

# ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 4 FEBRUARY 2016

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**Correspondence sent since 7 January 2016**

- a) Letter to Des Johnston confirming his successful tender for grass cutting of playing field
- b) Letter to Volunteer Link-up enclosing donation
- c) Email to Oxfordshire Highways regarding verge outside Thistle Cottage development, copied to WODC Planning officer

## **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL'S RISK ASSESSMENT**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 As part of its Annual Governance Statement which is submitted to the external auditor the Parish Council is required to confirm that “we have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks.”
- 1.2 The Practitioner's Guide to Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, produced by NALC states that “risk management is the process whereby local councils methodically address the risks associated with what they do and the services which they provide. The focus of good risk management is to identify what can go wrong and take proportionate steps to avoid this or successfully manage the consequences. Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about ensuring the achievement of objectives set by the council to deliver high quality public services.”
- 1.3 The council is expected to keep the risks it faces under review and to formally review the risk assessment at least once per year.
- 1.4 Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council last carried out a review of its risk assessment in February 2015.

### **2.0 Risk Assessment Review 2016**

- 2.1 The Clerk has reviewed the risk assessment.
- 2.2 The Clerk is not proposing any amendments, although it is for the Council to make the final decision on whether the risk assessment is complete and whether any amendments need to be made.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the Parish Council considers the risk assessment, proposing any amendments considered necessary. If there are no amendments to be made, that the Parish Council approves and adopts the risk assessment as attached.

Prepared by Helen Sandhu, Clerk & RFO  
29 January 2016

## ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Originally adopted at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 March 2008

Last reviewed and reapproved at a meeting of the Parish Council on 5 February 2015

Business Area	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
Clerk	Misappropriation of funds	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – interview/references</li> <li>Maintain appropriate level of fidelity guarantee insurance</li> <li>Bank reconciliation checked to original documentation on a quarterly basis by Chairman</li> </ul>
	Poor performance/incompetence	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – interview/references</li> <li>Membership of SLCC</li> <li>Training courses</li> <li>Oversight by experienced councillors</li> </ul>
	Health & safety issues – lone working at home	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require Clerk to keep up to date on Health &amp; Safety issues</li> <li>Employers' liability insurance</li> </ul>
	Loss of trained and experienced Clerk through resignation	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – ensuring Clerk is committed</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Support</li> </ul>

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Business Area	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
<b>Councillors</b>	Bringing Parish Council into disrepute	) L	) H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain training on Code of Conduct and other regulations/procedures as appropriate</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors have up to date documentation on Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Clear procedural Standing Orders</li> <li>• Libel and slander insurance</li> <li>• All official correspondence to be sent by the Clerk</li> <li>• Official media contact to be conducted through Chair, with statements to be agreed by Parish Council</li> </ul>
	Not declaring an interest as necessary			
	Misrepresenting Parish Council; acting in isolation but claiming to represent Council			
	Health and Safety	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Accident insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Legal/Statutory Powers</b>	Acting outside of legal powers	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of reference books</li> <li>• Membership of NALC – referring new and unclear matters to them</li> <li>• Identify legal power for new activities before commit to them</li> <li>• Legal powers used for expenditure noted on agendas and minutes</li> </ul>
	Not maximising use of legal powers – missing out on things the Parish Council are permitted to do	M	L	

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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
<b>Public Involvement</b>	Acting without a mandate from the public represented by the Parish Council	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage local residents to register as candidates for elections</li> <li>• Support local Parish magazine, enter an article providing updates from the Parish Council in each edition of the magazine</li> <li>• Parish Council page on Parish website – includes recent Minutes</li> <li>• Parish Council Twitter account</li> <li>• Actively promote Annual Parish Meeting</li> <li>• Keep Parish Noticeboards up to date with Parish Council news</li> <li>• Update Parish Plan as considered necessary</li> </ul>
<b>Procedures</b>	Not following correct procedures for meetings – exposing decisions taken to challenge	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of reference books</li> <li>• Membership of NALC – referring new and unclear matters to them</li> <li>• Training of Clerk</li> <li>• Experience of Councillors</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors are aware of procedure for calling Extraordinary Meetings</li> <li>• Clear procedural Standing Orders</li> </ul>

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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Not dealing effectively with major local emergencies	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic emergency plan developed. Consider further development of emergency procedures</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors are aware of procedure for calling Extraordinary Meetings in event of emergency</li> </ul>
<b>Records</b>	Loss by fire/flood/computer failure	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records kept in secure premises</li> <li>• Back-ups of computerised records maintained</li> </ul>
	Destruction by error	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk to refer to legal time period for document retention before destroying records</li> <li>• Clerk to consider historical significance of records before destroying them, and if in any doubt to seek advice from Parish Council/third party expert</li> </ul>
<b>Financial</b>	Poor cashflow management	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment procedures – appointment of suitably qualified/experienced Clerk, and identification of training needs</li> </ul>
	Poor record keeping	L	H	
	Failure to comply with VAT/Inland Revenue regulations	L	M	

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	Failure to comply with audit regulations	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for Clerk</li> <li>• Training for Councillors</li> <li>• Reference books</li> <li>• Financial Procedure Manual maintained; changes to procedures to be agreed at Parish Council meeting</li> <li>• Retention of suitable internal auditor to check accounts and records on an annual basis</li> <li>• Quarterly accounts circulated to Councillors and included on meeting agendas</li> <li>• Actual cash balance notified to Councillors on a monthly basis</li> <li>• Expenditure checked against budget before it is committed to</li> <li>• Bank reconciliation checked to original documentation on a quarterly basis by Chairman</li> </ul>
	Inadequate precept	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget prepared by Clerk following input from Councillors</li> <li>• Precept set on basis of draft budget</li> </ul>



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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Incorrect salary payments made	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to salaries decided at Parish Council meetings and minuted</li> <li>• Salary payments made are signed (cheque or online) by 2 Councillors</li> </ul>
	Payments made to incorrect suppliers/for wrong amount	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments to be made included on agenda of full Parish Council meetings for review/approval</li> <li>• Payments signed (cheque or online) by 2 Councillors</li> <li>• Original invoices provided to Councillors signing cheques</li> <li>• Direct Debit payments to be limited and mandates signed in accordance with cheque signature procedures</li> </ul>
	Not maximising interest	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise funds kept in interest bearing account</li> <li>• Review banking arrangements from time to time</li> </ul>
	Not maximising grant income	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider availability of grants when undertaking new projects and apply for any that are appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Suppliers/Contractors</b>	Poor reputation of supplier/contractor impacting on Parish Council	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain references before trading with new supplier/contractor as appropriate</li> </ul>
	Supplier/contractor not properly insured	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain copy of current insurance as appropriate</li> </ul>

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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Competitive Pricing/Best Value	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotation/tender procedures specified in Standing Orders and followed for new contracts</li> </ul>
	Management of relationship with major supplier/contractor	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider need for dealings with contractor/supplier to be carried out by more than one member of the Parish Council, particularly for initial meeting and signing off work</li> <li>• All paperwork to be routed through Clerk</li> </ul>
<b>Benches</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>War Memorial</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Bus Shelters</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
<b>Notice Boards</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Dog Bins/Litter Bins provided by Parish Council</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> </ul>
<b>Electrical Equipment</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to user/fire risk	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only purchase electrical equipment that complies with current safety standards</li> <li>• Keep equipment properly maintained</li> <li>• Users to do a visual check on flexes for wear and tear every six months and remove damaged equipment</li> <li>• Test electrical equipment as appropriate</li> </ul>

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

16/04419/S73

### Chimney Farm Barns, Chimney

Variation of condition 4 of planning permission W2001/0924 to allow unrestricted use for C3 (dwelling) use

#### 1.0 Current application

1.1 The owner is applying again for the condition restricting the barns to holiday lets only to be removed to enable them to be used as normal dwellings.

#### 2.0 Previous applications

2.1 The owner last applied for this condition to be removed in 2014 (14/01538/S73). This application was due to be considered by the Lowlands Planning Committee of WODC on 15 December 2014, with an officer recommendation for refusal. The applicant withdrew the application shortly before the committee meeting.

2.2 The owner also applied for this condition to be removed in 2010 (10/0782/P/S73). The application was refused, which was upheld on appeal in 2011.

2.3 The grounds for the refusal hinged on the non-compliance with Policy H10 of the Local Plan which restricts the conversion of buildings in the countryside and small villages, on the lack of a clearly presented case proving the unviability of the accommodation to be used for purposes other than for dwellings, and the likelihood of the relaxation of the condition to lead to a significant increase in vehicle movements.

2.4 The Parish Council objected to both the 2014 and 2010 applications.

#### 3.0 Applicant's case

3.1 This new application seeks to address the reasons for which the WODC planning officer was recommending refusal of the 2014 application.

3.2 The application also seeks to draw support by citing the continuing changes to national planning policy which are intended to boost housing supply.

3.3 The applicant refers to Paragraph 55 of the NPPF which supports the "re-use of redundant or disused buildings" as an alternative to the construction of new isolated homes in the countryside (it is to be noted, however, that these buildings are neither redundant nor disused).

3.4 The applicant addresses the requirement under Paragraph 55 of the NPPF for the development to "lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting" by asserting that the use of the barns as 3 private residential properties would enhance the hamlet as this would be a more "tranquil" use than the occupation of the barns by large party groups of holiday makers.

3.5 The applicant further refers to Paragraph 51 of the NPPF which says that planning authorities "should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic

reasons why such development would be inappropriate.” The applicant asserts that whilst the barns are not in fact in B use, the same principle should be applied for the commercial use of the barns.

- 3.6 The applicant also refers to the more recent creation of Permitted Development Rights which the Government introduced to encourage the reuse of redundant rural buildings, including the subsequent additional guidance which states that sustainability concerns should not prevent permission for the conversion of redundant rural buildings from being granted (because of their rural location, for example).
- 3.7 The application summarises this position by stating “It is clear, therefore, that national planning policy supports the efficient reuse of redundant and underutilised buildings to help boost housing delivery in rural areas, including in more isolated rural areas.”

“Economic Development First” rejection

- 3.8 One of the reasons why permission to withdraw the occupancy condition has historically been refused by both WODC and the Planning Inspector, was that the applicant hadn't presented sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the barns could not continue in business use for economic reasons.
- 3.9 Policy H10 of the existing Local Plan states that permission to convert existing buildings into dwellings in the countryside and small villages should only be given where “the building is not suitable or reasonably capable of the re-use for employment purposes, recreational or community uses, visitor facilities or tourist accommodation.”
- 3.10 This is the primary reason why the conversion of the barns was only permitted with a holiday-let restriction.
- 3.11 The applicant expresses the view that the NPPF does not apply the “economic development first” approach which was contained in previous planning policy, and cites an appeal decision at Port Isaac where the Inspector summarised “The conflict arises over the need in LP policy...to apply a form of sequential test requiring proposals for conversion in the countryside to demonstrate the efforts made to secure a suitable business use. No such requirement arises in national policy,” and “the appellant's approach is based on the premise that, if the original application to convert the property had been made now, permission would have been granted without an occupancy condition. I find the approach reasonable.”

Permitted Development Rights for conversion of redundant rural buildings

- 3.12 The applicant refers to the recent creation of Permitted Development Rights which the Government introduced to encourage the reuse of redundant rural buildings, including the subsequent additional guidance which states that sustainability concerns should not prevent permission for the conversion of redundant rural buildings from being granted (because of their rural location, for example).
- 3.13 The applicant claims that “had the properties still been redundant barns having not already been converted to holiday let units, they would have met the criteria of the NPPF and NPPG for the conversation to residential use, including the Permitted Development conditions where there is not a sustainability of location test.”

Five Year Land Supply

- 3.14 The applicant goes on to question whether WODC can demonstrate a five year land supply, and then refers to an appeal case in Daventry which is said to have established a principle that regardless of land supply, there is no cap on sustainable development “the aim of policy in NPPF47 is to boost significantly the supply of housing...just because the Council can meet its targets does not mean that more housing should necessarily be refused.”

Residential Amenity – traffic movements

- 3.15 One of the reasons why the previous applications was refused was because it was expected that permanent residential occupation of the barns would lead to more traffic movements than those associated with holiday lets, which would be a detrimental impact on the hamlet.
- 3.16 The applicant asserts that the “comings and goings” associated with residential use would be less detrimental than those associated with holiday use, particularly the specific use at these barns, which attract large parties; “it is concluded that the proposed full residential use of the barn is likely to represent a reduction in vehicle movements.”
- 3.17 The applicant addresses planning policy and guidance which stresses the importance of sustainable transport, by referring to the bus service in Aston which could be accessed by “cycling or a short journey by private car”, and further states that as the barns are close to both Aston and Bampton which have some amenities, “many regular journeys will be short.”

Economic Impact

- 3.18 The applicant asserts that the loss of the barns as business properties “is considered to have a negligible or even slight positive effect on the local economy.”
- 3.19 The justification for this is that permanent residents of the properties would be more likely to shop locally and would be able to become workers in the local area.
- 3.20 The applicant lists the local businesses where the residents could work and also states that “broadband availability also offers potential for people to work from home through provision of home offices.”

4.0 **Counter Arguments – Parish Council previous response**

- 4.1 When addressing development in rural areas, paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that “To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities...Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.” These “special circumstances” include “where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.”
- 4.2 The barns are not redundant or disused, indeed the bookings information provided by the applicant indicates that they are very well used for their current purposes (holiday lets). It is not clear how strong an argument would be which would cite that the relaxation of the holiday-let condition cannot be supported by paragraph 55 of the NPPF as the buildings are not redundant or disused.

- 4.3 Similarly, the newer Permitted Development Rights introduced by the Government were for disused/under-used rural and business properties. It is similarly not clear how strong an argument can be developed on the basis that these rights should not apply because the buildings are not disused.
- 4.4 Policy H10 of the current WOLP which deals with the conversion of buildings into residential use in the countryside and small villages (and applies the concept that business/tourist use first must be considered) will be replaced by Policy OS2 in the new Local Plan. This retains the concept of economic use first: “Development in the small villages, hamlets and open countryside will be limited to that which requires and is appropriate for a rural location and which respects the intrinsic character of the area. Appropriate development will include re-use of appropriate existing buildings which would lead to an enhancement of their immediate setting, with preference given to employment, tourism and community uses; and proposals to support the effectiveness of existing businesses and sustainable tourism.” The bookings information provided by the applicant indicates that the barns are very successful in the tourism market.
- 4.5 Policy H2 of the new Local Plan underlines Policy OS2 when dealing with the creation of new dwellings in small villages, hamlets and open countryside by stating that residential use will be considered an appropriate re-use of an existing building if this would “lead to an enhancement of their immediate setting and where it has been demonstrated that the building is not capable of re-use for business, recreational or community uses, tourist accommodation or visitor facilities or where the proposal will address a specific local housing need which would otherwise not be met.”
- 4.6 The concept of whether the relaxation of the occupancy condition would “lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting” of the barns is not evident.
- 4.7 The applicant has not sought to demonstrate that the barns are not capable of use for a purpose other than a residential one (indeed the volume of bookings would suggest that this would not be the case).
- 4.8 No “specific local housing need” can be demonstrated – the applicant seeks to rely on the Government’s desire to boost housing supply generally.
- 4.9 It is evident that the application does not comply with the policies of either the existing or emerging Local Plan. The key question which will decide this application is whether Local Policy or national policies and case history of appeals around the country (which may or may not emulate the specific conditions of these properties) will be paramount.

5.0 **Parish Council response to 2010 application**

**Planning application 14/01538/S73  
Chimney Farm Barns Chimney Bampton**

The above planning application was considered at a meeting of Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council on 6 November 2014. The Parish Council **objects** to the application.

As you are aware, the District Council considered a similar planning application for change of use from holiday lets to standard dwellings in 2010 (application 10/0782/P/S73). That application was refused by the District Council because it was considered that the application did not present an overriding case to convert the buildings to unfettered dwelling houses, and because it was considered that the conversion to dwelling houses would result in significantly higher levels of traffic movements than those arising from the holiday let use. The applicant appealed against this decision, but the Inspector who heard the appeal upheld the District Council's decision to refuse the application.

The current owner of the buildings has now submitted a new application for the restriction to holiday let use to be removed from the current planning permission for the barns. The applicant's case appears to hinge round the NPPF which presumes in favour of sustainable development, and paragraph 49 in particular, which states that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The applicant expresses the opinion that the District Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply, and that the policies of the current Local Plan which were used as the basis for refusing the 2010 application (policy H10 in particular) are not relevant and cannot be used as a justification to refuse this application.

The members of Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council have been advised by District Councillors Hilary Fenton and Steve Good that, following the approval of the Carterton East development, the District Council can now demonstrate a five year supply. This is, however, presumably, using the housing targets currently proposed by the District Council following its review of the SHMA, which have themselves, not yet been approved by the Planning Inspectorate.

Notwithstanding the vulnerability of the policies of the current Local Plan, paragraph 14 of the NPPF does state that permission should not be granted on planning applications where "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole." We consider that the very minimal benefit of granting permission for the creation of three unfettered dwellings would be significantly outweighed by the adverse impacts of granting this permission.

The members of Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council consider that the objections the Parish Council raised against the planning application in 2010 stand, and we would therefore reiterate them:

#### Original conversion – farm diversification scheme

The conversion of the barns to holiday lets was permitted as part of a farm diversification scheme. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (WOLP) states that farm diversification schemes "must be complementary to the agricultural operations, operated as part of the farm holding." It is possible that if the conversion had not been proposed as part of a farm diversification scheme it would not have been granted. In point of fact the holiday lets have never formed part of a farm diversification scheme – the farm was closed and broken up 4 years before the conversion of the barns was even started. It is regrettable that the



planning permission did not have conditions attached to ensure that if the farm diversification objectives no longer applied that the permission would lapse.

#### Previous refusal of residential use at appeal

As noted earlier, this is not the first time that an application has been made for these units to be converted to normal residential use. In addition to the refusal of the planning application in 2010 (which was upheld on appeal), application 05/0492/P/FP for conversion of two of the barns to residential use was refused on several grounds including that residential use would be contrary to Policy H10 of the WOLP and the sustainability criteria for development in the countryside contained within the then Central Government guidance in PPS7. These grounds still apply. The grounds for the restriction of the use of the barns for holiday let purposes contained within the original planning permission W2001/0924 (condition 4) – “the accommodation is provided on a site where development would not normally be permitted, and the nature of accommodation provided makes the units unsuitable for continuous residential occupation” also still applies.

#### Sustainability

Policy H10 of the WOLP states that conversion of existing buildings outside built-up areas to residential use will only be permitted where retention of the building meets overall sustainability objectives. The properties are located at the end of a single track no-through road. Access to the no-through road that leads into Chimney is by further stretches of single track road leading from the Buckland/Bampton road and the roads into Aston and Cote. These roads have no passing places and are heavily used by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. There are no amenities within Chimney and it is not served by public transport. People living in Chimney are dependent on the private motor car for all aspects of life. The NPPF focuses very clearly on the importance of the sustainability of development, referring to the importance of the economy (including the rural economy) which is needed to deliver employment, and on the importance of sustainable transport. If permission is given for the conversion of these buildings to unfettered dwelling use, it would be detrimental to rural employment, as the jobs currently supported by the use of the buildings as holiday lets would be lost. The use of these buildings as dwellings would increase non-sustainable transport use because it would increase the number of private car journeys, given the non-sustainable location of the site. Although the applicant seeks to provide information to support their argument that residential use of the barns would represent a reduction in vehicle movements, the data they supply indicates that the barns were only occupied for 127 out of the 184 days in the period recorded (69%). If the barns are used for residential purposes, they would be occupied 100% of the time, and create multiple car journeys on every day of the year. When considering the appeal in 2010, the planning inspector accepted the District Council's view that “residential generation (of vehicular movements) would be significantly higher than for holiday accommodation use.”

#### Policy H2 criteria d) of WOLP

The application also needs to be considered under the requirements of Policy H2 of WOLP. The Parish Council is of the opinion that the application does not meet two of the criteria contained within this policy. Criteria d) states that any proposal should not “create unacceptable living conditions for existing and new residents.” There are 5 other residential units in Chimney. If the removal of the holiday let condition is granted this would increase to 8 units – a 60% increase. If the

increase is considered in the terms of potential residents rather than units, the potential increase would be even greater – there are currently 16 bedrooms in the existing housing units. The barns have been converted to contain respectively 4 bedrooms (Rose Barn), 5 bedrooms (Owl Barn) and 6 bedrooms (Snipe Barn). The number of bedrooms in Chimney would therefore increase to 31 – a 94% increase with the relating increase in traffic, noise and general activity within the hamlet. The Parish Council is aware that the residents of Chimney are strongly opposed to this planning application because of concerns about the impact the removal of the holiday let condition and the occupation of the barns as residential dwellings would have on the tranquillity of the hamlet and their quality of life. The application therefore does not meet criteria d) of Policy H2.

#### Policy H2 criteria e) of WOLP

The poor access to Chimney and these properties is well understood and documented. As noted above, the roads leading to the no-through road also present safety concerns, as they are single track with no passing places. The Parish Council is of the opinion therefore that the application does not fulfil criteria e) of Policy H2.

#### Policy H2 criteria a) and b) of WOLP

The Parish Council is of the opinion that the application does not meet either of these two criteria and believes that conversion of the barns would not have been permitted, except for certain types of restricted use, such as those listed in Policy H10 (including for tourist accommodation) if the original application had been for the conversion of the barns to residential use. Although the barns have now been converted, the Parish Council is of the opinion that criteria a) and b) of Policy H2 must still be applied when considering whether the holiday let condition should now be removed.

In conclusion, the Parish Council objects to this planning application because it conflicts with Policies H2 and H10 of The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. Even though the strength of these policies is somewhat undermined by the fact that the Plan is technically out-of-date, and the NPPF has been put into place since the publication of the Plan, the Parish Council considers that the adverse impacts of granting this application would significantly outweigh the benefits of its approval.

We request that the District Council refuses the application. Given the planning history of this site, including the previously failed appeals, and the strength of public opinion against this application, the Parish Council would also request that this application is taken to the Lowlands Planning Committee for decision rather than being decided under delegated powers. The Parish Council would aim to send a representative to speak at the Planning Committee meeting where this application is considered.

**Financial Matters****1. Cash Balances**

	£
<i>SANTANDER CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2015	5,051.59
Transactions in month	NIL
<b>Balance at 31 January 2016</b>	<b><u>5,051.59</u></b>
 <i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2015	5,000.15
January payments	(563.79)
<b>Balance at 31 January 2016</b>	<b><u>4,436.36</u></b>
 <i>NATIONWIDE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2015	27,980.00
Transactions in month	NIL
<b>Balance at 31 January 2016</b>	<b><u>£27,980.00</u></b>
 <i>SANTANDER BUSINESS DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2015	532.84
Transactions in December: interest received	0.20
<b>Balance at 31 January 2016</b>	<b><u>£533.04</u></b>
 <b>TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 31 JANUARY 2016</b>	 <b><u>£38,000.99</u></b>

**ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL  
FINANCIAL YEAR 2016/17  
BUDGET APPROVED AT MEETING ON 7 JANUARY 2016**

	Budget 2015/16	Expected outturn 2015/16	Approved Budget 2016/17
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Precept	24,386	24,386	25,055
WODC grant	627	627	760
OCC grass cutting grant	1,049	1,049	1,049
Interest	70	100	110
	<b>26,132</b>	<b>26,162</b>	<b>26,974</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>			
<i>Ordinary Expenditure</i>			
Clerk's Salary	4,242	4,242	4,358
Office equipment			
Office running costs	500	331	500
Website costs			105
Insurance	456	434	456
Audit	200	100	200
Election expenses	83	83	
Village Hall Rental/Cost APM	40	77	40
Subscriptions	362	348	362
Chairman's Allowance	100	10	100
<i>Expenditure under Statute</i>			
Grass Cutting - verges & WM	4,815	3,377	5,056
Grass Cutting - playing field	840	840	1,080
Grants paid under statute	2,850	3,775	2,850
Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	231	193	203
Training & Travel	220	18	220
Clock Maintenance	202		202
Bus Shelter Cleaning	105	106	113
Repairs	500	100	500
<i>Expenditure from "Free Resource" (S137)</i>			
Village maintenance (Lengthsman)	2,000	210	2,000
Subscriptions (CPRE & ORCC)	106	101	106
<b>Grants</b> - See Separate Analysis	1,430	525	1,430
<b>Total Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>19,282</b>	<b>14,870</b>	<b>19,881</b>
<i>Projects</i>			
Replacement posts - WM		40	
Defibrillator		177	
Litter bin		83	
<b>Total Project Spend</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Contingency Budget</b>	<b>5,000</b>		<b>5,000</b>
<b>OVERALL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>24,282</b>	<b>15,170</b>	<b>24,881</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>1,850</b>	<b>10,992</b>	<b>2,093</b>
<b>Reserves</b>			
Opening at 1 April	23,926	23,926	34,918
Closing at 31 March	<b>25,776</b>	<b>34,918</b>	<b>37,011</b>
<b>Closing reserves analysis:</b>			
Working day to day balance		5000	5000
Contingency reserve		5000	-
Recreation reserve		<b>24,918</b>	<b>32,011</b>