

# CHARNOCK RICHARD PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Rooms, Charter Lane, Charnock Richard.

**Present:** Councillors: A J Shaw (Chairman), Mrs A Bishop, Mrs C Pilling, Mrs E Butcher, J Hill, Mrs J Ogden, A Cornwell, L Cheetham, H Heaton and Mrs L Watson.

## **REPORTS, COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS OF THE PUBLIC, PARISH, BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS PRESENT**

(At this point in the Meeting members of the public present can report, ask questions, raise issues and make observations on parish matters or items appearing on the Agenda. Reports, Complaints and Concerns will also be received from Parish, Borough and County Councillors if attending – Once closed the Chairman will only suspend standing orders to allow further participation if it will aid discussions)

Members of the Public Present – reported that hedges on Mill Lane, from the motorway bridge to Park Hall Road, are overhanging the footways. Welcome break will be informed. Mr Taylor reported that Delph Gardens were created 10 years ago at a cost of approx. £1000. The log roll used then to support the soil and prevent it from falling away is rotting and will need replacing with something more substantial which will last longer. If this is not replaced the soil will fall away on to the carriageway. The Chairman agreed to look at this with the Lengthsman. It has been established from speaking to other residents that there are a lot of people in the village who do not know about the proposals for the touring caravan site at The Laurels as not everyone in the village, has access to, or goes on, Facebook. It is understood that at the last Parish Council Meeting the applicants were asked to arrange a public consultation, but it has not taken place. It was confirmed that observations need to be submitted to Chorley Council sooner rather than later. The Chairman asked if anyone had anything further to say on the application 19/00094/FULMAJ – proposals at The Laurels, and asked that people try not to repeat what was said last month as everything already said will be taken into account. The Chairman confirmed that he will be lifting Standing Orders to allow Mr Bretherton to speak on the items of correspondence on the Agenda at the appropriate time in the meeting. It was confirmed that 2 parents at school, when it was brought up in conversation this morning, were also unaware of the proposals. It was pointed out that there have been public consultations on proposals for other types of development in the village. Mr Bretherton confirmed that the proposals have proved controversial and that there is a lot of scaremongering in the village around the change of use. He confirmed that neither he, nor Mr & Mrs Storey are planners and they therefore feel they should have had a planning consultant present to have a public consultation and their consultant was very busy. He had suggested that she could be invited to this Meeting but had not received a reply to this suggestion. Councillor Watson confirmed that a Parish Council Meeting is not a forum for a public consultation. The Chairman confirmed that this was why he had requested a specific public consultation event at the last meeting. Mr Turner asked if there is still going to be a public consultation. Mr Bretherton stated that it is unlikely at this late stage. Mr Turner confirmed that he feels he is probably the most aggrieved about the proposals and has invited the directors from The Laurels to his house so that they can see how the proposals would impact on him and the view from his garden and his bedroom windows and balcony. He was informed by the applicants that, for them, this would be like having a criminal attend court without his solicitor. Mr Turner confirmed that he had made this invitation before appointing his own planning consultant. He feels he has tried to be reasonable but feels that he now needs to fight his corner. Mrs Storey confirmed that their representative advised them not to meet. She further confirmed that the application has now gone in and that relationships cannot be on a friendly basis anymore. She stated that everything on Facebook is rubbish and they are fed up with it. A request was made that the Charnock Richard village name sign be erected back to back with the new Heskin sign on Park Hall Road, utilising the same posts. The Clerk will ask Heskin PC. Councillor Heaton proposed that Planning on the Agenda be brought forward for discussion to this point. There was no seconder for this proposal. The Chairman did not want to bring the item forward anyway.

- 137. Apologies** - Were received and accepted from Councillor Brennand (work) and Borough Councillors Whittaker (prior meeting but will try to attend) and Leadbetter (late apologies received).

The Council were informed that Councillor Leadbetter will not be applying to renew his term of office as a Borough Councillor. The Council will thank Councillor Leadbetter for his work in the Parish. Councillor Heaton does not think the reason for absence should be recorded as holidays as it informs people that Councillors homes may be empty. His reason for sending his apologies was amended to work.

- 138. Declarations of Interest** – Members were asked to consider any disclosable pecuniary interest they may have to declare in relation to matters on this Agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Parish Council Standing Orders & Code of Conduct currently in force – **Councillor Heaton declared an interest in Planning No: 4) 19/00094/FULMAJ on the Agenda but reserved the right to speak on the matter if required, to offer planning advice. The Chairman said he did not think planning advice would be necessary. No further declarations were made at this point however Councillors will declare them should they arise in the Meeting.**
- 139. To Accept the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019** - The Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 had been circulated in advance, and following the amendment of Councillor Heaton's apologies to 'work' it was **Resolved: The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting were accepted as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.**
- 140. Update on Matters Arising from previous Meetings for note by the Council:** Report 1 (page 7) Agreed. It was also noted that work has started on the railway bridge on Chorley Lane, it is hoped that the metalwork will be painted as part of this work.
- 141. Correspondence and Information items requiring discussion or action:**
- a) Exchange of correspondence since the last Meeting with Mr Bretherton re: planning proposals at The Laurels. + Lodging of a formal complaint against Councillor Bishop in regard to this matter and points raised in relation to the behaviour of the Chairman with regard to this matter – **The Clerk explained that, as some of the comments in Mr Bretherton's letter referred to the conduct of the Chairman, it was considered more appropriate to refer the complaint to the Parish Council for discussion, as per the Parish Council complaints procedure, rather than allow the Chairman to try to settle the complaint outside the Meeting. Mr Bretherton was asked to give a verbal report of his complaint against Councillor Bishop. He reported that he feels Councillor Bishop has breached the Councillors Code of Conduct by/in her posts on social media and by her comments at the previous Parish Council Meeting. He also referred to the Chairman's conduct and suggested that he had said things in the Hinds Head whilst discussing the Laurels planning proposals. Mr Bretherton said he was disappointed that he had to do this and, that he respects that people have valid reasons to object to the proposals but, that from his understanding and, quoting sections from the Code of Conduct, he believes that Councillor Bishop's negative comments on social media and at the Meeting, breach the Code of Conduct, and indicate that she is not impartial on this subject. Regarding comments about the Chairman's conduct, Mr Bretherton stated that they had been told that the Chairman, Mr Higginson and Mr Turner were in the Hinds Head and told the landlord that if he supported the proposals at The Laurels then he would lose business. It was also claimed that this was repeated in another local business. Mr Higginson and Mr Turner confirmed that they had not been in the Hinds Head, or anywhere else with the Chairman, since the last meeting. The Chairman asked for further information on the allegations made about his conduct. The Chairman stated clearly that the statements by Mr Bretherton are lies and that he has not discussed the proposals anywhere. Mr Turner stated that he would definitely not have said anything to the landlord of the Hinds Head about losing business. When the Chairman and members of the public again asked for clarification of who said this, Mrs Storey joined the discussions and, raising her voice and pointing, stated that it was Mr Higginson who allegedly said it to the landlord of the Hinds Head. She also alleged that the Chairman had been present in local businesses and voiced his objections, an allegation which the Chairman refuted. As discussions between Mrs Storey and members of the public became heated a lady present**

asked whether there was a Code of Conduct which applied to the behaviour of members of the public who attended the Meeting. The Chairman completely refuted the allegations made against him and confirmed that he was seeking legal advice on this matter. Councillor Bishop was invited to respond to the allegations made against her in Mr Bretherton's letter. Councillor Bishop reported the outcome of a very recent similar situation regarding her posts on the community Facebook page. Having taken legal advice on this at the time, the monitoring officer at Chorley Council, who deals with breaches of the Parish Councils Code of Conduct, confirmed that Facebook posts by Councillor Bishop on the community Facebook page are made as a resident of Charnock Richard and, nowhere does she state that she is, nor does she purport to be, commenting in her capacity as a Parish Councillor and therefore the Code of Conduct does not apply. The monitoring officer at Chorley Council went on to say that, even if she had been commenting as a Parish Councillor, no breach of the Code of Conduct had taken place. Regarding her comments at the Parish Council Meeting, Councillor Bishop confirmed that she, like all Parish Councillors, is allowed to have her own opinion on any matters including this one and, that in serving the community there will be some residents who support the proposals and some who do not. She confirmed that all her statements were statements of fact and truth and, that in her opinion the subsequent formal complaint about her conduct from one of the applicants constitutes bullying and intimidation, that the statements are both slanderous and libellous and constitute defamation of character. Councillor Bishop does not believe that she has acted in breach of the Code of Conduct neither on Facebook nor elsewhere, and that she has neither done nor said anything wrong. Mr Bretherton reported that Councillor Bishop stated that she had no opinion until she was threatened by Mr Storey and does not feel that complies with the Code of Conduct. He would like all the misconceptions put to bed. It was confirmed that the many comments littered all over Facebook are nothing to do with the Parish Council and are the result of the fact that there are many unanswered questions which could have been resolved if the requested, and promised, public consultation on the proposals had been arranged. Mrs Storey asked Councillor Bishop at what point Mr Storey had threatened and intimidated her. Councillor Bishop confirmed that this had been done in front of a witness. Mr Bretherton was again asked if a public consultation was going to be undertaken to which he responded that it was now too late. The Chairman confirmed that was why he stressed the importance of a public consultation event at the last meeting, it would have answered all the questions raised and would have given the applicants the opportunity to dispel rumours and answer questions on this matter. Mr Bretherton confirmed that he has been available to speak to anyone who wished to contact him and reported that 7 people had already visited The Laurels to look at the plans. When asked if his complaint had been resolved, Mr Bretherton stated that if the Chairman was happy with this outcome then he was, despite disagreeing with some of the points made.

- b) Notification from Chorley Council of a Community Funding Evening on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May at Chorley Town Hall at 6pm – **Details will be forwarded to Mrs Stewart.**
- c) Info. from CPRE regarding introduction of a deposit return system for drinks containers – **Resolved – The Parish Council support this as a body. It was reported that at a recent Football Match in the village recyclable glass bottles of milk had been used.**
- d) Info. from Royal Bank of Scotland on your options in relation to Business Banking Switch – **The Parish Council are happy with the current banking options which will remain unchanged.**
- e) Letter of complaint re: business advertising on the planters at Mill Lane – **The Clerk confirmed that she had outlined the reasons for the sponsorship signs on the planters in the Parish to the complainant. The signs are small and unobtrusive and the sponsorship sum assists greatly with the annual planting and maintenance costs of the planted areas in the village.**
- f) Response from the Head teacher, CR Primary School, to parking problems reported last month – **Councillor Watson reported that, as a parent of a child at Charnock Richard primary school, she has not heard any mention of a walking bus at school. It was suggested that editorial be placed in the chronicle by the school asking if there is anyone outside the PTFA or the Governors, already DBS checked, who may wish to arrange/escort a walking bus**

from the Football Club car park. The Clerk confirmed any photographs of vehicles parking illegally/inconsiderately sent to the Parish Council will be forwarded to the PCSO.

- g) Response from the Secretary of the 2019 Best Kept Village Competition to your comments following last year's judging and request that you reconsider entering this year – **The council appreciate this positive response and following discussion Resolved to enter Welch Whittle in this year's competition nominating The Hinds Head, Festive Lights and Park Hall as outstanding features.**
- h) Info. for signage from P Fender, who has agreed to sponsor the planters at Mill Lane - **The Chairman took details and logos etc. to arrange signs for the Mill Lane planters which will now be sponsored by P Fender a local businessman in the village.**
- i) Info. from LALC – **Confirmation that Councillors Bishop and Watson will attend the Planning Workshop in May.**
- j) Details of late items of correspondence received – i) Notification of the final recommendations of the Local Boundary Commission Review for Chorley – confirming that Charnock Richard will be with Heskin and Eccleston South – **Noted.** ii) Request from a resident for an explanation for the increase in the Precept – **The Clerk will confirm that there has been no increase for the past 3 years and, that due to the forthcoming elections and proposed further progress with the Orchard Gardens project, an increase in the Precept was necessary.** iii) The Clerk reported the dimensions and costs of 2 replacement notice boards from Whitehill Direct. Councillor Heaton questioned the installation costs and confirmed that he would install the 2 new notice boards free of charge. Following discussions on where to site the notice board at the Parish Rooms it was agreed that near the entrance gate, in the same position as the previous notice board, is the most suitable location. **Resolved – 2 x notice boards, black aluminium with white magnetic back boards, double doors and header boards at a cost of £830.00+VAT each will be ordered, Councillor Heaton to install them.**

**142. Reports, Complaints, Concerns from Councillors** - not addressed at the beginning of the Meeting

- 1) Councillor Cornwell saw Chorley Council tree officers examining the tree TPO'd on Chorley Lane near the Cherry Tree Close junction. It was confirmed the tree is solid and that it is the homeowner who wants the tree removed as he says it is going to damage his property.
- 2) Branches from a tree on Charter Lane, just past the Parish Rooms, have fallen on to the verge and need removing. There is also an unstable branch, barely attached, touching overhead cables. The Lengthsman will be asked to remove the fallen branches.
- 3) 2 traffic cones have reappeared on the verge near the planters on Mill Lane. Councillors Heaton and Shaw will site the metal bench stored at Councillor Heaton's at this location.
- 4) Dog fouling remains a serious problem in the village. Other villages have spray-painted it to highlight the considerable amount being left without picking it up. Councillor Watson reported on a newspaper article which shows that statistics for Charnock Richard are very low, probably because much of it goes unreported. Info. on how to report it will be put on the Facebook page and website. Councillor Bishop agreed to spray them and remove them to highlight the problem.
- 5) Tree branches and an old Christmas tree need removing from the grass verge on Church Lane, opposite the end of the school railings. The Lengthsman will be asked to remove them.

**143. Reports from Committees and Representatives on Outside Bodies – Chorley Liaison Meeting** – attended by Councillor Cornwell who reported that some of the businesses from Botany Bay have moved to Heskin Hall whilst others will be taking up some of the empty town centre shops. It was reported that the car boot sale from Botany Bay has moved to Park Hall.

**144. Acceptance of Annual Audit Plan for forthcoming year and review of documentation in the Parish Councillors Information Pack – Resolved: The Parish Council confirmed the following action has been taken throughout the year to satisfy Audit Requirements:** i) The Parish Council Risk Assessment – was reviewed and confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2018. Risk review and health and safety implications associated with the work of the Lengthsman remain on-going. ii) The effectiveness of the Internal Audit was confirmed – the Internal Auditor is both competent and independent, has no relationship with the Clerk or Councillors. The Audit trail

is detailed, planned and the broad scope of the internal audit covers all aspects of the Councils business including financial, administrative, practical and procedural matters. Any issues arising from both the internal and external auditors are reported to the Parish Council at the earliest opportunity and appropriate action taken. **The Council confirmed the continued appointment of Mrs Stewart as the Parish Councils Internal Auditor.**

**145. Orchard Gardens Project** – Update – The Chairman thanked Councillor Bishop for all her hard work on the Orchard and garden side of Orchard Gardens over the last 3 months. Councillor Heaton reported that he was under the impression that all trees were being planted outside the footpath with the grassed area in the middle just being grass. Councillor Bishop confirmed there will be grass in the middle to play and picnic on, and that 6 trees were removed from the central grassed area. The new trees planted on the grass in the middle have been planted on the wet areas to absorb the water and keep the remainder of the grassed area dry. Councillor Heaton was concerned that the new trees could be damaged when grass cutting takes place. It was confirmed that if this proves an issue it will be addressed in due course. The garden continues to be a work in progress at the moment. All the work to date has been done by Councillor Bishop and volunteers. 3 full size benches and 1 child size bench have been donated for the site and a nature trail has been created for the children. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April people who have purchased or donated a tree in memory of a family member will have the opportunity to plant them. It was reported that within 48 hours of advertising that this could be done, they had to stop donations as this proved more popular than expected. The money donated by the Mothers Union will be used to buy sensory lavender plants for a border rather than a tree. It was also reported that a lot of restoration work has been undertaken on the existing trees on the garden ie: removing ivy. Colin Dingley and Karl Hitchen have done a lot of work and cutting back, all of which has been really hard work. Some sapling fruit trees have also been found on the site, which were being strangled by ivy and nettles. One major problem is the lack of water to the site. The Lengthsman is going to try to find some large water butts which can be filled. The Parish Council will look in to the possibility of a water supply to this site.

**146. Planning** – The Council made the following observations on the applications discussed:

- 1) 19/00109/FULHH – Erection of a detached outbuilding (summerhouse). Tan House Farm, Preston Road, Charnock Richard. **Resolved – No Objections.**
- 2) 19/00189/FULHH – Proposed first floor bedroom and rear family room extensions. 25 Meadowlands, Charnock Richard. **Resolved – No Objections.**
- 3) 19/00247/PNOT – Notification under Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 re: relocation of a pole support forming part of an overhead electric line from residential property to adjacent agricultural field. 16 Town Lane, Charnock Richard. **Resolved – No Objections.**
- 5) 19/00245/FULHH – Two storey rear extension. 5 Meadowlands, Charnock Richard. **Resolved – No Objections.**
- 4) 19/00094/FULMAJ – Proposed change of use from a golf course to a touring caravan site, to include six camping pods, the erection of an amenity block and a reception/shop building, landscaping mounds and associated infrastructure. The Laurels at Charnock Richard, Preston Road, Charnock Richard – **The Clerk explained Green Belt Policy and that when considering these proposals the Parish Council need to decide i) if the proposals constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt and ii) if the proposals affect the openness of the Green Belt. The land will remain Green Belt land even if planning permission is granted and any future proposals would have to be considered on the same basis as above. The Chairman asked that Parish Councillors put their personal views on the proposals to one side and look only at the relevant planning and Green Belt policies which apply. The Chairman asked them to consider, if use as a touring caravan site constitutes recreational use, if the proposals affect the openness of the Green Belt and, if the benefits of the proposals outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Going around the room: - Councillor Butcher remains concerned about a camp site next to the highway, about lighting and drainage issues, and reported that she could not find a definition anywhere that included a touring caravan site as outdoor recreation. The Chairman confirmed that the case law used to support the proposals was won on appeal and most case law on this subject relates to extensions to already existing touring caravan sites. It was**

confirmed that if the matter goes to appeal, this will take the decision out of Chorley Councils hands also. Councillor Cornwell stated that he had no objections to the proposals and left the Meeting. It will bring business to the area and some minimal employment depending upon whether it has seasonal opening times. The views of the people adjacent cannot be ignored. The size of the mounds and the damage and disturbance to the flora and fauna is significant. Councillor Butcher does not know why the Transport Statement from the Wigan Athletic planning application has been used. She is also personally concerned about the impact of the proposals as they would be clearly visible from the road. Councillor Butcher suggested that if the proposals were permitted that Green Belt Policy 138 could be used to support development of the site in the future. Councillor Pilling has no objections in principle however the lack of a public consultation to clear up some issues is cause for concern. Councillor Bishop confirmed that there is no doubt this will change how the green belt looks at this location. It is currently trees and green fields and if the proposals go ahead it will never look the same again. The work will be damaging. Councillor Ogden has concerns about the adequacy of the access with the increasing speed, and number of, vehicles on Preston Road. She confirmed that things will definitely have to change on this land to create a well-run site. Councillor Hill agrees with the objections of the residents close by. Councillor Cheetham feels there are numerous similar sites within a small radius of Charnock Richard which are not well used all the time. He feels the proposal for 60 pitches is too much. Councillor Watson is concerned about traffic and highway safety and the country lanes which would need to be used to access the site from Junctions 27 or 28 of the M6. She agrees that the number of pitches is excessive and constitutes over-intensification of the site. Councillor Bishop objects to the change of use and stated that if the recreational use is the same why is a change of use required and feels a change of use would dilute the green belt status. The Chairman asked for a proposal on the application. It was proposed, seconded, and **Resolved** – in a unanimous vote from Parish Councillors remaining who were able to vote, that the Parish Council Object to the proposals using all the observations and objections raised by Councillors at the Parish Council Meetings. (The letter of objection is attached at appendix 1 to these Minutes). At this point Councillor Watson stated that she felt a lot of the questions and issues raised could have been addressed by the applicant if a public consultation had been arranged. The Chairman then asked Councillors to consider his proposal to add a rider to the Parish Councils objections stating that, if Chorley Council Planning Committee has a mind to grant permission for the proposals, a condition be attached stating that, should the site cease to be used for the purpose proposed, the land should be restored to its current use, all touring pitches, buildings and infrastructure to be removed and the green field status restored. It was proposed, seconded and **Resolved** – unanimously that this rider be added.

**147. Standing Orders Resolved:** In Accordance with Standing Order No 19, Standing Order No 18 was suspended to allow the remaining items of business to be conducted.

#### **148. Accounts**

##### **Accounts for Payment:**

LALC -	Annual Subscriptions	£471.02
CR Scouts & Guides Com'e	Payment for use of Scout Hut for IT courses	£150.00
Parish & Town Training Lancs.	Planning Workshop (Councillors Bishop & Watson)	£50.00
Mrs C A Cross	Salary – (Net)	£623.88
HM Revenue & Customs	Tax & NI due by Clerk	£104.12
	NI due by Parish Council	£3.59
		£107.71

**Resolved:** That the aforementioned Accounts are approved payments.

**149. Lengthsman's Payment** - Work undertaken in this 4 week period totals 100 Hours @ £8.50 per hour = £850.00. **Resolved:** Total Paid £850.00.

Next Meeting: **Tuesday** 14 May 2019      Annual Parish Meeting 7:00 pm  
 (Second Tuesday)      Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 7:30 pm  
 Members of the Public and Press are Welcome to Attend

## REPORT 1

### **Matters Arising from the Minutes to be noted by the Parish Council:**

- a) Notification an appeal has been made against the Chorley Council Planning Committee decision to refuse permission for a single storey rear extension, Spencer House, Brook Lane.
- b) Confirmation that the Pastoral Proposals for Eccleston and Charnock Richard will proceed as drafted together with the statement of reasons.
- c) Notification of temporary road closure on Church Lane overnight on Saturday evenings to Sunday mornings each weekend between 6<sup>th</sup> April and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019 to enable essential brick works to take place.
- d) Letter of application to join the Parish Council – the applicant was informed of the current election procedures for anyone interested in joining the Parish Council.
- e) Councillor Bishops editorial “Putting the “Orchard” back into Orchard Gardens”.
- f) Confirmation from Network Rail that your report of litter on the railway side of the fence from Coppull to Charnock Richard has been referred to the maintenance team for investigation.
- g) Copy Agenda for Chorley Liaison Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019, with items requested by the Parish Council i) does Chorley Council have a forward plan in place to assist in letting/renting out vacant shops in the Town Centre ii) Why are Chorley Council looking to go back into social housing provision. Councillor Cornwell to attend this meeting.
- h) Info. from BHIB Insurance regarding risk assessment for trees.
- i) Notification that the TPO for trees at the rear of houses on Willow Drive will be discussed at the Planning Committee Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April and is recommended for confirmation.
- j) Notice of Election for Borough Councillors in Chorley
- k) Notice of Election for Election of Parish Councillors in Chorley – including Charnock Richard.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:**

If the interest to be declared arises only as a result of your membership of another public body or one to which you have been appointed by the Council, then you only need to declare it if you intend to speak. If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, you must withdraw from the meeting. You should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision of the matter.

## Appendix 1

Letter of objection to the Planning Officer re: proposals at The Laurels at Charnock Richard:

Dear Caron,

**Below are the Parish Councils objections to the planning application 19/00094/FULMAJ – Proposed change of use from a golf course to a touring caravan site, to include six camping pods, the erection of an amenity block and a reception/shop building, landscaping mounds and associated infrastructure. The Laurels at Charnock Richard, Preston Road, Charnock Richard:**

The Parish Council OBJECT to the proposals outlined above at The Laurels, as they would constitute inappropriate development in Green Belt and would significantly affect the openness of the Green Belt in Charnock Richard.

Whilst the Parish Council acknowledge that the site can be used for outdoor recreation, an appropriate use in the Green Belt, however, investigations have found nothing specific to confirm that the definition of outdoor recreation includes use as a touring caravan site. The Parish Council believe this fact is further confirmed by the description of the proposals which involves a "change of use" of the land. If the proposed use as a touring caravan site, including 6 camping pods, is outdoor recreation then, by definition, a change of use would not be required. The proposed use is completely different to use of the land as a golf course or football training facility, both of which are clearly outdoor recreation.

Case law on this subject seems to relate to extensions to already existing touring caravan sites, this is clearly not the case at this site, which is currently an amenity grassland site containing a number of TPO'd trees, some of which it is proposed will be removed.

The proposals, if allowed, would totally change the green field site for neighbouring residents, anyone using the public rights of way around the site, village residents, visitors to the village and anyone else who may view the site from a public vantage point. The amenity value of the Greenfield site will be lost forever, the land in question will never look the same again and the proposals will adversely affect the character of the area.

Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt and can be interpreted as the absence of building and development. The creation of large mounds around the site will clearly obstruct the openness of the site and will have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. The siting of caravans, camping pods and an amenity building, will clearly and very obviously impact on the openness of the site as there are currently no structures or buildings of any description on this piece of land to detract from the beautiful open green field site.

The significant importation of materials required to complete the proposals, together with the new infrastructure proposed and the changes required to the landscape, will have a destructive, harmful and environmentally unfriendly impact on the considerable amount of local wildlife in this locality e.g. newts and nesting birds etc., and on the flora and fauna in the area. Furthermore, the quality of life of residents living adjacent to the site, for whom the close proximity of the proposed touring caravan pitches will be both unwelcome and objectionable, and will clearly interrupt the current green belt character and expanse of the land at the rear of, and adjacent to, their homes.

The impact of additional lighting where there is currently none, and the noise generated from the proposed use will be intrusive, will affect their quality of life, will result in a significant loss of amenity and, could result in statutory nuisance to local residential dwellings.

The existing access is considered to be inadequate and will compromise highway safety on the A49 and for vehicles exiting the site. The A49 is a fast road and congestion could be caused by vehicles waiting to enter the site from the filter lane which cannot safely accommodate more than one vehicle towing a caravan. Add to this the vehicles, some of which will be towing a caravan on change over days exiting the caravan site, together with any vehicles using the existing golf course and restaurant on the site, all using the current, and only, unaltered access to the site.

Concern has also been expressed as to whether the existing drainage systems to and from the site will be adequate to support the proposals and not have an adverse impact on the current drainage systems serving existing properties.

The Council feel that the proposals would not only have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt at this site but would also result in over-intensification of the site, to fulfil a need which has not been proven in the area and, which can be easily satisfied by the 5-6 existing touring caravan sites within a few miles radius of this site.

According to National Planning Policy Framework, the Green Belt serves 5 purposes - 134c) "to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment" The Parish Council feel that the proposals would pose a significant encroachment into the countryside at this location. 141 states "once green belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to ..... retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity .... The proposals at this site will completely alter and detrimentally affect the landscape whilst at the same time threatening the visual amenity of the green belt for local residents and visitors to the village.

The Council would also like to point out that 138 of the National Planning Policy Framework for the protection of Green Belt land states "where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or is well-served by public transport". Whilst this land is neither previously developed nor well served by public transport at this moment in time, serious concern has been expressed that if permission is granted for 'change of use' to a touring caravan site with camping pods, in the future the applicant could claim that this is previously developed land as it would then contain structures and buildings, and request that the land be released from the Green Belt or that the Green Belt boundary should be revised to remove the Green Belt designation.

In conclusion, the Parish Council **STRONGLY OBJECT** to these proposals, however, if Chorley Council Planning Committee has a mind to grant planning permission for these proposals, the Parish Council would like to ask that the following condition be attached to the planning permission:

"Should the proposed use as a touring caravan site with camping pods, associated buildings, landscaping and infrastructure cease to be used for this purpose, the land must be restored to its current use. All touring pitches, camping pods, buildings and infrastructure to be removed and the green field status must be restored."

Kind regards

Carolyn

Mrs C A Cross

Clerk to Charnock Richard Parish Council