



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 8 September 2005 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: K Davies (Chairman), P Blagden, C Lewis, J. Morden, Mrs A Philips, T Shorrocks, P Challis, D Ives, G Puddephatt, S Clark, A Smith, Ms S Harding (until 8pm), N Kiley, G Parry, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

Apologies: Councillors: A Thorpe and K Lock (District)

Declaration of Interest: Cllr A Philips 05/147 and 05/157(vi) and Cllr G Puddephatt 05/153.

05/141 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 14th July 2005 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

05/119(vi) The Clerk reported that the seat kindly donated by McNicholas Plc has been installed in The Street outside The Fairground.

05/58(ii) Cllr Puddephatt circulated a plan and costing for planting & maintaining three public open spaces in the village to be paid for by potential sponsorship. It was agreed that further details may be obtained.

05/142 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Harding reported that the planning application is currently in progress for Windmill Court to convert the old residential wing into 7 one and two bedroom flats (for extra care) and that each flat will have telecare etc. There will be no change to the existing flats. Work is to commence 3 months after the contract is completed for the sale of the site to Sovereign and the work will take approximately 6 months (internal changes only). The house is to be used as a site office and then separated and let. West Berkshire is to have 100% nominations to the flats. Regarding the footpath in The Street West Berkshire now have the ownership details from The Avenue to Kiln Lane and also for the covenant. They are to proceed with the Kiln Lane stretch first then will review the remaining stretch if that is completed (but they will remove the covenant in the meantime if possible). They are awaiting comments on the redwood from the Tree Officer. The review of the extension of the 30mph speed limit (at the 40 mph section from The Avenue to Monkton's Lane) is to go on the review list for 6 months time.

05/143 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met three times since the last Council Meeting on the 27th July, 18th August and 6th September 2005 when 13 plans were considered.

05/01269/FULD Windmill Court. Conversion of part of existing building into 7 two bed flats for elderly persons. No objections but we would once again raise our concern over the continued lack of use of the warden's house.

05/01529/HOUSE Meadow House, Turks Lane. Proposed loft conversion to provide den/storage, new dormer to rear and velux roof windows to side elevations. No objections.

05/01416/REM The Colt House, Sweetzers Piece. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 new dwellings. No objection.

05/01535/OUTD Land adjoining and to the rear of 14 Stephens Close. Erection of two residential units and new access. No objection (access is to be onto Stephens Road).

05/01590/FULD Land to rear of Birch Cottage, Birch Lane. Dwelling House.
Object: Irrespective of the Planning Inspector allowing, on appeal, the erection of a similar property on the adjacent site (Serena, Birch Lane) our objections to that development apply equally to this application (see 03/02414/FUL)

05/01623/HOUSE AMENDED 9 Stephens Close. Single storey rear extension. No objection.

05/01633/HOUSE 4 Spring Lane. New garage. No objection.

05/01682/HOUSE Hathaways Cottage, Kiln Lane. Single storey side and front extension. No objection.

05/01685/FULD Land to rear of Serena, Birch Lane. One detached 4 bedroom dwelling (amendment –

- 05/01743/FULD velux window in roof space). No objection.
Methodist Church and Hall, West End Road. Creation of new entrance lobby and replacement of flat roofs with pitched. No objection.
- 0501724/HOUSE 6 Church Farm Barns. Extension to provide disabled persons play/day space accommodation. No objection. The earlier application (05/00099) was allowed on compassionate grounds. This must not be used as a precedent for future building or extensions on agricultural land.
- 05/01919/HOUSE West End House, 1 West End Road. New boundary wall and gates. No objection.
05/01685/FULD Land to rear of Serena, Birch Lane. One detached 4 bedroom dwelling (amendment – velux windows in roof space). No objection.
- 05/01825/OUT.MAJ Land adjacent to Mortimer Railway Station. Outline application for a residential development (16 dwellings) and associated road and infrastructure improvement including designated car parking.
Object: This outline application must be taken as a whole, not the entrance alone:
1. A major development outside the settlement boundary would set a dangerous precedent.
 2. Unacceptable change of use of agricultural land.
 3. There is a considerable area of new road, aprons and hard standing which will drain into and pollute the Foudry Brook. This is a clay area and soakaways will not be effective.
 4. The number of suggested station car parking spaces is not achievable if realistic space dimensions are applied. A reduction from the existing 50 is more likely.
 5. The proposed routing of Calor Gas Lorries through a housing development is inappropriate. The entrance road is likely to be congested by parked cars unable to find space in the station car park.
 6. Flooding has occurred (2000 and 2005) in the northern corner of this site. The Environmental Agency is planning to increase the bunds but details are not yet known.

Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:

- 05/01623/HOUSE 81 The Avenue. Rear extension, first floor roof conversion. Approval.
04/00523/LBC Great Park Farm. Reinstate earlier slate roof, infilling previously formed openings associated repairs. Approval.
- 05/01321/FUL Horse & Groom, The Street. New pitched and flat roof extension to rear, covering front window sills. Approval.
- 05/01416/REM The Colt House, Sweetzers Piece. Demolition of existing bungalow. Erection of 2 new dwellings. Refusal.
- 05/01063/FULD Serena, Birch Lane. New 4 bedroom dwelling to rear of existing property. Refusal.
05/01529/HOUSE Meadow House, Turks Lane. Loft conversion, dormer window to rear, velux to side. Approval.
- 05/01100/FUL The surgery, 72 Victoria Road. Removal of existing S106 agreement, erection of new single storey extension to front etc. Refusal.
- 05/01269/FULD Windmill Court, Windmill Road. Conversion of part of existing into 7 two bed flats for elderly people. Approval.
- 05/01535/OUTD Land to rear of 14 Stephens Close. Erection of two residential units. Approval.

Cllr Morden reported that Notice of Appeals against West Berkshire Council's decisions to refuse applications have been received in respect of:

- 05/01218/FUL Land to rear of 33-37 West End Road.
05/01416/REM The Colt House, Sweetzers Piece.
05/00336/DEM Mortimer Mens Club, The Street.

These are to be heard at an informal hearing to be held at West Berkshire Council Offices at a date to be arranged.

An informal hearing was conducted over 3 days on 16, 17 and 18 July both at West Berkshire Council's offices and on site in respect of the refusal to approve 14 houses on the site of Garth House, St John's Road. The Parish Council was represented by Cllr Morden who spoke in support of West Berkshire Council's decision. The Inspector's decision will be made public in about 7 weeks from the date of the Enquiry.

Wokefield Park: The exceedingly large advertisement which has appeared at the Grazeley Road entrance to Wokefield Park has been drawn to the attention of West Berkshire Council. Style Conferences has been informed that a retrospective planning application must be submitted. As far as the use of the site for BMW personnel training, this comes within the terms of the approved planning applications which gave permission for the site to be used for training purposes. The number of trainees who can be accommodated on site is finite and

the number of vehicle movements – 276 car parking spaces should cause no problem.

05/144 **Update on Village Design Statement:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that a 2 page questionnaire will be delivered to every house in the parish (with the newsletter). This has been drawn up as part of the consultation process for the Village Design Statement and Paula Amorelli of West Berkshire Council was consulted on the questionnaire and her comments and suggestions were included in the document. A ‘drop-in’ public meeting is to be held on Saturday 17th September from 10:30 to 12:30 in St John’s Hall.

05/145 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

Report: No report. Next Committee meeting to be held on 3rd October 2005.

- i. **Update on Brewery Common Title:** Still no further information from the Land Registry. Clerk to chase solicitors.
- ii. **Brewery Common Management:** The Chairman and Clerk met on site with Mr Sowden of West Berkshire Council to discuss the mowing arrangements for the common. Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council own the common and West Berkshire Council manage it. Mr Sowden confirmed that 2 mowings a year are scheduled although it appears that one mowing a year has been missed recently. It was agreed that West Berkshire Council will inform the Parish Council in advance when the grass is to be cut in future. An additional cut could be programmed in but this would have to be paid for by SMPC at a cost of £450. It was agreed to review the situation in a year’s time.
- iii. **Update on Brewery Common gas main compensation claim:** The Chairman reported that the claim figure (supplied by the District Valuer) plus costs and legal expenses has been supplied to West Berkshire Council legal department who are to serve a claim on Land Services (Transco) for the trespass.
- iv. **Update on installation of ‘dragons teeth’ Brewery Common:** The Chairman reported that in order to install ‘dragons teeth’ (wooden stakes) around the edges of both sides of the common the Parish Council (as owners) have to apply to The Secretary of State for permission under Sec. 194 of the Law of Property Act 1925. He confirmed that the lengthy application form has now been received from West Berkshire Council (who acts as the Parish Council agents and manager of the common) and this will be now be completed by both parties and submitted to the Secretary of State.
- v. **Update on Traffic/Parking Issues/Footpath The Street:** See District Councillor’s report (05/142).
- vi. **Update Car Park West End Road:** The Chairman reported that a letter had been received from West Berkshire Council asking the Parish Council not to take any further action on this for the time being as the District Council are in renewed discussions with the Fire Authority about the ownership of the land.

05/146 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

Report: Cllr Blagden gave an update, and distributed a report, on the monthly Fairground maintenance and grass cutting arrangements.

- i. **Monthly Area Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that the play area has survived intact over the summer holidays. **The Clerk** is to chase the contractor regarding the minor repairs to the equipment and the replacement of the clatter bridge.
- ii. **Insurance Cover:** The Chairman reported that the council’s insurers have warned that the current Public Liability Policy does not cover claims for damage or injury caused by fires lit on the Fairground. For this reason the lighting of fires on the Council’s property is strictly prohibited, and the Clerk is advising Fairground users accordingly. **The Clerk** is to make further enquiries as to insurance cover in relation to fires.
- iii. **Update on Pavilion Project, SEEDA Grant application:** Cllr Smith reported that in order to speed up the fundraising the working party has agreed to meet every 2 weeks at present. It has been agreed to seek planning permission for the biggest of the current designs (£450,000). There is a meeting to progress the SEEDA grant application on 20th September.
- iv. **Fairground Trust:** No report.

05/147 **Cemetery:** In the absence of Cllr Thorpe the Clerk read out a copy of his report: Cllr Philips declared an interest.

Committee members met representatives of the Parochial Church Council at St Mary’s Churchyard

on 30 August 2005. The following points discussed and agreed on were:

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council cannot agree to renew the present contract with Ian Philips (after the present contract expires in October) in relation to the upkeep of the churchyard. This is because of potential liability if any of the contractor's personnel suffer harm because of dangerous condition in the churchyard. Consideration might be given by SMPC to paying an equivalent amount direct to the PCC, but the Parish Council would need to agree to this and include the prospective cost in their annual budget for 2006/07. Committee members are to meet with Thrive on the 22nd September to discuss the present contract.

- 05/148 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that another six week beginner's computer course is planned to start in the third week of September in the Methodist Hall. Training in the use of MS Publisher started on 6th September for three weeks. Staff from WBC are to run the first of three courses for students in the library, who attended the beginners sessions, a hands-on experience of using email and accessing the internet. The next Business Forum meeting has been delayed until October as details such as guest speaker, location and meeting time have yet to be finalised. Issue 5 of the Parish Council Newsletter is to be distributed on 10/11 September. A vote of thanks was offered to Cllr Shorrock for his work on the layout. Hydro Logic Limited has kindly agreed, again to print the September issue (1600 copies) and E J Spratley Limited has also kindly committed to contribute £50 towards the costs.
- 05/149 **Audit Report from Hacker Young for year ending 31.3.05:** The Clerk reported that Messrs Hacker Young (the council's external auditors) have returned the Annual Return for the year to 31 March 2005 duly audited. A copy of the public notice advising the conclusion of the audit and that the annual inspection is available for inspection will be advertised on the Parish Council notice boards for 14 days.
- 05/150 **Update on The Rural Housing Trust:** No update.
- 05/151 **Update on new car park Mortimer Station:** Cllr Puddephatt reported that a further meeting had been held on 5th September with the land owner (Englefield Estates) and the preferred option would be a shared profit arrangement so that the income from the new car park would be shared between SMPC and Englefield Estates.
- 05/152 **Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) Report:** Cllr Davies reported that he attended the NAG meeting (along with Cllr Ives) on Tuesday 6th September. Cllr Davies has been elected Chairman of NAG pro tem. It was agreed that the next public meeting for Mortimer provisionally to be held in November will be postponed until the end of January 2006.
- 05/153 **BT: Phone Box Review Mortimer:** Previously circulated to all councillors. The Chairman reported that BT has an obligation to provide access to public payphones to meet the needs of consumers but payphones continue to decline and are not cost effective. There are currently 2 street based payphones in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer (one Victoria Road and the other outside the old pumping station, Grazeley Road). BT therefore proposes that these two phone boxes be converted to a cashless payment option as an alternative to removal. In light of the above it was carried by a majority vote that the Parish Council had no objection to support the cashless option for the two telephone boxes in question (this does not include the telephone box at Mortimer Railway Station). **Clerk** to complete and send off the return to BT.
- 05/154 **WBC Underage Drinking in West Berkshire Survey:** Previously circulated to all councillors. This was discussed and the **Clerk** to reply to the questionnaire as agreed and send to West Berkshire Council.
- 05/155 **Finance: To ratify payment of Accounts for August:** Proposed by The Chairman and seconded by Cllr Smith.
- i. Clerk's Salary.
 - ii. Clerk's Custodian's Tax & NI.
 - iii. Custodian's salary.
 - iv. RBWM (Pension).
 - v. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery/Churchyard) £497.85 inc VAT.
 - vi. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground) £173.44 inc VAT.
 - vii. Dads Shop £69.00.
 - viii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £763.75 inc VAT.

- ix. K Lock (Purchase of black sacs WBC) £32.40.
- x. Bridgewood Landscape Services (grass cutting Alfred Palmer Field & felling of tree Fairground) £435.00.
- xi. J Bull (installation of new seat The Street) £63.00.

05/156 **Finance:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Clark proposed that they be paid; Cllr Kiley seconded this. Carried unanimously.

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. Clerk's/Custodian's Tax and NI.
- iii. Clerk's Expenses.
- iv. Custodian's Salary.
- v. RBWM (Pension).
- vi. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery/Churchyard) £497.85 inc VAT.
- vii. Bridgewood Landscape Services (grass cutting Alfred Palmer Field) £80.00.
- viii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £763.75 inc VAT
- ix. Thrive (Cemetery Maintenance August) £45:00.
- x. Dads Shop Ltd - not submitted.
- xi. Thames Water (water trough Fairground £6.37.
- xii. Open Spaces Society (annual subscription renewal) £30.00.
- xiii. CPRE (annual subscription) £25.00.
- xiv. Stratfield Mortimer Fair Ground Charity £500.00.
- xv. SLCC (Regional Conference Clerk & Chairman) £75.00.
- xvi. The District Valuer (valuation of Brewery Common) £270.25
- xvii. Forbuoys Ltd (delivery of newspapers) £8.10 (2 months).

05/157 **Correspondence:**

- 1. West Berkshire Council. Notification that the Ramblers' work party are to voluntarily clear public rights of way in Mortimer every second Friday until all the work is completed.
- 2. West Berkshire Council. Information on the Local Area Agreement in West Berkshire.
- 3. Information on the Campaign for the Sustainable Communities Bill. This is a private members bill.

05/158 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- 1. The Library will be closed for one week on the 26th September. It will therefore not be possible to open the Parish Office on Tuesday 28th or Thursday 30th September. The District Councillors Saturday Surgery will also not take place on 2nd October 2005.
- 2. It was agreed that as the Horse & Groom public house is to be closed for refurbishment the gate to the Fairground car park will close at sunset from 15th October for six weeks. **Clerk** to put up notices.
- 3. It was agreed that in order to regularise the matter of when members of the public may be permitted to speak at Parish Council Meetings that a resolution be placed on the next agenda.
- 4. It was agreed that **Cllr Puddephatt and the Clerk** are to look into the access arrangements to the Fairground by the Cricket Club.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13th October 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:15 p.m.