

**OWSLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2007  
AT 7.30 PM IN OWSLEBURY PARISH HALL**

**PRESENT**

Chairman: Cllr Mr A Manship

Councillors: Mrs J Chase, Mrs T Meads, Mr J Seabrook, Mr R Page, and Mr G Tull.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

District Councillors: Mr R Humby and Mr L Ruffell

Mr Jonathan Humphrey, Landowner of Whites Hill Farm, Whites Hill, Owslebury

Mr Charles Macleod,

Clerk: Mrs E Manship

**169/07 APOLOGIES**

Cllr Mrs J Ruffell

PC Charlie Farley and PCSO Sarah McCulloch

**170/07 DISCLOSURE OF PREFERENTIAL INTERESTS FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no disclosures of interests

**171/07 INTRODUCTION – WHY ARE WE HERE – CHAIRMAN OF OPC**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Mr Jonathan Humphrey, who, further to his planning application 07/00954/FUL being approved by WCC, had written to the Parish Council suggesting a meeting, to draw a line under what had happened and jointly, to look forward. The Chairman invited Mr Humphrey to talk through the history of the farm and his suggestions regarding the way forward.

**172/07 HISTORICAL FARM SUMMARY – MR JONATHAN HUMPHREY**

Mr Humphrey addressed the meeting; saying that he hoped this would be the first of a number of constructive meetings, to look for a way forward. He wished to draw a line under what had gone before and to work collaboratively with the Parish Council and the Community to find a long-term solution. He had not come to put forward an answer. That would be wrong. But that only by engaging, learning and talking would we find the way forward.

Mr Humphrey said that it was only right to go back and review why Humphrey Holdings was looking to redevelop, outlining the history of the site and its business. Humphrey Holdings is a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation farming business, with egg producing hens at the site since 1966. They now have ¼ million rearing hens supporting an egg laying capacity of 600,000. The numbers are going down, reflecting the change in demand and the economics of agriculture. The pressures on the producers of food are immense and it is becoming more and more difficult in legislative and commercial terms. There is no light on the horizon. The costs in wheat and cereals purchased had increased, wheat more than doubling in price in the last three weeks. This was reflected in the cost of food for the supermarket. This is the picture that is influencing business diversification. The farm has to look at how it can re-deploy its assets in other ways. This is in line with Government policy, which encourages farms to diversify.

Key Dates

1966 – Established

1967 – Introduced Rearing hens

1972 – Built houses for their staff

1984 – Built the large rearing unit

## **173/07 RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS – MR JONATHAN HUMPHREY**

Mr Humphrey explained that the site was not deemed to be suitable for offices or residences. But it was deemed appropriate for B1 – Light Engineering or B8 – Storage. He submitted his original planning application for change of use for the 2 redundant sheds to B8 storage to WCC in December 2004 and was granted Temporary permission for 3 years. He explained that at the time of the original application, he had come to the Parish Council and discussed possible uses and prospective tenants and the issue of traffic had then been raised. He confirmed that he had a mind at the time (before the application was even granted) to encourage an existing tenant to use the site. In November that year they rented the top building, which continued until January this year. No one was in dispute there had been low traffic movements. When he put in the application to address the temporary nature, he did not envisage the concerns raised by the Parish Council. He offered his apologies for this. Had he realised he would have engaged sooner. He was aware of the number of objections raised by the Parish Council and the community for the application that was granted in June of this year. He wished to draw a line under this, hence his letter.

Mr Humphrey confirmed his letter was not a passing statement, rather a genuine position. If the Parish Council wished to see something different on the site then we needed to talk about it. In the long term interest there was need to engage and he was prepared to put resources behind this in order to reach a workable solution.

## **174/07 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS**

### **B1 versus B8**

Cllr L Ruffell questioned Mr Humphrey's explanation of B1 & B8 Planning, stating that he only had B8 planning.

Mr Humphrey confirmed that this was correct. He was saying was that the Government Policies were steered towards B1, b & c and B8. Not B2 as this can lead to noise and he had not applied for it. In this instance, yes, he was restricted to B8. B1 is understood to generate a higher volume of traffic than B8.

### **Business Plan / Potential Tenants**

Cllr Meads asked Mr Humphrey if he had a Business Plan for the site.

Mr Humphrey replied no, stating that he had put his thoughts on hold, subject to this meeting. In his letter he had agreed not to spend any further money on the site until such time that a joint working group was formed between us, we had considered the options together and come up with a suitable proposal to progress the use of the site".

Mr Humphrey said that he would like to look to put a tenant into the converted shed. He had had a number of tenants enquire but had turned them down as he considered they would generate too much traffic."

Cllr Page asked Mr Humphrey the type of businesses he had turned down.

Mr Humphrey confirmed a railway construction business and a yard for HGV storage

Mr Humphrey stated that he was currently talking to a business that stored domestic property and held it for short-term periods. Not a warehouse. It is specifically for Police relocating. Considering traffic generation they work from transit vans. They have units in 4 other areas in the country. 2 retired policemen run the company.

Cllr Page stated that this sounded ideal.

### **Sub-letting**

Mr Humby asked Mr Humphrey about sub-letting and how he would manage sub-let tenants. Mr Humphrey confirmed that his tenancies did not allow for sub-letting.

### **Vehicle Movements**

Cllr Meads asked Mr Humphrey what he would consider to be an acceptable number of vehicle movements per day. Mr Humphrey confirmed, as per his planning documents.

Mr Humphrey said that that it was his understanding that the principle concern of the Parish Council and the community was the unknown element in respect to the number and size of vehicles. In reality he felt the planning committee had summarised this sensibly, stating that Traffic Generation is self-regulating, owing to the size and nature of the site. Large traffic was not feasible and he assured the Council he would regulate this.

Cllr Tull stated that his concern were the articulated lorries that could possibly be used by traders to deliver to the site, over which he recognised Mr Humphrey had no control.

#### **Future Planning for the Site**

Cllr Seabrook said that what Mr Humphrey was saying sounded good, but until the Council knew more, it could not make a decision.

Mr Humphrey replied that he was not asking for a decision. He was saying that if the Parish Council did not want B8, owing to that beyond his control – as indicated by Cllr Tull (HGV's delivering to the site, using GPS etc) then we needed to talk to discuss what the Parish Council would like to see. Would the Parish Council like to see offices or houses instead of industrial use? Yes, some of this may not be within the policy today but if this is what people want then it is worth putting the time and resource into this.

#### **Twyford Site**

Cllr Seabrook stated that if something started small, it could grow and with it the traffic could grow.

Mr Humphrey confirmed he understood. He spoke of his main site at Twyford where there is no livestock. They have a number of lets including the Royal Mail and some smaller tenants. Each tenant has a fixed term contract of 1 – 3 years. At the end of 3 years they must leave, or, if they wish to continue, they must enter into a new lease. The nature of the businesses is that they are changing and developing. Therefore 3 years is a good time for such a let. As a landlord he could look at his tenants and move them on if they grew to large for the site.

#### **Rural Crafts**

Cllr Manship asked Mr Humphrey his views regarding rural crafts using the site.

Mr Humphrey confirmed that he could go back to WCC for 'specified tenants', to change the class to 'light industrial' would be inoffensive to the neighbours.

Cllr Tull stated that he knew of a cabinetmaker that rented 6000 sq. feet of space. The shed was full of machinery but there were only 3 workers. Therefore the site did not generate a mass of traffic. For this Mr Humphrey would need to go back to WCC to apply for B1 (b) Use Class for Light Industrial use.

#### **Offices**

Cllr Tull stated that offices generated a lot of cars.

### **175/07 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

#### **Smell and Flies from the Chicken Sheds**

Mr Craig Koetsier, from Longfields explained that he had lived next door to the site for 3 years and he would like to continue to live there. He recognised that Mr Humphrey objective was to run a viable business. He explained that his objective was to enjoy the countryside. He said that this summer had been great but in previous summers the smell and the flies from the chicken sheds had caused him huge concern.

#### **Hours of Use**

Mr Koetsier explained that his main concern with regard to the storage units was the traffic. He was currently affected by the loading and unloading of the chickens, late at night, and was concerned that the noise generated from the storage units would have an impact on him.

Mr Humphrey explained that the reason the chickens were moved late at night was that this was the best time to keep them calm. He confirmed that the storage side of the business was restricted to specific hours, but the agricultural side of the business had no such restrictions.

Delivery / Collection to and from the storage sheds is restricted to the following hours:

Monday – Friday	8am – 6pm
Saturday	8am – 1pm
Sunday	None allowed.

## **B1**

Mrs Miranda Sprot said that she had heard what Cllr Ruffell had said with regard to the fact that we don't want things made on the site, but in some ways she felt this was preferable.

Cllr Ruffell said that this would open a complete can of worms.

Cllr Page said that if you go for B1, it is back to Mr Humphrey good will with regard to his tenants. For instance a neighbour of his fabricated steel. It was then pointed out that such a use would normally come under Use Class B2, which would not normally be allowed in the context of Whites Hill Farm.

Mr Stewart Garnett confirmed that Mr Humphrey could apply for B1 and WCC could give restrictions with regard to noise and external operations.

Mr Humphrey explained that if he went back to 'Planning' and said that he had a specific person in mind to use the site but he required a different class, 'Planning' were likely to be more receptive to him than if he asked for a generic change of use from B8 to B1.

Mrs Sprot asked if once the site was changed to B1, there was no undoing this and it set a precedent.

Mr Humphrey confirmed that this was correct but that conditions would be put on it. An example of this was his farm at Kingsworthy. He had applied for a stonemason to use the site. He had a restriction that the site was only to be used for the stonemason.

Cllr Meads asked whether B1 would supersede B8 or run alongside.

Mr Garnett confirmed that once B1 was operational, this was for good.

## **Damage caused by HGV's**

Mrs Tina Kemp explained that from her cottage they had seen lorries and HGV's (not necessarily from Mr Humphrey site) driving around the tree and riding the kerbs. She had huge concerns with regard to HGV's and the damage they caused the village, the new kerbing and potentially the 'Bank Tree'

Mr Humphrey confirmed that at Twyford they had an arrangement imposed by him that traffic was routed in one direction off the main road. This was stated in his tenancy agreements and if this was broken a charge was applied to the delivery vehicle.

Mr Mark Egerton informed Mr Humphrey that just last week one of his own feed lorries had driven through Marwell and there were no chickens at the site. He should not have driven through. He was breaking the 'access only' rules of the road as he was not delivering.

Mr Egerton confirmed that sat. navs. from Winchester to Owslebury directed traffic down Mares Lane and up Whites Hill! Personally he had concerns with regard to the storage units. He would rather see more car movements as HGV's left a lot of damage.

Mr Humphrey confirmed that all vehicles to his site should come into the village via Longwood. If vehicles were seen coming up from Marwell then he asked that their numberplates were e-mailed to him.

The Clerk confirmed that all roads into the village are 'access only' for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes.

Mr Humphrey confirmed he appreciated the village was busier with traffic in the rush hour and that 7.5 tonne lorries and articulated lorries could cause problems.

Cllr Tull said that sooner or later 2 lorries would meet and one day there will be a bad accident.

The Chairman confirmed the number of HGV's driving through the village was a debate for Council. Tonight's discussion was about Whites Hill – The Way forward.

## **176/07 COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

### **B1 versus B8**

Cllr Page said that he felt it was a good idea we were discussing this and he appreciated Mr Humphrey would like to let the site as soon as possible. Therefore, the sooner a workable solution was reached the better.

Cllr Ruffell said that he felt the B8 route should be applied in the first instance before B1 was considered.  
Cllr Manship agreed.

Cllr Tull said that we should look at everything.

### **Hours of Use**

Cllr Humby explained his concerns that even with restricted hours, HGV's, restricted by their tachograph etc. could park up the road and wait. He asked Mr Humphrey whether he would monitor this and could the Council have his undertaking that he would put a clause in his tenancy agreement that this would not take place.

Mr Humphrey confirmed that he could put this in his tenancy agreement.

Mr Humphrey stated that he did not think 8am – 6pm was an ideal time for vehicle movements from a Parish Perspective as it concentrated vehicle movements in the rush hour. He would think that an access time of 7am to later in the evening was better as it would not limit the HGV movements to peak traffic.

Cllr Humby said that he felt after 9am would be better to avoid the children.

Mr Humphrey said this would be untenable and too restrictive.

Mr Garnett confirmed that there could be separate conditions for vehicle movements for delivery / collection and for the workforce. I.e. staff could work flexible times and deliveries could be restricted.

## **177/07 PROPOSALS AND AGREEMENT OF NEXT STEPS**

The Chairman suggested we meet again in 2 months time. That both Mr Humphrey and the Council think through what had been said and seek views to bring to the next meeting.

Mr Humphrey asked whether B8 would be a solution that the Parish Council would be happy to work with or would they like to look beyond B8, possibly to B1.

Cllr Page said that we needed to look at what the village would like to see and define by need. We needed to set criteria that were important to the village, for instance, the biggest consideration had to be the HGV's.

Cllr Humby asked whether we needed to consult with the village as to what they would like to see.

Cllr Manship confirmed he would make this an agenda item in the next Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Meads said to Mr Humphrey that he appeared to be talking beyond B1 and B8 and her assumption was that he had ideas about what he would like to see. She asked whether Mr Humphrey could share these ideas.

Mr Humphrey replied no. It was just that the residents of Owslebury had put huge energies into stating what they did not want. He was suggesting that this energy be put into deciding what they do want.

The Chairman asked that Whites Hill – The Way Forward was place on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm