



# Latimer & Ley Hill Annual Parish Meeting | MINUTES

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21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 / 7.00pm | Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

## **ATTENDEES**

Cllr Anne Birkett (AB), Cllr John Drewery, Cllr Nigel Hill (NH), Cllr Steve Thorp (ST), Cllr Chris Gregory (CG), Cllr Chris Harris (CH) Claire Leek (Clerk), Mitchel Pugh (MP)(Senior Planning Enforcement Officer)

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### **| Mitchel Pugh - Background**

Mitchel Pugh described the types of development he gets involved in as the Senior Planning Enforcement Officer for Buckinghamshire Council. Focusing on minerals and waste specifically, Mitchel is responsible for everything from unauthorised small-scale tipping to large sites and landfill, and carries out a monitoring role on behalf of the council. Although the council are not obliged, they will perform a certain number of visits to a large extraction site to maintain a good overview of what is happening on site.

### **| Mitchel Pugh – Meadhams Farm Timeline**

Since a lot of focus at the site in 2016/2017, when the liaison group was set up and in communication with the site operators, there has been no activity and the site was considered dormant from early 2018.

Became aware of new activity at the site following an email query from the parish council at the end of February 2021. There had not been any contact from the landowner at this point.

A soft spot check was carried out at the end of March 2021. Mitchel spoke with the operator who made it clear that they planned to recommence filling, but nothing was happening at the time and the site was being prepared. The operator was fully aware of the notices and preparations required.

A full monitoring inspection was carried out mid-April 2021. Site prep works underway and still no fixed date for extraction or import.

The council has been made aware of site prep works starting 28<sup>th</sup> April, but these will not be too obtrusive.

The council require a minimum of 1 weeks notice prior to import/extraction at the site.

There is a commitment from Buckinghamshire council to visit 5 times in the financial year – 3 will be in Q1 and the remainder to be spaced out. This is in addition to any enforcement visits that may arise as a result of reports received.

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### **| Question Topic: Site Security (Question from ST)**

The parish council reported the issue of broken fencing at the site which led to people swimming in the quarry last year and again recently. The parish council would like to know if there are any regulations or responsibilities on the land owner as it is a very dangerous situation.

Mitchel says there is no onus on the landowner to secure the site/prevent easy access. Security at sites like Meadhams Farm is always tricky. There may be some actions within a permit along the HSE line which may specify the site is secure. Mitchel will follow up on this once the site preparations that are currently underway are finished. The operator's job during site preparations is get the site ready to go and this may include a requirement to sure up the fences.

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**| Question: Removal of the water in the cell (Question from ST)**

The cell for infill is currently full of water and the parish council ask what will happen to this body of water.

Mitchel says there is a condition of the permit that specifies that all water on site be displaced prior to infill. It is likely that this water will be pumped out whilst the site is being prepared.

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**| Question: Permitted route of vehicles (Question from NH)**

Mitchel confirmed the original agreed route in the S106 agreement (2011) has not been changed. The parish council are concerned about the school and the narrow lanes on the approach. The parish council feel they have a responsibility to tell the school, walkers, residents with parked cars etc that there is going to be the increased vehicle presence.

\*Mitchel sent the route after the close of meeting to the parish clerk. Vehicles must turn left out of the site.

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**| Question: Potential for Traffic Bottleneck (NH)**

Last year there was a big problem with the agricultural vehicles following the farming of maize in the parish. The vehicles were large and caused damage to the verges and caused congestion due to the width of the vehicles. There were up to 30/40 vehicle movements per day associated with the maize farming. How can we control this and the (capped) 25 movements from Meadhams Farm and avoid bottlenecks?

Mitchel said although we cannot control the potential for congestion, it would benefit all parties if the issue is mentioned loud and clear early on. The operators at Meadhams Farm will want to plan as best they can to avoid unnecessary delays.

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**| Question: Correspondence from Owners (AB)**

The parish council received an email on 31/3/21 from Steven Morris – from AT Contracting, the site operators. The email says that current activity on the site is to get the site ready and compliant for a potential operational date from July. The email references the liaison group that was initially set up and suggests a meeting with the parish council/community would be scheduled for late April, and they had some ideas to discuss with the community.

The original liaison group would like to get going again and Mitchel agrees it would be beneficial for all to put the community face to face with the operators and/or owner.

Mitchel was not aware of the email and has not had an email directly along these lines.

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**| Question: Levels of Control (CG)**

Questioned what control the council has over the site if they are carrying out activity lawfully and are compliant to all regulations.

Buckinghamshire council will have day to day functional control and will visit and pull them in to line if and when needed. There is a condition that restricts the import amounts and this helps keeps things transparent as it links back to number of vehicles etc. The council will maintain an on site presence.

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**| Mitchel Pugh – Final Words**

With the site going from dormant for a number of years up to what is lawfully allowed, will seem like a huge increase in activity but it will be tightly monitored.

Mitchel is the single point of contact for all things minerals and waste. If the parish council have an issue with unauthorised tipping or extraction, report it to Mitchel and it will be investigated. He will keep in touch and provide updates as and when necessary, on Meadhams Farm.

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**| Questions from the parishioners – Landfill Tax – Funding Opportunity**

Going back 20+ years there was an opportunity for local communities to get a percentage of the land fill tax paid in the local area. In 1997 funding via this route was used to help build the village hall in Ley Hill. Proposed that this could be worth exploring for the parish council to fund a community project if the funding.

The funding opportunity is still available. The tax paid is determined by the tonnage tipped in a year so this is something to look into a year after filling begins.

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**| Chairman**

Councillor Anne Birkett thanked the residents for joining the meeting and for the continued support of the parish council and the community over the past few years.

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Meeting Closed at | 07.43pm |

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Anne Birkett

Chairman

Latimer and Ley Hill Parish Council