

HEMINGTON, HARDINGTON & FOXCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

MENDIP DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16 April 2014
at Faulkland Village Hall

Present: Councillors E. Drewe (Chairman), P. Roberts, A. Hall, T. Hucker, F. Green

In attendance: R. Campbell (Clerk), 17 members of the public

*Actions – marked **A** – are on the Clerk and on any Councillor whose initials appear at right →*

2001. **APOLOGIES** None

2002. **INTERESTS**

Cllr Green declared a non-prejudicial interest in planning item 2013/0318/OTS as his wife owns a property at the other end of the row containing Oaklea, which in turn adjoins the proposed development.

2003. **MINUTES**

Resolved to accept the minutes of the PC meeting of 12 March 2014 as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Chairman

2004. **VACANCY FOR A COUNCILLOR**

Councillors were in a position to co-opt but there were no applicants. Councillors and members of the public were asked to publicise the vacancy. The Clerk to speak to former Councillor Rebecca Skinner, as it was reported she might be interested.

A

2005. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR** No report.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman adjourned the Parish Council (PC) meeting and declared a Public Forum, which included the points noted below in *italic*. They do not form part of the minutes.

Savills' Planning Consultant Phil Holdcroft (**PH**) and Rural Surveyor Ben Short (**BS**) made a presentation on the proposal for eight dwellings on land Between Faulkland Farm and 'Oaklea', High Street, Faulkland (2013/0318/OTS).

PH would try to explain the key issues and, he hoped benefits, of the application. He referred to the 2008/9 Mendip District Council (MDC) call for sites with reference to the new local plan. Savills had submitted this site as suitable for 15 – 30 units, making representations that the development would round off the settlement, be discreet, set back and retain the surrounding vegetation. This had been in the public domain for 5/6 years. The challenge to MDC on their 5-year supply had led to premature submission of applications. He referred to the West Farm site. His responsibility was to preserve the Estate's interests. At the beginning of February an outline application had been submitted for 8 units, to establish the principle of development. The position, style and heights were all reserved matters, but documents had been provided.

This is land is of high archaeological potential. Working with Somerset County

Council (SCC) Archaeology, the archaeological survey had found remnants of Romano-British occupation. A coin had been found. The County Archaeologist had confirmed he had no further concerns. The site is of local significance only.

An ecological survey had been done. There would be no loss of trees, but new planting. Wessex Water had expressed no concerns. The applicant had tried to follow local architectural cues, distances between properties. There would be 6 market and 2 affordable houses.

The Government was pushing for more homes. He referred to the New Homes Bonus – approximately £50K to MDC and £14K to SCC for each property. There was an opportunity to secure a percentage locally for village requirements. The applicant would try to ensure that the 2 affordable dwellings were for people living no more than 2-5 kilometres from the site..

BS *said that the Estate wants to protect and work with the community.*

Q *How will equipment be got up the tiny lane?*

PH *SCC Highways have no problems with the existing splays. We will be cutting into the hedgerow area; a footpath is proposed for safety. There will be noise during construction, but it is not a huge scheme.*

Q *When will the single house next to Oaklea, for which permission has been given, be built?*

BS *It is hoped to start in Autumn 2014, with construction stretching into 2015*

Q *The school bus pulls in to the proposed entrance as a pickup point.*

PH *This should not present any problems.*

Q *Will you stop at 8 houses? Faulkland now has no shop, so will its housing quota drop?*

PH *We would not seek more houses at present, but maybe 5 years down the line. Doesn't think the shop is key to the village's secondary status.*

Q *If you get permission, how would you proceed – i.e. sell or develop?*

BS *It is too early to say. Trustees – more than one stakeholder – are involved. This would be for further down the line.*

Q *The Local Plan quota will be exceeded if the West Farm application goes through.*

PH *Doesn't think 8 more will be significant. In Wiltshire, which is months ahead with its Local Plan, the Inspector has allocated another 7,000 houses. The figures are fluid.*

Q *Does the new homes bonus benefit the parish? Were you anticipating anything over and above that for the parish?*

PH *Some parishes have been savvy. It is up to the parish to negotiate with MDC. Some parishes have got up to 25%.*

Q *Would there be no housing bonus if the target is exceeded?*

PH *Housing targets are reviewed every 3 years. (After clarification) The bonus is paid on every dwelling built.*

Q *Is the grass on the left-hand side in estate ownership? It is unfortunate that the single house is to be built on a green space. Now the existing grass on the other side is to be grabbed. It would be better not to build the single house.*

PH *It is within the development boundary.*

Q *Will the turning area at top be left alone?*

PH Did not know. He made a note to find out.

Q Access from the narrow road behind houses would be difficult. Could you widen it?

PH We will have a look.

Q Has Highways looked at accessibility with the increased number of cars if the scheme opposite (West Farm) is approved.

PH This is an issue for SCC.

Q What is the function of the tree area

PH Landscaping.

Q Could the land be made over to the PC as a public amenity?

A It might be possible to let the PC manage it while protecting the Estate's interests.

Q Can you assure us that if the development is approved, we won't have a Kilmersdon-style disaster, where the developer produced good design but what was actually built was rubbish?

BS This could be addressed with positive covenants: a mix of planning and legal covenants.

PH invited people with queries to email him on PHoldcroft@savills.com

The Chairman thanked all speakers, closed the public forum and reconvened the parish council meeting at 8.25pm.

2006.

PLANNING

(i) **Applications** Councillors considered the following:

2013/0318/OTS Land Between Faulkland Farm And 'Oaklea' Faulkland Somerset. Outline planning application for residential development of 8 dwellings and means of access (off A366), with all other matters reserved.

It was noted that the consultation period now ended on 2 May 2014.

Resolved (FG/TH, Cllr Drewe abstained) to recommend **refusal**.

Reasons:

1. The land is outside the limits of development on MDC's 2004 Local Plan
2. PC considers the access is inadequate. It would form a crossroads with the access to the Lavender Farm (whose traffic includes coaches) and West Farm.
3. PC is concerned that if approval is given, it will lead to further development on adjoining land
4. Together with existing applications and approvals, the total number of houses in Faulkland would increase by 25%, which is unacceptable.
5. The recent closure of the village shop means that village should no longer be classified as a secondary village and so no further development should take place.

2014/0321/AGB New Sunnyside Farm Laverton Bath BA2 7RA.. Documents not received – consideration postponed.

Not on agenda: 2014/0482/HSE Ashgrove, Grove Lane Faulkland Frome Somerset BA3 5UU. Erection of a double garage. The planning officer had been asked for the latest date. **Resolved** to delegate to the Clerk

(ii) **Updates**

2014/0138/APP Stock barn Laverton: details of reserved matters (sample panel, joinery) approved by MDC.

2013/2551/OTS Re-consulting County Archaeologist after submission of Magnetometer Survey Report. Details on website.

2013/0914 Land south of West Farm, Faulkland

Cllr Drewe said he had been informed that day that there is likely to be a recommendation to grant permission, subject to completion of the S106 Agreement being finalised. The village, and in particular the village hall, could have got considerable S106 money for improvements from the West Farm development if an application had been submitted. He repeated that it is strongly advisable to make such an application even if a planning application is being recommended for refusal.

2007. **MATTERS ARISING/CLERK'S REPORT**

Minute 1954 Robin Clark, Village Hall Committee Chair, thought the parking notices should be produced by the PC. The Clerk to arrange this. **A**

Minute 1969. Advanced Tree Surgeons will be asked to expedite crown lifting of the lower chestnut on Faulkland Green pending confirmation of status of the upper tree from MDC. **A**

2008. **FINANCE**

Unaudited year-end figures had been supplied to Councillors.

The Precept of £6,750 had been received, as had a council tax support grant of £479

AON's insurance quote for 2014/15 was £653.26 (budget £700). This was plus 1.4% on last year. Two additional quotes (Zurich and Came & Co) were being sought. To be a May agenda item for decision. **A**

Resolved (PR/AH, unanimous) to pay the following:

SALC subscription 2014/15 £146.54

Staff salaries April 2014

Faulkland Village Hall Committee: hall rental £120; insurance £630.41 (budget £645); non-domestic rates £35.55 (budget nil) Total £785.96 (budget £775)

2009. **FAULKLAND PLAYING FIELD & VILLAGE GREEN**

Grass cutting

Resolved (ED/TH) to accept the quotation from The Landscape Group of £1250.00 + VAT to cut Faulkland Playing Field and Green in 2014, the budgeted amount. **A**

Updates Cllr Hucker had spoken to Mr Watts, but not yet shown him the site. Cllr Hucker considered the concrete surface of the former pavilion good enough for a skateboard ramp. **A TH**

2010. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION**

Temporary Post Office The Post Office is now suggesting 2 x 7 hour days, but the operator, Roger Jacobs, cannot do this. He in turn is suggesting Monday and Thursday mornings to the Post Office. Once agreed, it will take three months to set up.

Highways and Rights of Way A new village sign has finally been erected on the A366 coming into Faulkland from Terry Hill.

The milestone going out of the village towards Terry Hill has been knocked into the ditch. Highways to be informed **A**

The blocked drains at Faulkland Green have been cleared.

The bank at Browns Lane has been partly cleared. Francis Brothers to be asked to complete when the nesting season is over. **A ED**

Allotments Cllr Hall said there was no objection to but equally no enthusiasm for a community orchard. He was therefore not very optimistic about establishing one. It was noted that there were currently only two allotment holders.

2011. **CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS**

Correspondence

Councillors noted the following correspondence received since the last meeting. The item from the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) to be put on the May agenda. No other actions were identified

A

- Parishes Information Bureau
- Mendip PCSO Steering Group – minutes 27/2/14; request for PC donation for purchase of laser-based speed guns. *Note* the new PCSO is believed to be on training till the end of May
- Avon & Somerset Police Newsletter March 2014; ‘Best on the Beat’ awards leaflet
- Avon & Somerset Police & Crime Commissioner– pride awards leaflet
- Somerset County Council – Confirmation of closure of Coleford recycling site
- SALC – Information on Internal Control Guidance, New Model financial Regulations, Audit changes, Transparency, Changes to External Audit, Payments to HMRC. To be a May agenda item

District Councillors report Cllr Drewe will report in May

Miscellaneous reports

Speed gun to be put on May’s agenda.

A

Cllr Hall said that the turning down to Bishop Street is still in bad condition in spite of promises made at a site visit by Highways. Charlie Higgins to be contacted.

A

A resident asked if Faulkland could have traffic calming by humps, as in Norton St Philip. May agenda

A

Cllr Drewe had mentioned in the past traffic lights which turned red automatically if approached above a certain speed. Could this be investigated? May agenda.

A

2012. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 14 May 2014, 7.30pm: Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 14 May 2014, 8.00pm approximately: Annual Parish Council meeting, including election of Chairman for the coming year

Both in Faulkland Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm