

**Minutes of the Longcot Parish Council
held in the
Village Community Room, Kings Lane, Longcot
on Thursday 4 September 2014 at 7.30pm**

Present: Phil Young, Chairman, Andi Cunningham, John Barneby, John Bridge, District Councillor Simon Howell and Tina Brock, Clerk.

123/14 Apologies for Absence: Alan Rich (prior commitment), District Councillor Elaine Ware (prior commitment) and County Councillor Yvonne Constance (prior Commitment). These apologies were received.

124/14 Declaration of Interests. Prejudicial interest for:

Minute 131/14 iii John Bridge is the applicant.

Personal interest:

Minute 131/14 iii John Barneby lives close to the site and knows applicant.

Minute 131/14 iii Andi Cunningham knows applicant.

Minute 131/14 iii Phil Young knows applicant.

125/14 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 31 July 2014 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

126/14 Matters Arising:

a. **Finance Payment of Accounts.** It was RESOLVED to authorise the payments below:

	Net Cost	VAT	Total £
Payments received:			
VWHDC 2 nd half of precept			2,750.00
Payments now due:			
AWBS (bark for play area)	59.58	11.92	71.50
Thames Water (allotments)			14.42
T Brock (clerk's July salary)			144.00
Bridge Engineering (repairs to tennis courts)			5.00
T Brock (clerk's August salary)			144.00
RoSPA (play area inspection)	71.00	14.20	85.20
T Brock (clerk's reimbursements July to Aug)			31.84

As at 26 August 2014 the Current Account was in credit at £2,355.33 and the Deposit Account was in credit at £3,888.83.

REPORTS

127/14 Report from County Councillor. None present.

128/14 Report from District Councillor. Simon Howell reported:

The Council discussed the problems caused by the diverted traffic during the major roadworks carried out on the A420. It was agreed that a letter of complaint would be sent to Oxfordshire County Council regarding the lack of communication between the parties involved.

The A417 at Challow Bridge would be closed whilst work was carried out by Network Rail.

The Local Plan 2031 would be out for consultation in November 2014.

FINANCE

129/14 Annual Budget 2014/15. The income and expenditure figures and bank reconciliation were noted.

130/14 Expenditure

- i. not exceeding £200.00 for repairs to the play equipment at The Dash play area and community tennis courts was AGREED.
- ii. not exceeding £200.00 for repairs to the bench on The Dash was AGREED. Andi Cunningham would arrange for the repairs to be carried out.

131/14 Update on other current matters. The Chairman reported:

David Jeacock, Solicitors was in negotiations with Wales and West after an underground cable had been placed on Parish land without first obtaining signed permission. A wayleave agreement with Wales & West had been executed in escrow conditional upon completion.

Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) requested a Wayleave request for a new underground cable along the edge of The Village Green. The Chairman had passed the request to David Jaecock, Solicitors.

PLANNING

132/14 Submitted Planning Applications. The Council would submit the following observations:

ii ii	P14/V1745/FUL P14/V1816/LB	<p>Land adjacent to Red Gables, Longcot, Oxon <i>Conversion of existing stables into a three bedroom dwelling and conversion of existing animal shelter into a garage/workshop. (Re-submission of withdrawn application P14/V1116/FUL.)</i></p> <p>OBJECTS to this application for the following reasons: We enclose the following maps of our village that show: The latest VWHDC accurate drawings of our drainage system as per our Longcot village flood plan (which has been in place and managed since 2007). The details of the houses flooded surrounding the development site in 2007. The 1879 map of Longcot that comes from the Berkshire records office, as Longcot was Berkshire before the boundary change. This map shows the location of a pond on the far side of this site, which is no longer there. The Thames Water map that covers the site in question. Although Longcot is not flagged on the EA map as a flood zone, we are on the VWHDC and OCC flood maps as we are part of their flood forum group, but this is not because of the village being within a flood plain. Its because we are on clay and are surrounded by a large land mass that drains across us as it travels towards the river Ock which starts from the brooks and springs in Longcot. The village has been badly flooded over the years and the houses next to this site have been flooded in both 1994 and 2007. The Parish Council did not have a flood management plan in place until after the 2007 floods as we had not understood the effects and implications that building has on the drainage of a village and the increased risks of flooding to existing houses. We now work very hard with The VWDC to ensure that correct plans are in place to minimize the damage to other houses with regards to water management. This plot is most noticeably to be flagged up because of its position with regards to the distance to the main drains, its lack of connection ability and its difficulty in managing water. The surrounding houses to this site flooded very badly in 2007 and it did involve water coming from this site, and moving across the land, as there is no drainage facility at all in situ at present. So the water pours off once the land is saturated and gets away by heading down towards the houses at the lower points. The low points do not just affect the immediate properties, but all of them on the Fernham road and the bottom of Priory Mead as those properties all flooded (refer to the map) Plus the fall of the land is graded towards the lowest point which is on Fernham Road. Made more significant as in the past buildings have been put on the original pond sites, which of course is where the water heads towards. We think it is appropriate to also note here that our soil is heavy clay and this is not therefore practical for simple soak away solutions within any basic SUD system. Our policy is to request that Peter Dela look please at the detailed drainage plans which are not included with the</p>
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application.

Longcot was traditionally a brick manufacturing area as well as a farming village as we have good quality clay, (this combination has been seen to create sink holes in other areas if not managed correctly).

The plans should show details that assure the proposed development would not:

1. Increase risk of flooding to surrounding properties with more ground made over to concrete, plus the bigger and extra roof areas.
2. The disturbance of the ground with relation to the neighbouring properties and subsidence.

This is due to the fact that the older neighbouring houses are built in the traditional way with no modern foundations and so move as the clay shifts, so any huge impact on the local structure by introducing development, could have an effect on the surrounding buildings. **This would need careful structural assessment toward the damage of surrounding properties.**

This planning application does not suggest that the lovely old farm buildings on the site, so important for our village character are carefully brought back to life with care and consideration to our heritage, but instead appears to be about what can be crammed into the space with no consideration to careful design.

We ask that the views of all the adjoining neighbours are taken into consideration as this is not a stand alone site, it really does incorporate walls and buildings of the surrounding properties, which are grade 2 listed.

The dominance of this development is out of keeping with the surrounding grade 2 listed houses and the NPPF states in 58. 'Development should respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials'.

There is virtually no design and access statement and there are no heights or scale shown on any drawing.

The materials that have been submitted appear to be minimal and avoid detail. What has been submitted suggests that materials are of the lowest quality possible listing block and concrete.

We would like to draw the attention of the committee to the development of the old farm buildings in Fernham a few years ago, and how successful the conversion was. Ensuring design and materials were carefully chosen with heritage in mind.

There is a big concern as this site is surrounded by, and was indeed once part of the attached farm houses that are all grade 2 listed.

This means a lot to our village, as all the houses are the villages heritage, and are made from the brick that was made in Longcot, and represent the old part of the village next to the church.

A heritage asset is important not only by its situation but by its setting as stated in the NPPF, so the development needs to be in keeping and sympathetic by way of design (this could be very modern of course, we do not mean exact copy of the original grade 2 houses surrounding the site) but the design should set an example for the heritage future of how the planning allowed for great design along side houses that are 300 years old now.

The NPPF as well as the local saved policies, are clear about the need to conserve (defined as: Conservation: The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.) heritage assets.

Following the existing footprint would fulfil the NPPF need for housing development and re-use of agricultural buildings.

		<p>As this response is also in relation to the listing application on this site, we would like to emphasise that in a designated small village such as Longcot as per your outline plan, it should be most important to be able to protect some of Oxfordshire's heritage.</p> <p>This is important for tourism which is one of our growth markets, so our village needs to retain some of its original character, especially around the oldest buildings and the Church, which this site is part of.</p> <p>Someone at the VWHDC listed our buildings as they realised the importance of heritage, so its important that we protect the small area in our village that has listed buildings from 'out of keeping' construction that in turn loses the impact of the original listed buildings.</p> <p>We have a very healthy bat population in Longcot, this needs preserving and we see no reference to this on the application. If you stand near this site at dusk you will see many large bats enjoying their evening feed. We care that any development should take our wildlife seriously.</p> <p>Longcot as you will know attends all relevant planning committee meetings and has been pro active in wanting the correct development for the village. We are not against building as you know we have some good building projects in our small village, but it is important that the correct decisions are made.</p> <p>In this case the grave concerns are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of flooding on surrounding houses 2. The complete lack of any drainage plans (we enclose the official VWHDC drainage map for Longcot, this highlights the serious problem of this plot) 3. The possible structural damage to adjoining properties with construction that needs to be addressed (note here there are party walls and buildings with Ivy Farm house and Downs Cottage) 4. The design impact and effect on our grade 2 listed buildings. 5. The unknown scale and height of the proposed buildings. 6. The choice of materials submitted. 7. The lack of detail in the design and access statement. 8. Mains sewerage in Longcot. We need to know that the system will cope as we have Thames Water called out regularly to cope with the rising pressure that blows back across the road by the pumping station. 9. When asked on section 12 of P14/V1745/FUL where will surface water be disposed of – the 'soakaways' box has been ticked. We know that this area (note old map of Longcot showing a pond beside the site) will not withstand a soakaway system. We also note that no evaporation tests have been submitted. 10. Structural impact assessment required showing how to ensure that close and attached buildings do not suffer subsidence or damage due to proposed development. <p>Plus this concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre application advice has been ticked on P14/V1816/LB and not ticked on P14/V1745/FUL.
iii	P14/V1794/FUL	<p>Hill View Cottage, Longcot Road, Longcot, Oxon SN7 7TP</p> <p><i>Change of use of existing paddock land to residential and erection of a five bed dwelling with associated parking, garage, garden and new access from Longcot Road.</i></p> <p>John Bridge left the room during discussions.</p> <p>Council was unable to comment on this application due to Councillors</p>

		interests. The Clerk would send a letter requesting that VWHDC Planning Officers look into the following points before a making a final decision: Is the development outside the curtilage of the village? Are OCC Highways satisfied with access to/from the development? Drainage plans are not detailed enough.
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133/14 Notification of Planning Appeal: An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the Council's decision to refuse the following planning applications was noted.

i	P14/V0627/FUL	Roadside Farm Barns, The Green, Longcot, Oxon SN7 7SY
ii	P14/V0628/LB	<i>Conversion of derelict barns to three residential units.</i> Council submitted further comments to the Inspectorate.

134/14 VWHDC Community Governance Review – Final Decision: To amend the boundary of Watchfield Parish to include that part of the housing estate on Majors Road that currently lies in Longcot Parish was noted.

135/14 Update on any other current matters. None.

PLAY AREA

136/14 RoSPA Inspection 2014 of The Dash Play Area, Kings Lane, Longcot reported that the present overall risks for the play space is medium.

John Bridge was thanked for repairing the roundabout.

The play bark had been delivered and would be spread over the slide area within the next few weeks.

Andi Cunningham would arrange for the trees overhanging the roundabout to be cut back.

137/14 Update on any other current matters. Andi Cunningham would email villagers asking for help with the strimming around The Dash play area.

HIGHWAYS

138/14 Update on current matters.

The Clerk would report via 'fix my street' website that traffic cannot read the directional sign near to the King & Queen public house, Shrivenham Road and a broken directional sign on the grass verge at the rear of the Church, Fernham Road. *(Clerk's note: Highways have reported that the directional sign outside the King & Queen would be relocated to the opposite verge and a new directional sign had been ordered)*

ALLOTMENTS

139/14 Update on current matters. None.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP

140/14 Update on current matters. Andi Cunningham reported that she would be attending a child protection meeting for Oxfordshire.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

141/14 The next meeting would take place at **7.30pm on Thursday 16 October 2014** in the **Village Community Room, Kings Road, Longcot.**

Further Parish Council meetings are due to be held at **7.30pm** in the **Village Community Room, Kings Road, Longcot** on **Thursdays: 4 December 2014 and 8 January 2015.**

142/14 ANY OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSION.

Broadband. John Barneby reported that fibre optic would be installed to the Shrivenham cabinets then copper wire to Longcot, which may not improve broadband speeds. Investment in installing new cabinets nearer to users was needed not just the updating of cabinets.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed..... Date.....2014