

Mere Parish Council

PARISH CLERK - MRS. L. C. WOOD

CLERKS REPORT – April 2014

Agenda Items

5a) Band Hut – Timberwise survey report + update on proceedings – Here is a copy of the survey report from Timberwise:

Our investigation has been confined to ground floor structure only and was of a non-destructive nature.

The building itself is in a poor state of repair and in desperate need of redecoration externally and general refurbishment internally, which would include the repair and reinstatement of the timber flooring throughout.

Our initial instructions following discussion with Mr Christopher Weedon of Gilyard Scarth Surveyors was to provide budget costs to undertake a chemical sterilisation of the timbers and oversite and repair of the timber plates in preparation for others to reinstate new floor timbers to the left hand room where the existing floor has been removed, evidently on the basis that it was affected by dry rot.

We can confirm however that from our initial observations of the retained timbers and the general debris within the over site, most of the evidence observed suggests wet rot decay (brown rot) and varying wood boring insects are responsible for the deterioration of the floor including Common Furniture Beetle and also wood boring Weevil.

However the presence of the true dry rot fungus should not be fully overlooked.

The actual structure of the building is formed with a timber frame supported on a sole plate which is constructed off of brick masonry, being clad internally with a fibreboard material and externally with Shiplap softwood boarding.

There is also evidence that Asbestos sheeting may exist in the left hand room and it is also not known (given the age of the building) whether the fibreboard may contain Asbestos and we have therefore removed small samples for further analysis. We can now confirm that the fibre board is free of Asbestos, although the cement based heat shield on the rear wall does contain Asbestos and its (professional) removal is advised. In the event that we are instructed to undertake the works advised we can discuss this with you in more detail.

The rooms to the right of the entrance are currently carpeted and over-clad with chipboard although we can confirm that wet rot decay does also exist within the room to the far right and it therefore has to be assumed that the entire ground floor area is affected by decay and should be replaced. However, we can give no assurance to the overall condition of the timber plates and timber uprights that form the main walls, but assume that they are in a similar condition to those within the left hand room that is currently exposed.

Unfortunately, chipboard has also been laid across part of the floor within the entrance and the room immediately to the right and these were not accessible due to the fact that the carpets have been heavily stuck down, so we are assuming that the entire floor area within the former Band Hut is in need of replacement.

Discussion & Recommendations

It is understood that the local Railway Club are intending to take on the building for their future use and as such have evidently agreed to undertake the necessary repair/reinstatement of the flooring, and we assume all internal/external redecoration. This is however on the understanding that the building is provided in a reasonable structurally sound condition and water tight, but more importantly 'free from decay' and any potential dry rot spores.

As such therefore it is intended that we undertake the following works which will include the removal of the external cladding, internal linings (as deemed necessary) replacement of the horizontal timber wall plates all round, the vertical uprights (as required) with all necessary reinstatement and appropriate damp proofing measures introduced to the plates and external cladding, as considered necessary and in accordance with building good practice.

We will also undertake to remove the internal cladding, although this will be reinstated and only replaced where necessary and on completion of all works undertake a full chemical spray of all timbers as required. However we have not included for the reinstatement of new skirting's, this we assume can be dealt with in conjunction with the reinstatement works.

In addition to the repair of the main structural framing, we will also carry out de-mossing of the roof coverings and cleaning of the gutters all round to ensure that they are free flowing. On the basis of Timberwise undertaking the works required, we would suggest that you would need to budget the following;

(LW taken out figures in case this becomes prejudicial to future discussion)

In relation to the internal redecoration of the building, we would suggest that given the fact that there is a considerable amount of internal deterioration of decorations resulting from condensation mould, the most practical solution is to introduce improved ventilation which assumingly will occur once the building is put back into regular use and redecorate throughout using specialist anti-mould paints, having first suitably prepared the internal fabric by washing down with a biocide/fungicide wash.

It is also assumed that with appropriate background heating (if economically viable), the building should be suitable for continued use assuming that ongoing maintenance and routine cleaning of gutters etc is undertaken.

In relation to the reinstatement of the flooring, we are concerned that these have limited sub floor ventilation particularly to the right hand side of the building and as such whilst a conventional timber floor can be installed using pre-treated timbers and appropriate damp proofing measures and alternative option could also be considered. The introduction of a concrete base and chipboard floating floor with insulation could also be an option, although this is much dependent on the Railway Club, as we understand they have members who intend to deal with this aspect of the work.

We trust that the information provided meets with your agreement and allows you to make an informed decision on how best to proceed. In the meantime, if you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact the writer otherwise we look forward to you further instructions on this matter anticipating that the works required can be completed within a 2-3 week period and that mains electricity and clean water supply can be made readily available for our use.

7b) Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document -

Notification of Intention to Prepare Two New Development Plan Documents

Wiltshire Council has published its intention to prepare the following Development Plan Documents (DPDs):

- Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations DPD; and
- Chippenham Site Allocations DPD.

To ensure development plans are as informed as possible from the outset of the preparation process, the Council is undertaking a consultation designed to seek representations on the proposed scope of such documents. The purpose of this letter is to invite such comments.

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations DPD

The scope of this document is proposed to cover two key matters. Its primary role is to support the delivery of housing growth set out within the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy.

The document will identify sufficient land (in the form of sites) across Wiltshire to provide surety of housing delivery over the plan period to 2026.

In addition to identifying sites for housing delivery, the document will review settlement boundaries, as defined in the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy in relation to: the Principal Settlements of Salisbury and Trowbridge; Market Towns; Local Service Centres in the South Wiltshire Housing Market Area; and Large Villages.

The document will present proposals and associated policies designed to be in general conformity with the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework. It will consider sites in relation to the geographic area of Wiltshire, but excluding Chippenham. Growth at Chippenham is to be dealt with as a separate DPD, as set out below.

Chippenham Site Allocations DPD

The scope of this document is designed to ensure that specific development sites are allocated at Chippenham to fulfil the growth planned for the town over the period to 2026.

The document will also present policies designed to enable the delivery of priority regeneration schemes as set out in the draft Chippenham Town Centre Masterplan.

The document will include proposals and associated policies designed to be in general conformity with the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework. It will cover the geographic area of the Chippenham Community Area and parts of the Corsham and Calne Community Areas which are adjacent to the built area of Chippenham town.

Consultation arrangements

If you would like to comment on the proposed scope of these documents, representations should be submitted during the 6 week consultation period, running from Monday 24 March until Monday 5 May 2014. Representations can be emailed to: spatialplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk. Alternatively, please send your representations to: Spatial Planning, Economic Development and Planning, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JD.

Further detail in terms of the timetable for preparing these documents is set out in the Council's latest [Local Development Scheme](#).

Call for Sites

The plan making process will involve the consideration of site proposals. If you have a site which you would like to be considered as part of this process, please let us know by completing the forms available on the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment web site (address below).

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planninganddevelopment/planningpolicy/strategichousinglandavailabilityassessment.htm>

If you have any queries about this 'Call for Sites' please contact the Council's Monitoring & Evidence Team via email: spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk. Alternatively, please call the Spatial Planning Team on 01225 713223.

8 b) Report on Rivers Group Meeting Held on 14th March:

Attendees :

Ian Sheppard	Mere Rivers Group
Paulette McManus	Mere Rivers Group
Adrienne Howell	Mere Rivers Group
Brett Norris	Mere Parish Council
Tony Denham	CCWater
Caroline Coleman	CCWater
Angus Menzies	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
Fiona Bowles	Wessex Water
Lesley Bennett	Wessex Water
Ian Colley	Wessex Water
Caroline Francis	Wessex Water

Apologies :

Christopher Greenwell	Environment Agency
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Current Situation in Mere :

Ian Sheppard provided a summary of the current situation with the Mere rivers, local residents are very happy with the appearance of the two streams. They are both flowing well and the source of the Shreen is currently higher than its usual site.

During the very wet weather this winter the flow in both streams was high but didn't break the banks in either case. As of today (14/3) one of the stepping stones outside Ians property has just risen above the water level.

2013 trial final results :

- The 2013 trial set out to stop the export from Mere once a groundwater level of 103.75 mAOD at Burton Mill was reached and to monitor the effect on the flows in both streams.
- The trial was largely successful; the transfer remained off for the majority of the period. The short periods of time where the transfer was needed were due to outages at other sites and high demand during the hot weather in July. The dry autumn meant that Codford remained restricted longer than usual and the Mere transfer was needed to cover this.
- The 2013 trials gave no consideration to the cost of turning off the transfer and this will also be the case for the 2014 trial.
- Concerns were raised over the planned expansion of Gillingham and the pressure that would put on the Mere source. The role of the grid was discussed and it was agreed that it would be useful for more information to be provided on the grid and how it would affect the Mere area. The Mere Rivers Group would like the council to lobby the Gillingham Town Council to include the fitting of water efficiency devices as mandatory on all new builds, Brett Norris to investigate this possibility.
- Tony Denham asked whether the Mere catchment could be used as a target for a Wessex lead water efficiency campaign, in the same way that Dorchester is in the Smart Water campaign. Caroline Francis explained that the Mere catchment has been chosen by Wessex for a combi boiler promotion, with all residents being offered the deal on a device to reduce power and water use, planned for April 2014.
- Important result from the 2013 trial was that for every 3-4 Ml reduction in abstraction from the Mere source, there is a 0.5 Ml/d benefit in flows in each stream.

- Angus Menzies said that last year's local monitoring results were very difficult to interpret and lacked consistency; he would like to see the monitoring continue over several seasons. This monitoring will need to be more regulated (i.e. on specific dates) and Ian Sheppard will try to recruit some more river monitors.
- Tony Denham asked what the group were trying to achieve in terms of rivers flows i.e. what constituted an acceptable flow in the streams. Ian S said that this year's flows were 'reasonable' and Tony raised the point that it was very important not to create unrealistic expectations of achievable flows in the rivers. Historic levels may not be attainable now for a variety of reasons, changing climatic conditions, increased demand for water due to population growth etc. Turning off the transfer will only restore flows to a certain point; beyond that reducing demand in the catchment must be the next focus.

2014 Trigger Point

- Ian C explained that the original plan for the 2013 trial was to use a flow in the stream but as the gauges couldn't be installed in time a groundwater level was substituted. Using a level at Burton Mill is not ideal as it is too sensitive, being very close to the river, so it was proposed that a flow of 2 MI/d in either stream (usually this flow is reached in both at approximately the same time) be used as the trigger for turning off the export for 2014.
- Once off Wessex will endeavour to keep the transfer off until the flows are significantly above the trigger flow in the Autumn. The transfer may be needed briefly during the summer for operational outages or periods of high demand.
- The need for a formal documented policy was discussed but it was agreed that this was not needed until 2015 when the site would be operated under AIM.
- The possibility of an end date in the year was discussed, from which point Wessex would be able to operate the transfer regardless of flows in the streams and this was agreed as the 1st November.
- The strategy agreed by everyone at the meeting was therefore that Wessex would endeavour not to use the transfer from Mere source when the flow in the Shreen and / or Ashfield fell below 2 MI/d in the spring. This would be kept off during the summer whenever possible and would be restarted when the flows rose above 2 MI/d for a sustained period in the Autumn and/or the date of the 1st November was reached.
- The point on both gauge boards which equates to 2 MI/d will be marked so residents can clearly see when the trigger has been reached.

Communication

- The Mere Rivers Group will continue to communicate with local residents via Mere Matters and, if appropriate, The Blackmore Vale magazine.
- Brett Norris will continue to include updates on the group in the Monthly Clerks Report to the Council, which is available on the council website
- The need for more communication with Gillingham residents was discussed. Angus Menzies agreed to investigate the possibility of the Wildlife Trust engaging with the Gillingham schools and also to investigate the Trout in Schools project, run by the WCSRT.
- Brett Norris agreed to investigate getting some information on the work of the Mere Rivers Group on the Gillingham Town Council website.
- Wessex will inform the group when the trigger has been reached and the transfer has been turned off and then again when it has been switched back on. They will also be kept informed of any significant periods when the transfer is needed again in the summer.
- Wessex will organise another meeting of the group approximately 2 months after the 2014 trial has finished to discuss the findings. Any other meetings of the group will be organised by Ian and / or Paulette as necessary.

- The future of the Mere webpage was discussed and it was agreed that the page would be archived. The existing information would remain available in the short term, with a link directing anyone requiring more information to the parish council website. Caroline Francis to do this.
- The need for a river management plan was discussed but the problem of establishing riparian ownership in the town was proving problematic and no real progress has been made on this to date.