in Mortimer. The Highways

Department will sanction the build as soon as the gas installation works exceed one thousand metres from the site.

3. The Parish Council contacted the Enforcement Officer regarding the erection of a sales office, flag poles and car park on the site of 3 Hammond Heath where planning permission has been granted to demolish and replace the original dwelling house with one private dwelling house. WBC enforcement have replied that as the land is considered to be adjoining the 120 home site it is covered under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 and therefore the site benefits from this legislation and no other action is being considered. This goes against assurances given by the developers when they discussed both the larger development and the more recent application on Hammonds Heath. Cllr Lock is to investigate this and report back to the next meeting.
4. The Clerk was also asked to check with WBC on the brick colour approved for the Mortimer Hill Development as yellow bricks are being used for some of the new houses and it was thought that it was agreed that red bricks were to be used to blend in with the rest of the village (which is mainly Victorian red brick).

05/35 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

- i. **Update on Brewery Common Title:** Cllr Davies reported that the Council is still waiting to hear back from the Land Registry and the solicitors are to chase next week.
- ii. **Update on Brewery Common gas main:** Michelle Sherman of West Berkshire Council has forwarded a letter received from Chris Raven of Land Services Ltd (consultants for Transco) who asks for a site meeting with the Parish Council to try and secure an easement, the Parish Council have stated that they require the pipe to be removed. **The Clerk** to arrange meeting.
- iii. **Update on TRL Traffic Survey & The Street:** Cllr Davies advised that TRL gave a presentation on the traffic survey at the Roads Footpaths and Commons Committee on 21st February. Most of the data collected from the 6 locations in the village is in the form of statistics, tables and graphs etc:
Speeding: worst on West End Road (Turners Arms); next worst on The Street (St Mary's School and the Mortimer Club); least in the centre of the village. Range from 87% over limit down to 27%.
Weekly total of Vehicles: St Mary's School to St Johns 24,000 approx; Dad's Shop 18,000 approx; Turners Arms 16,000 approx; library 12,000 approx.
Percentage of Classes of Vehicles: Cars 92% approx; commercial vehicles 7% approx; motor cycles 1% approx.
 The report has recommended to reduce speeding, use "Vehicle Activated Signs" (as alternatives to cameras) comprising roundels but no indication of actual speeds. More generally: emphasise environmental as well as safety concerns. Also consider altering junction at St John's Church. The Roads Footpaths and Commons Committee will study the report and make recommendations to the Council in due course.
- iv. **Update Car Park West End Road: Public Car Park (adjoining the Fire Station)**
 Cllr Davies reported that the Clerk and the Vice-Chairman on 3rd March 2005 met two representatives of the Fire Authority to discuss, informally and off the record, the future, and legal status, of the car park. It is virtually certain that the Fire Authority as freehold landlords will require the negotiation of a new lease in place of the one granted by Berkshire County Council in 1980. (They are entitled to terminate that lease on 6 months' notice). It would therefore be appropriate for the Parish Council to seek valuation advice on negotiating a reasonable rent (and possibly also a reasonable purchase price for buying the freehold in order to get full owner-occupation if desired). It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk could obtain advice on a valuation of the car park and report back to the next meeting. Cllrs Harding and Lock were asked to find out whether the provision of the car park was part of the current parking restrictions in West End Road.
To Agree to repair car park fence (3 panels) at a cost of £327.83 inc VAT: It was agreed the Clerk would get additional quotes for this.

05/36 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

Report: Cllr Blagden gave an update on the monthly Fairground maintenance.

- i. **To consider purchase of brush cutter for use by the Fairground Working Party:** This was

- held over until next month.
- ii. **To agree to cut the outside hedge and ditch along the Fairground boundary with Windmill Road and Hammonds Heath at a cost of £240 plus VAT:** It was unanimously agreed to accept the above quotation and the Clerk to action.
 - iii. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that the play area appears to be ok and asked whether the custodian could finish the painting of the equipment. Clerk to action.
 - iv. **Resolution Fairground Trust: The council hereby authorises the trustees named below Graham Puddephatt and Keith Davies to apply to the Charity Commissioners on the Council's behalf for a scheme for the Charity described in Part 1 of the application document.** Cllr Davies proposed the above resolution and was seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed. Cllr Davies reported that all the trustees are in place apart from the nomination from the Annual Parish Meeting which will take place on the 7th April. It was agreed that Cllr Davies could look into what sort of lease would be applied for.
 - v. **Update on Fairground Refurbishment Project:**
Cllr Smith reported that the sponsorship for the London Marathon has been received and sponsor forms will be held at the Parish Office, Library and shops throughout the village. A fundraising "Summer Ball" for the pavilion project is to be held by the Cricket Club in September to celebrate 115th anniversary of cricket being played on the Fairground. Nick Carter from West Berkshire Council has advised that the project would be eligible for a £40,000 grant from SEEDA.
Agree funds up to £200 for architect's fees for the pavilion project. It was unanimously agreed that up to £300 may be spent on new architect's drawings.
- 05/37 **Cemetery:** Cllr Thorpe gave a report on the Cemetery.
- 05/38 **Communications Committee:**
- i. **Report:** Cllr Blagden reported that the next six week computer familiarisation course dates will be announced shortly and there are still a couple of places available.
 - ii. **Business Forum:** The second Business Forum is scheduled for Thursday 17th March at 6:30pm in the Methodist Church Hall. Responses to the last newsletter have so far and almost without exception been very favourable. The next newsletter is planned to be distributed over the weekend of 7/8 May. Sponsorship of the newsletter either in cash or in kind are being investigated and also links between Mortimer Life and the Newsletter explored.
- 05/39 **Update on Stratfield Mortimer Parish Plan Action Plan and meeting with Nick Carter WBC:** The Clerk reported that a meeting took place with Nick Carter of West Berkshire Council on the 23rd February and the Action Plan was updated and reviewed. This will be circulated as soon as it is ready.
- 05/40 **Burghfield/Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group (Police Reassurance Project):** The Chairman reported that the first meeting of the Burghfield (and neighbourhood group,) consisting of Aldermaston, Padworth, Ufton Nervet, Sulhamstead, Wokefield, Stratfield Mortimer, Burghfield and Beech Hill will hold it's first meeting on the 15th March 2005 at Burghfield Village Hall. Cllrs Davies, Philips and Blagden and the Clerk are to attend. Inspector Andy Talbot is to talk about the new project at the Annual Parish Meeting on the 7th April in St John's Hall.
- 05/41 **Update on The Rural Housing Trust Housing Needs Survey:** The Clerk reported that the Housing Needs Survey for the Rural Housing Trust had now been received and will be placed on the Agenda next month.
- 05/42 **Update on Leisure in the Rural Communities Initiative:** Cllr Smith reported that the £2,000 grant had been agreed by West Berkshire Council. Health Walks: The first Mortimer "Health Walk" is scheduled for Tuesday 12th April at 10 am for about an hour starting at the Fairground Car Park. Thereafter there will be a walk a week for six weeks until 12th May. Youth Club: A meeting is being arranged with local volunteers and West Berkshire Council LIPS project to initiate this project and the outreach worker who visits Willink School will be asking pupils what they would like to see. Seniors Club: Possible funding from West Berkshire Council is being investigated and a group of interested seniors and a local project leader is being looked into.
- 05/43 **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill – outline of measures.** Held over until the next meeting.

- 05/44 **Parish Councillor Vacancy:** The Clerk reported that there are two councillor vacancies as both Cllr Tony Jones and Cllr Phil Scrase have resigned both due to work commitments. These will be advertised and the monitoring officer informed and the previous interview committee will make recommendations for co-option of new councillors to the Council.
- 05/45 **To consider subscriptions to Newbury Weekly News and Reading Chronicle at a cost of approx 98p per week in light of new licencing regulations:** It was unanimously agreed that the council have the above two local newspapers delivered on a weekly basis.
- 05/46 **To consider renewal of the Berkshire Association of Local Councils Annual Subscription at a cost of £657.25:** It was unanimously agreed to pay the annual subscription to BALC, due in April, and continue to belong to the association of Local Councils.
- 05/47 **Finance and General Purposes Committee – Report:** The Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 3rd March and the following recommendations were made to the council:
i) to agree additional grant for Burghfield and Mortimer Friday Club (year 05/06) for £350 in addition to grant of £350 already agreed: It was unanimously agreed that a total of £700 be granted to the Burghfield and Mortimer Friday Club.
To consider funding 3 copies of a book on the history of the war Memorial: Maj. John Kemp has produced a 300 page (approx) illustrated document on the Mortimer War Memorial including details of all the people whose name appear on the memorial, the date and location of death etc. This only copy of this document is kept at St Mary's School and the Finance and General Purposes Meeting recommend that the Parish Council consider funding further copies the Library (so all residents can have access to it) and County Archives. It was agreed in principle to fund this but the Clerk was asked to obtain costing for printing and making the document into a proper bound book.
To agree new salary structure for Clerk: The Clerk presented a report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on the new national salary structure for Clerk's as agreed by the NALC and SLCC. Upon the recommendation of that committee it was unanimously resolved to implement the new pay structure with effect from 1st April 2005.
- 05/48 **Finance:**
 In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Puddephatt proposed that they be paid; Cllr Thorpe seconded this. Carried unanimously. It was also agreed that £13,500 could be transferred from the Fairground Refurbishment Account to the Current Account.
- i. Clerk's Salary.
 - ii. Clerk's/Custodian's Tax and NI
 - iii. Clerk's Expenses
 - iv. Custodian's Salary
 - v. Wicksteed Leisure – final payment for installation of slide (April 04) after satisfactory conclusion of complaint £1,078.30 inc VAT.
 - vi. Thrive - gardening contract Cemetery 45.00.
 - vii. Aldermaston Pottery – SMPC 2005 Community Award £160.00.
 - viii. G Puddephatt – reimbursement for purchase of new telephone and headset for Parish Office £74.22.
 - ix. K Lock – reimbursement for purchase of black sacks (West Berkshire Council £10.80.
 - x. Thames Water – water trough Fairground £4.24.
 - xi. West Berkshire Council – annual invoice dog bin emptying £409.73 inc VAT.
 - xii. Mortimer Methodist Church – hall rental for period November 2003 to April 2005 £463.00.
 - xiii. Butlers Lands – waste disposal Fairground £88.13 inc VAT.
- 05/49 **Correspondence:**
- Letter from Mr E Mazzawi asking if the council would consider selling a portion of Brewery Common. The Clerk to reply.
 - Letter from Mr J Higgins re procedure for provision of streetlights. Clerk to reply.
 - Minutes of Kennet & Pang Valley Area Forum held on 26th January 2005.
 - Letter from West Berkshire Council re District Parish Conference on 22 March and a

planning road show to be held on the 6th June 2005.

- Information on National Association of Local Councils 23rd to 25th September 2005

05/50 **Minor Matters to Report:**

- Cllr Morden reported that he attended a meeting on 9th March of the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee. The provision of a Skate Board Park at the Willink School/Leisure Centre had been discussed but is unlikely. The 1986 Education Act and the lease agreed between Newbury District Council, Berkshire County Council and the school governors place control of school buildings and the school grounds, outside the school day with the school governing body. Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's contribution to the Willink Leisure Centre will be £7,270 for the coming year. The figure for usage for the full 12 months to March 2005 will exceed 100,000 attendances.
- Cllr Morden advised that the local branch of the RNLI had raised £20,000 and had now purchased an in-shore life boat to be named "Spirit of Mortimer". It was agreed to write and congratulate the local branch of the RNLI.

Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 14th April 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

The date for the Annual Parish Meeting is Thursday 7th April at 7:30 pm.

The Meeting closed at 10:20 p.m.