

# BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Parish Council Extra Ordinary Meeting Held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at 7.00pm in The Heritage Centre

### Present:

Cllr. P. Thompson (Chair)  
Cllr. V. Sandars  
Cllr. J. Wilcox  
S Youldon - Clerk

Cllr. J. Cole – Kintbury & Hungerford Ward  
Cllr. C. Rowles - Kintbury & Hungerford Ward  
4 Parishioners

### Apologies:

Cllr. M Hayes-Newington (Vice Chair)  
Cllr. P. Harris  
Cllr. P Kidling

	Action
<p>▪ <b>Declarations of Interest:</b> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p><b>Planning Applications</b></p> <p>The following applications were considered:</p> <p><b>19/01840/LBC2 Barrowdale, Boxford RG20 8DP</b> – Section 19: Variation of condition 2 ‘limit of permission’ of previously approved application 18/02463/LBC2: Replace windows in the western elevation wall of the kitchen and bathroom using the original openings. Councillors agreed a response of No Objections.</p> <p><b>19/01844/FUL The Bell at Boxford</b> – Partial residential redevelopment by demolition of outbuildings; erection of two-storey rear extension; provision of 6 flats (four with one bedroom and two with two bedrooms) and a staff flat (one bedroom); and renovation of existing public house area.</p> <p>In an open discussion the Parish Council heard concerns from the neighbouring property owners, two parishioners, attending Councillor opinions and written input from Cllr. Hayes-Newington and Cllr. Harris. In summary the concerns raised for the Objection letter to the Planning Officer were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Density of the dwellings on the site: The number of dwellings fitted in to the space was not in keeping with the rural village.</li> <li>- Parking: Plans do not provide sufficient parking for the flats or pub customers. In order for the pub to be successful passing trade is essential (as noted in the viability report). The allowance of 8 customer spaces does not represent that of a pub maximising passing trade. In addition, the 12 spaces allowed for the accommodation the Council fear will lead to more on-street parking, which is particularly dangerous at this busy junction.</li> <li>- External Design: It was noted that the developer is the same developer responsible for the conversion of the Lord Lyon at Stockcross. This conversion shows a woeful lack of design and has concerns that this development would do harm to the aesthetic of the whole village. It was also raised that these flats at Stockcross were still available to let, raising concerns that the interior design/ layout obviously does not meet the markets requirements.</li> <li>- Plans submitted are not sympathetic to the historic building that The Bell is.</li> <li>- Balcony’s: Are not consistent with the parish and wider AONB and will overlook neighbouring properties.</li> <li>- Roof Terrace: Again, this is not in keeping with the village and will provide a viewpoint over all neighbouring properties, which maybe acceptable in an urban environment but not a rural one.</li> <li>- Internal Design: Strong concerns were raised over the architect’s design incorporating obscured glass windows in the main accommodation of the apartments. This has been incorporated to increase privacy for the neighbouring properties but the PC questioned how long would it take for the new owners of the apartments to want to change these for windows they can see out of. This design reflects an urban solution not one suited to the village location.</li> </ul>	Resolved

# BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

- Environmental Impact: The PC questioned the environmental impact of this building. To propose 6 apartments on the edge of a village where public transport is limited and there are no local services within walking distance is not an environmental sound proposal.
- External Lighting: The application includes extensive external lighting, which is not in keeping with the village location and will cause light pollution.
- Flooding: The application includes a report on water levels and the surface water flooding but does not appear to show how this has been addressed in the plans submitted. The PC is very aware of how the water flows down the High Street and towards The Bell and neighbouring property and this needs to be fully addressed in any application on this site.
- Bin Storage: It was noted that the bin storage situated at the front of the property was not ideal.

In addition to the concerns raised on the application itself the Parish Council also discussed the long-term viability of the pub. It was agreed that the plans do not show any attempt to grow the business, income from letting rooms is lost and the PC questions whether the longer term aim is to run the business down to a point where the owner can then convert the rest of the building/land in to further apartments.

Councillors Cole & Rowles listened carefully to the concerns, they spoke about the process if the application was to go to committee and how the Parish Council and representatives can speak at that hearing. It was noted that 10 individual letters of objection were necessary for the application to automatically go to committee, but the Parish Council could also ask Cllr. Cole to call this in for hearing at committee. Ward Councillors to be copied on final response. Councillors agreed to discuss the proposal with neighbours to raise awareness. Clerk to monitor objection letters online and update councillors accordingly so a decision can be taken on whether Cllr. Cole needs to call the application to committee

SY

It was also noted that the orange planning notice sign did not go up on site until the 7<sup>th</sup> August, this would be mentioned in the Parish Councils response to ensure adequate time is still given to the parish to view the application.

Cllr. Thompson to draft the Objection letter to the Planning Officer and circulate for review before submitting to WBC. The deadline for response was noted as the 20<sup>th</sup> August.

PT

Following on from discussions of the planning application, it was agreed the village needs a better offering and with an entrepreneurial spirit more could be done to make a community offering incorporating a pub and essential services that also thrives on passing trade. The loss of two pubs in Stockcross has made local offerings thin on the ground. It was agreed that ways to engage the community would be discussed at the September meeting.

## Any Other Business

**Cycle Route:** Cllr. Rowles reported that the idea to use the former railway line to make a safe cycle route to Newbury had been discussed with colleagues and was positively received. The Parish Council now needs to put together a formal case covering possible numbers that would use the route, how it can be funded and landowners along the route. Clerk to add to the September agenda.

SY

**Boxford Big Dig:** J Appleton reported that the Boxford dig starts 19<sup>th</sup> August. Help is need on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> to set up marquees, and the open day will be on the 31<sup>st</sup> August. Clerk to send details round on Parish email.

SY  
CR

**Drains & Gullies:** Problems with drains and gullies through the village have been noted, Clerk to meet with Highways Officer and Cllr. Rowles on site Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Resolved

**Clerk Wages:** Once members of the public had left the meeting, Clerk reported that to enable a variable standing order to be set up to pay the monthly clerk wages the internet user limit has to be increased from £100 to £150. Request letter to bank was approved and signed.

**Meeting Closed at 7.55pm**

**The remaining 2019 meetings will be held:** 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November

Boxford Parish Council Clerk – Sarah Youldon  
Email:parishcouncil@boxford.org.uk