

**Minutes of the Meeting of
LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 7th August 2017**

PRESENT: Cllrs. M Phelps (Chair), L Isko, T Barnes, R Noblett, S Collins, J Stephens, A Toomey and D Attrill

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Maliphant (Clerk), District Councillor D East, County Councillor B Robinson and 30 local residents

1. There were no apologies for absence
2. There were no declarations of interest

3. Public Forum

There were a number of points made about the application for 60 log cabins at Blakemore Park, including:

- The application should be considered as a housing application, not for “caravans”
- The proposal would have a big impact on road movements and traffic volumes - the nearby stretch of the A4136 has already seen several accidents
- The road improvement works in 2007 at the junction with the A4136 do not comply with the approved drawings. The junction is just wrong, and the number of cars leaving the road confirm this
- There is no footpath along the access road from the A4136 to Blakemore Park, thus increasing the likelihood of more vehicle movements
- The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Site Act 1960 (CSCoD 1960) says each caravan shall not be less than 6 metres from any other caravan, which does not seem to mesh with the proposal for "caravans" measuring up to 12m x 6m on the site as mapped - so even if the "caravans" definition were accepted (which it is not), the current proposal would seem to create a site that would be unlawfully over-occupied
- CSCoD Section 11 says that suitably surfaced parking spaces shall be provided where necessary to meet the additional requirements of the occupants and their visitors. This has not been included in the site layout for the 2015 or current application. Section 11 also says only one car may be parked between adjoined caravans, but in the site layout plan it clearly shows spaces for two cars between many adjacent caravans, which is in contravention of the statute.
- Sewerage is expected to be a problem
- How will the council check whether anyone is using a cabin as their primary residence?
- There are discrepancies in the two most recent environmental studies

There were also several comments about the changes to the No 33 bus service, including:

- The changes would mean at least one person having to walk 1.5 miles to work daily, along a road with no footpath.
- Reducing the bus service would be better than cutting it entirely
- People on shift work will also have problems
- Morning and evening buses are full of schoolchildren
- There are also issues around transport for older people
- The current 24 / 33 bus service crossover in Mitcheldean may have confused the user statistics

4. Planning

The circulated progress report on planning applications was received with thanks. After discussion, it was agreed there were no objections to the proposals for a new greenhouse at Court Leet and a change of use for Unit 21 at Harts Barn. It was agreed to object to the proposal to build 60 new log cabins at Blakemore Park for a number of reasons:

- The Longhope neighbourhood development plan now carries increased weight following the recent external examination, and has a number of relevant clauses:

H1g - "any development within the parish must not have an unacceptable impact on the local landscape character" - which 60 additional cabins to the 27 already approved would surely have, as no amount of tree planting could conceal that number of buildings and associated motor cars. In addition, part of the site was acknowledged as high landscape value in the 2015 application, though the same consultancy firm now describes it as medium value

H1f - "future housing development in Longhope village and parish will be supported only if it is small scale" - it has been clearly acknowledged by the District Council in correspondence (attached) that this would be a major development, and it is not explained why log cabins permanently connected to plumbing and other facilities, with permission for 365-day occupancy, would not be classified as buildings rather than "caravans"

If2 - "developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate waste water and water supply capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users" – the relevant section of the planning application form says "foul sewerage disposal - unknown"

- There appear to be discrepancies between different transport assessments for this site over time, which seem to make no assessment of the cumulative effects of successive planning approvals. The idea that at least 60 occupants (plus at least 27 for the other cabins) would find enough on site to keep them occupied all day for weeks on end is clearly ludicrous, let alone traffic caused by visiting friends and relatives (the cabins each have two bedrooms, which also begs the question of extra parking on site). If each of a total of 87 cabins generated an average two traffic movements a day (one leaving the site, and one arriving, not least to visit facilities not available in Longhope village) between the hours of 8 am and 11 pm every day, plus day visitors to the farm park (this usage is still continuing), this would mean at least one vehicle movement every two to five minutes at a dangerous road bend where a recent survey (attached) shows over 15% of drivers exceed the 40 mph speed limit, and there have been many serious accidents, including two car crashes since Christmas 2016.
- 365-day occupancy (particularly for cabins that will be for sale) begs the question of potential permanent occupancy as a first home, with all that means for impact on the parish. In these days of reducing public funds, the parish council can have no confidence that a suitable level of enforcement to prevent permanent occupancy could be afforded by the District Council

A number of other issues raised in public forum would also be included in the letter.

5. Members' Reports

AT confirmed that from the beginning of September the No 33 bus service would be diverted from Lea through Mitcheldean and Longhope, with the result that 4.7 miles of the A40 between Lea and Huntley would have no bus service at all. Stagecoach had made the decision for financial reasons.

DE and BR reported they had spoken to county transport officers about this issue. BR added that the No 33 service was not currently receiving any county subsidy, it would cost £120,000 to keep the current service going, and that while county officer Alan Bently was looking at a number of options there would probably not be one single solution. After discussion, it was agreed that BR would go back to the county council with a number of points, including:

- Have all the relevant statistics been studied?
- Some people are getting on and off at unscheduled stops
- Is there potential for subsidising two journeys per day?
- Would removing the 33A be a better plan?

AT raised the issue of dog fouling complaints on May Hill. The clerk advised that the current suppliers couldn't get their vehicles up to the water tower, but it was considered there could be a sign there directing dog owners to the new bin at Dursley Cross.

SC reported there was up to £20,000 in grants available from the police commissioner's fund, which could be spent on speed indicators, CCTV installation or even things like skate parks. A number of suggestions were made:

- MP would speak to Les Meadows about the skate park idea
- A sign on Hopes Hill if possible, warning of vehicles exiting Velthouse Lane
- Ask again for use of the Forest's mobile CCTV

RN said he had begun the process of checking salt bins for the winter, the parish still had a store of 50-60 bags of salt.

MP reported there was another emerging proposal for a mobile phone mast, and the clerk added there would be a planning application in due course around a proposed new reservoir to replace the water tank on May Hill.

6. Finance

The following invoices were approved for payment:

Forest of Dean District Council	50.00	Speed campaign
Merlin Waste	33.90	Dog waste collection
Andrew Maliphant	573.79	Salary - July
Andrew Maliphant	37.33	Expenses – July

7. Next Meeting - Monday 18th September at 7 pm

Signed:.....Chairman. Date:.....