

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF AN URGENT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT
LITTLEHAM VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 2nd APRIL 2009

Present: Cllrs Hamilton, Hassall (Vice-Chairman), Heard, M. Smith and Stevens.

Apologies: Cllrs Atkinson, Mrs Beer, Mrs Galvin (Chairman), Ms Lamb, Poole and G. Smith and also Cllrs Barton (DCC) and Pennington (TDC).

In the absence of the Cllr Mrs Galvin, Cllr Hassall (Vice Chairman) presided as Chairman of the meeting.

The Chairman advised that members of the public are permitted to address the meeting on a specific agenda item, in accordance with Standing Order 24 and Paragraph 12(2) of Statutory Instrument 2007/1159, but they are only permitted to do so before that Agenda Item. There were no members of the public present.

816 Registration of Members Interests: No additional registrations were required.

817 Planning Application: 1/0208/2009/AGR; Edge Mill Nursery, Yeo Valley, Littleham:

Cllr Stevens declared a prejudicial interest and, after speaking as a member of the public, he left the meeting.

Mr Stevens was concerned over access to or from the site on to a dangerous road, with several vehicles each day (including staff vehicles, suppliers vans and large commercial vehicles) likely to enter or leave by this hazardous access.

A letter from Mr & Mrs Corkery of Nethercleave was read to the meeting. The letter referred to the narrowness of the Class III road, blind bends, and six houses nearby (four of them with doors opening straight on to the roadside). Drivers pull to the middle of the road at the approaches to this blind corner when householders leave their dwellings, or park to unload. There is no kerb or visibility splay and the site entrance is considerably obscured from view. Beyond a nearby bend, east of the site, there is a former DCC quarry that is now used as a heavy transport depot. Mr & Mrs Corkery fear that the additional traffic generated by Edge Mill Nursery is likely to result in more danger, more accidents, more injury (with even death possible) and increased public cost. A SLOW marking has been painted on the highway west of the proposed Edge Mill Nursery site, Edge Mill hamlet and bends. More are needed. The road is used by heavy articulated vehicles, servicing businesses and villages to the west and there have been accidents requiring Police presence and road closure. Mr & Mrs Corkery ask TDC Planning Committee Members to make an official Site Visit and to REFUSE this planning application.

Members noted that TDC can only decide on “*whether changes or further details of siting or design should be required for visual amenity / landscape reasons*”.

Parish Councillors consider the location to be unacceptable, because the Class III highway at this site entrance is dangerous. They point out that additional vehicles parked on the highway outside Edge Mill Nursery or manoeuvring to enter or leave the site will result in collisions. Edge Mills needs more SLOW markings. Members referred to possible inaccuracies in the planning application in respect of there being no neighbours, the development not being more than 25 metres from the highway, sub-standard drawings, the apparent absence of adequate septic tank facilities (there are no septic tank drawings), no water or electricity supply (even though there should be staff washing /toilet facilities and other services requiring adequate electricity and water supply). The applicant states in the Planning Application Questionnaires that the site is on level ground. This is incorrect. TDC are thought to have asked the applicant for better plans, but these have not been shown to the Parish Council.

Minute 817 (continued): -

Members question whether the proposal is viable, because, completion of sale is thought to still be awaited. The Parish Council have not seen any Notification to the Owner, if sale completion has not yet been achieved. Members also question how the application meets the accreditation required for financially viable new agricultural units.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Hamilton, seconded by Cllr M Smith, with unanimous support, that Planning Application 1/0208/2009/AGR is recommended for REFUSAL, because:

- 1. The site location is unacceptable. The Class III highway at this site entrance is dangerous and frequently used by heavy vehicles servicing a wide area.**

2. There is inadequate vehicle access to the proposed site and insufficient turning space on the highway.
3. The proposals do not provide adequate visibility splay, or other road safety / traffic calming features.
4. Proposed Agricultural Building “A” will not be more than 25 metres from the highway.
5. No details are shown of provision for a septic tank, or for mains water and electricity.
6. There are neighbours within 400 metres of the proposed site and they should be consulted in view of the expected effect of increased traffic hazard on their amenity.
7. Substandard, possibly inaccurate, drawings have been submitted. Although better drawings are thought to have been requested by TDC, the Parish Council has not had the opportunity to see them. Elevation drawings and details of finish and colours are essential for assessment of the appearance of the buildings.
8. Responses to the Planning Application Questionnaire need to be more precise, in particular, the statement that it is a level site requiring no levels survey conflicts with our concern over how a septic tank could be sited on this steep slope, close to and above the road and concern exists over dangers of soil erosion and run-off on to the highway.
9. Further information in respect of any required landscaping and it being compatible with the high quality rural landscape of this part of the Yeo Valley is needed.
10. On no account, should retail sales from the above site be allowed, or advertisement signs, or anything which might distract motorists.

It was also RESOLVED, by the same motion, that: -

11. TDC is called upon to hold a formal Planning Committee Site Visit before any decision is made.
12. TDC is advised that the Parish Council always endeavours to support agriculture, because it is Littleham’s main industry, but at this proposed site, the unsuitability and danger outweigh any agricultural opportunity.
13. Devon C.C.(Highways) and the Police Road Safety Officer are made aware of the increased danger to householders in Edge Mill hamlet and to drivers on this frequently used Class III road.

Cllr Stevens was invited to return to the meeting.

817 Other Urgent Planning Matters: (Min 806g) TDC Planning Questionnaires:

TDC’s disappointing reply to the Parish Council’s letter had previously been copied to members.

RESOLVED, that another letter is sent to TDC, asking for this matter to be referred to both Torrington and Holsworthy Area Advisory Groups.

819 L&LPC Footpaths Working Party, Friday 3rd April at 2.00pm:

Members of the Working Party were reminded to meet at the Village Hall.

820 Parish Plan: CCD Natural Environment Questionnaire: The form was completed.

821 Boundary Committee Review: Reports were distributed to Parish Councillors.

822 2008/09 Final Accounts: Final Accounts were distributed to members for the next Parish Council meeting.

823 Date of Annual Meetings:

RESOLVED, that the 2009 Annual Parish Council Meeting and 2009 Annual Parish Meeting are postponed from 7th May to 14th May, because of the Bishop’s visit to Littleham on 7th May and that the Clerk revises arrangements with the Guest Speaker.

824 Date of Next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: Thursday, 30th April 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting commenced at 7.45 pm and ended at 8.53 pm.

