

NORTON ST PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL

www.nortonstphilipparishcouncil.co.uk

Chair Ian Hasell, 7 Monmouth Paddock, Norton St Philip, Somerset, BA2 7LA, ianhasell1@gmail.com

Clerk Nicola Duke, April Rise, 81 Studland Park, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HN, clerk@nortonstphilipparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on
Wednesday 11th September 2024 at **7.00 pm** in the Palaiet Hall, Norton St Philip.

Present: Cllr Hasell (Chairman), Cllr Fox, Cllr Lund and Cllr Murfitt.

In attendance: Nicola Duke (Parish Clerk), Somerset Councillor D Denton and 3 members of the public.

Public Participation

Members of the public were invited to make representations to the Council on any matters relating to the work of the Council or to raise any issues of concern:

- The applicant for planning application **2024/1140/FUL** - Land At Brownshutters Farm Farleigh Road Norton St Philip - spoke to the Council in respect of the application, providing some background to the proposal to establish fishing lakes and a small shop at the site and reporting on the plans to rewild areas of the site. The applicant offered to answer any questions the PC had, given the number of documents associated with the planning application. The Chairman invited questions from councillors of which there were none at the time and stated that, if necessary, he would suspend Standing Orders when the application was considered.

	AGENDA ITEM
8984	Apologies for Absence Cllr Hitchins due to a family commitment, accepted.
8985	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate None.
8986	Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th August 2024 were approved for accuracy and adopted (proposed Cllr Lund, seconded Cllr Fox).b) To consider any matters arising from the above meetings (if any): None.
8987	Co-option of Parish Councillors Members considered the co-option of Parish Councillors (August minutes refer, Co-option Procedure previously circulated) and gave regard to an application from Mr David Curwen. Mr Curwen addressed the Council speaking to his background and interest in and reasons for joining the PC. Following debate, it was resolved to co-opt Mr Curwen with effect from the October 2024 meeting (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Lund). The Clerk would

	<p>arrange for the appropriate paperwork to be signed in readiness for the meeting on 9th October 2024 and liaise with Mr Curwen to arrange an induction. The Chairman congratulated Mr Curwen on his co-option and welcomed him to the team.</p>
8988	<p>Council Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairman – No report. • Parish Clerk reported that the transfer to Unity Bank was progressing well. Additional information had been required from the Chairman, which would be provided. The appointed signatories would then hear direct from the bank. • County Councillors; Dawn Denton had provided a report which had been circulated and further reported as listed below. Cllr Adam Boyden had sent apologies for absence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Somerset Council’s redundancy programme was going ahead with a reduction of 25% in staffing levels. ○ At the current time, it was expected that bankruptcy would be avoided during the current year, although the situation in respect of 2025-26 remained uncertain. ○ The Chairman asked for clarification as to the impact of the redundancies on the operational capacity of the planning and strategic planning policy departments, given the significant delays already being experienced in receiving responses from both departments. Cllr Denton reported that planning was a statutory function and, as such, was exempt from redundancies however, staff levels had reduced due to officer resignations and the backlog of cases and lack of enforcement officers was acknowledged. ○ The Chairman drew attention to two significant enforcement issues within the parish, which he had reported to Somerset Council. The Chairman would copy Cllr Denton in on future correspondence regarding both issues and reported that he would continue to chase for progress on both given the potentially serious nature of the breaches. He also reported on a recently raised enforcement issue at Brownshutters Airfield, on which no acknowledgement had yet been received. ○ Cllr Denton asked for an update on the planned review of flooding in the parish (previous minutes refer) so that support could be provided by SC in readiness for the winter months. The Chairman would follow this up and copy Cllr Denton in on the correspondence. ○ Cllr Murfitt asked whether there had been any changes to SC’s recycling collections as the schedule appeared to be somewhat erratic. Cllr Denton confirmed that a sub-contractor had been appointed to take on this service. ○ Cllr Fox asked whether Cllr Denton was aware of any operational problems experienced by other parishes in relation to planning matters. Cllr Denton was unaware of any. ○ The Chairman discussed the ARG application relating to Mount Pleasant Farm, confirming for Cllr Denton that the Case Officer had undertaken to consider all three applications relating to the site together, as both the

	<p>agricultural and full applications were interrelated. Cllr Denton confirmed that the AGR application would be processed in a different manner given its status as notification only. The Chairman reported that the PC and residents had submitted comments against all three applications, as conjoined applications on the same parcel of land. It was confirmed that the applications would be referred to Committee should the Officer recommendation differ from the PC's views.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Palairt Hall – No report. ○ Church Mead Committee – No report.
8989	<p>Planning Applications, Appeals and Consultations 2023/1918/FUL - Bell Hill Garage Bell Hill Norton St Philip Bath Somerset - Demolition of existing garage buildings; erection of 9 No. dwellings; cottage extension; erection of new commercial garage building (sui generis); and associated access, landscaping and drainage works – Re-consult – Members noted receipt of the application, further noting that an extension had been granted for PC comments and the application was therefore referred to the October PC meeting. It was confirmed that a site meeting had been arranged for later in September.</p> <p><i>At this point Standing Orders were suspended in order to enable members to question the applicant for Land at Brownshutters Farm (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Lund)</i></p> <p>Members discussed the application with the applicant with the following information being clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promotion of the access from the A366 had been planned due to safety concerns with the access from the A36, and the plan for the access road across the site had been developed to avoid the need for vehicles to cross the runway. • It was planned for one of the smaller barns on the site to be repurposed as shop to service the fishing lakes. • The applicant also provided information on a failed initiative to develop a similar proposal for fishing lakes with Chippenham Town Council. <p>2024/1140/FUL - Land At Brownshutters Farm Farleigh Road Norton St Philip Bath Somerset - Creation of 5.no fishing lakes, nature conservation & wildlife areas, the construction of an acoustic bund and a new access track with associated parking – Support, in principle subject to the resolutions of the issues as listed below in the main detail of the PC's comments: (proposed Cllr Lund, seconded Cllr Murfitt). Cllr Fox abstained from the vote on ethical grounds.</p> <p>Brownshutters Farm is located approximately 1.8km north-east of Norton St Philip and 1.6km west of Farleigh Hungerford. The proposed development seeks a change of use of the existing agricultural land to create 5 fishing lakes together with a new access track and associated parking.</p> <p>The Applicant seeks to construct the lakes in 2 phases. The first phase would comprise lakes 1 and 2 located on the north section of the site. The construction of lakes 3-5 on the south</p>

section of the site would start once lakes 1 and 2 have been completed. Lakes 1 and 2 would be used for 24-hour fishing, whilst lakes 3, 4 and 5 will be in use during daylight hours only.

The site is currently four arable fields, classed as Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) by Natural England. The applicant considers that the land is at the lower end of Grade 3. All of the site lies within the Bristol and Bath Green Belt. Access to the site is currently via the existing farm access off the A36; however a new track is proposed from the existing access to Brownshutters airfield. This access is from the A366 and no increased use of the A36 access is proposed. The proposed access from the A366 is approx. 100m north of Farleigh Yard, the location of the very popular Farleigh Road Farm Shop and Cafe and other smaller commercial units. Approx. 400m to the south and also accessed from the A366 are both the Haven Timber yard/retail outlet and the Springleaze light industrial units.

The PC notes that no new buildings are proposed in this application; however the proposed new track terminates in a car park. The PC is also aware of the comments submitted both by Somerset Highways and National Highways (5th and 22nd August 2024), both requesting much more detail. Government Policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is that *“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”* Exceptions to this general rule are set out in Paragraphs 154 and 155. Para 154b) allows for *“the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation..... as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”*; Para 155 gives further detail of other forms of development which are not inappropriate providing they preserve the “openness” of the Green Belt and do not *“conflict with the purposes of including land within it.”* These include (at sub section e) *“material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation)”*.

The NPPF has three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development. These objectives are: economic, social and environmental. The application should enable the diversification from farming to another rural based enterprise which will potentially provide economic and environmental enhancements together with recreational facilities. The PC has suggested to the applicant that substantial social benefits for the local community could result from the provision of a permissive path off the existing PROW. This would enable a “circular” walk. This could be secured by means of a condition.

The Parish Council thus considers that the proposed development of the fishing lakes could be a suitable form of development within the Green Belt, meeting the tests in NPPF paras 154&155.

The PC does have concerns about the proposed access. This will introduce an approximately 1km long, 3.5m wide track (with occasional passing places) between the A366 and the proposed car park adjacent to the existing farm buildings. The Council’s Landscape Officer does not completely understand the need for the new access when a surfaced track exists directly from the A36 to the proposed car park. However, National Highways have not commented on the access and Somerset

Highways has requested further highway detail to include “a detailed drawing of the access, to include geometry, radii, surface materials and drainage details”. It is therefore difficult for the PC to comment further at this time. The new track would run alongside the hangers and ancillary buildings used by Brownshutters airfield. It therefore has the potential to be an access route for those buildings. With this in mind, the PC wishes to draw the LPA’s attention to Section 5 of the Planning Statement (Pre Application Consultation): *“5.1 The Applicant sought pre-application advice with the former Mendip District Council (LPA) in relation to the creation of 6.no fishing lakes, nature conservation and wildlife site and the construction of a sound bund in July 2022 under reference 2022/1033/L4PA. 5.2 The pre-app also included the potential for an upgrading of the grass runway associated with the existing airfield, the provision of on-site refreshments and site facilities including a kitchen, toilets and shower facilities, in addition to the provision of a tackle shop, and solar and wind power generation. It is to be noted that these are not included in the subject application.”*

The PC recognises that the potential developments referenced in para 5.2 are not included in the current application. Furthermore, it would not be predisposed to object to any of these but suggests that the route of the proposed track in particular would result in the *“upgrading of the grass runway”* being more viable. Any increase in operations at the airfield would be a concern for both PC and community. The PC suggests that this is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

There is very little detail on new planting. The PC requests that this be agreed with Somerset Council prior to a grant of permission in order to enhance the site’s ecology and secure the Biodiversity Net Gain.

The PC would appreciate the opportunity to comment further following the anticipated submission of responses to the comments made by Somerset Highways, National Highways, Local Flood Authority and Tree Officer.

The PC supports the principle of this application. It provides economic and environmental benefits and has the potential to provide a social benefit. Subject to the resolution of the issues set out above the Parish Council supports this application.

At this point Standing Orders were re-instated (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Lund).

Members received and considered a planning application received after the issue of the agenda *(where the response time fell outside of the meeting schedule and an extension cannot be obtained):*

2024/1529/CLP - Brooklyn Cottage Wells Road Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Demolition of the existing car port – Notification only – Support (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Fox).

Planning Appeals

Planning Appeals 2023/0640/FUL, 2023/0643/FUL & 2023/0644/FUL (Fortescue Fields) – the Chairman reported that the reconvened PINS hearing had taken place on 5th September 2024 and the outcome was now awaited. It was confirmed that the Inspector had given no

indication for the timeline for her determination and that neither party were seeking costs in relation to the appeal.

Planning Consultations

Members considered any comments to make in respect of the current consultation on proposed reforms to the NPPF and, following debate, it was resolved that Cllrs Hasell and Hitchins would liaise to prepare a draft response for members' comments, with authority being delegated to the Clerk to submit the final response (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Murfitt).

8990

Financials

- a) Council payments due as listed were approved (proposed Cllr Lund, seconded Cllr Fox). Payments would be raised as soon as the cheque book was received and the Clerk updated members on issues experienced with the current bank. *Agenda items b) to e) below were duly noted and adopted (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Lund).*
- b) Bank Reconciliation Statement July 2024 (previously circulated).
- c) Budget Report as at July 2024 (previously circulated).
- d) Earmarked Reserves as at July 2024 (previously circulated).
- e) External Audit Report for year ending 31st March 2024 (previously circulated).
The Clerk would arrange for the publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit.

N Duke	Expenses September 2024 LGA 1972 S 112	£ 86.75
Cllr Hasell	Chairman's expenses LGA 1972 S 111	£ 103.28
Hardington Vale PCC	Photocopying LGA 1972 S 111	£ 116.00
SALC	Code of Conduct training LGA 1972 S 111	£ 25.00
HMRC	PAYE/NI August 2024 LGA 1972 S 112	£ 139.08
Devon & Somerset Pension	Pension contributions August 2024 LGA 1972 S 112	£ 367.18
St Philip and St James Church	Release of annual grant LGA 1972 S 214	£ 1,100.00
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit fee 2023-24 LGA 1972 S 151	£ 504.00
Context Planning	Reissue and new invoice LGA 1972 S 111	£ 7980.00

8991	<p>Litter and dog waste bin charges 2025/26</p> <p>Members had been provided with information from Somerset Council regarding future options and potential charges for the emptying of litter and dog waste bins on parish-owned land for the 25/26 financial year. It was noted that the bins on Church Mead were currently managed and operated by the Church Mead Committee and therefore fell outside of the remit of Somerset Council. The other bins in the parish were noted not to be within the ownership of the Parish Council and the Clerk would respond to Somerset Council to confirm that none of the bins mentioned in their correspondence were owned or operated by the PC.</p>
8992	<p>Traffic Action Group and Highways</p> <p>Cllr Fox provided a summary of a TAG meeting held on Thursday 5th September referring to the notes of that meeting, which are appended to the minutes. In addition the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team would continue to carry out a traffic count to monitor the impact of the closure of the A36; the counts would be carried out on the same days/times in order to provide a comparison. • TAG was considering a project to improve pedestrian safety throughout the village and a consultation to gather empirical evidence and views on potential solutions was being planned. The draft survey would be prepared at the next TAG meeting and then be submitted to the PC for endorsement prior to issue. Cllr Fox reported that any agreed consultation would be run in the same way as previous PC consultations. • Further correspondence had been prepared in relation to the A366 safety report (previous PC minutes refer) and this was approved for release to the neighbouring PC's involved in the initiative. • A suggestion had been tabled at the TAG meeting to look at a demotion of the A366 to a B road. The implications and process for so doing had not yet been established and further work would therefore need to be carried out on this proposal before it could be considered further. • The purchase of an additional SID would be taken forward once the outcome of the grant application to Avon and Somerset Police was known.
8993	<p>Neighbourhood Plan for Norton St Philip</p> <p>It was noted that the Regulation 14 consultation was currently 'live'. There were therefore no further updates.</p>
8994	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>None.</p>
8995	<p>Parish News</p> <p>The following items were agreed for inclusion in the next edition of Parish News:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus timetables • Reminder about the current Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 consultation • Policing team visits to the village

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General update <p>Cllr Murfitt raised a query regarding the fact that Farleigh Hungerford was not listed among the areas covered for the Parish News. Cllr Murfitt would raise this with the editing team.</p>
8996	Meeting schedule Wednesday 9 th October 2024 – The Old School Room, Farleigh Hungerford

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.40 pm.