

# MELBURY OSMOND PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting

### Re: Planning Application for the Proposed Extension to Melbury Dairy (WDDC Ref WD/D/15/002487)

**Venue:** Reading Room

**Date:** Tuesday 1st December 2015

**Time:** 19:30

**Present:**

**Council:** Jon Burden (Chair), James Evans (Vice-Chair), Anna Roxburgh, Michael Kowalewski, Martin Smith, Charles Swallow, Lindsay Reeve (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Pete Coverdale

**Public:** Eleven members of the public were present

#### 1. Open Meeting:

JB opened the meeting and explained its purpose was to discuss the planning application that had been made by Ilchester Estates to extend Melbury Dairy and to give the residents a chance to ask questions about it.

JB then outlined a meeting that had taken place a week before between the PC and Ben Jones (BJ) and Robbie Taylor (RT) of Ilchester Estates when the proposed plans were presented and the PC was able to ask BJ and RT questions on behalf of the village.

BJ explained that the Estate was looking at ways to streamline the dairy operation which was becoming less viable due to the problems afflicting dairy farmers with low milk prices. The proposed extension to Melbury Dairy was in order that they could re house the 200 strong herd currently at the outdated Holywell Dairy at Melbury and drive efficiency into the business. This would necessitate new barns and new shelters.

The councillors raised their concerns over traffic movement and noise and BJ stated that there would in fact be fewer movements with 14 less across the whole day and a total of 99 less a week as journeys to service the operation at Holywell would no longer be necessary.

The councillors asked if there were proposals to eventually make Melbury Dairy a super farm and were told definitely not as there would not be enough summer grazing. RT (the Farms Director) said that the grazing plateau had been reached and so there could be no further extension, after this proposed one, to the herd size.

BJ confirmed that there would be no additional tanker movements.

JB told BJ that the PC would hold an open meeting to discuss the plans with the village residents.

Having summarised the previous meeting JB then stated that he believed with less traffic it looked as though the proposal would be a benefit to the village and then invited the audience to ask any questions which they did and an open discussion took place with responses from the PC

This discussion covered:

- The Estate's estimate on less traffic movements due to Holywell closing and less slurry/feed journey plus the accuracy of the ATC ( Automatic Traffic Count)
- The capacity of the bio digester and possibility of any more.
- The question of a possible super farm being created at Melbury Dairy, as it had been an

indoor farm in the past and the proposed barns seemed larger than required for the new herd of 700 cows

- The possibility of the Estate using internal roads more.
- The fodder journeys from Holywell not being in the traffic figures supplied by the Estate.
- The possibility of any housing development for an extra dairyman.
- The visibility of the new farm buildings from the Yetminster road leading to the A37.
- Request for the estate to put in writing that traffic would be less (it was already in document supplied at the previous meeting with BJ and the PC)
- Possibility of the cows being moved from Golden Cross as there was capacity in the proposed development plans.

The Chairman then closed the open meeting and opened the Parish Council meeting

**Councillors Present /Absent as above.**

The Chair asked each councillor present for their views on the proposed plans and requests for clarification on some points were made. It was proposed that these be included in the documents returned to the WDDC Planning Officer.

Chair said he felt it was a good thing overall for the village as traffic would be reduced and requested a show of hands in favour of the proposed plans but with the following comments being attached:

1. The PC does not accept the accuracy of the historic traffic count used in the Traffic Report and would not wish to see it used as a baseline of traffic movements for any future planning applications.
2. The PC would recommend the proposed extension does not allow more than 700 cows.
3. The PC would ask for a new application if the Estate wishes to change their mode of farming to 365 days a year indoor grazing.

Voting cast by Chairman Jon Burden, Cllr Evans, Cllr Roxburgh, Cllr Swallow, Cllr Smith, Cllr Kowalewski

Result

5 in favour

1 abstention

It was resolved that the PC was in favour of the proposed plans with comments attached.

Meeting Closed 20:30