

# **Minutes of Mudford Flood Information Meeting held on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 19:00hrs**

**Led by:** Councillors (Cllrs) Stephen Bartlett and Robin Bowring

**In Attendance:** 16 members of public

## **Open discussion**

The councillors opened the meeting by giving members of the public the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns related to the main issues the parish is currently facing: namely flooding and the new proposed developments (and their potential impact on flooding).

### **1. What is the status of the Primrose Lane development and Sock Hill development?**

Neither development has been granted full planning consent. Mudford Parish council is seeking to engage a hydrologist to comment on the potential issues with both developments and their impact on flooding. The public is concerned about the impact of any development in the Mudford area on springs and potential subsequent flooding.

The Councillors explained the difficulty with responding to the planning applications in the short time frame they are given and the need to fight more to be present at the planning meetings.

#### Primrose Lane development (14/02554/OUT and 15/03942/FUL):

- The developers have not yet provided the application for the attenuation ponds.
- Mudford Parish Council instructed Lisa Foster (planning lawyer) for legal advice.
- The parishioners raised concern about the soil being suitable for attenuation ponds in the area. The councillors responded that there are no detailed plans provided on how the water would escape the attenuation ponds (pump use) and a geologist report might be needed. Furthermore, the issue of who would maintain these ponds was raised.

#### Sock Hill Development (Mudford Road 22/00695/OUT):

- The developers still need to provide the full application (detailed plan for managing the phosphate issue and water run off).
- Mudford Parish Council has engaged Andrew Burrows (landscaping and development planning consultant services) to provide a report.
- An Ilchester resident raised a concern about the development impacting the flooding on the A37. A brief discussion has led to a conclusion that forming a group consisting of neighboring parishes

would be beneficial for sharing information and cooperation (especially regarding flooding and development).

## **2. The impact of the works on A303 (Sparkford to Ilchester) on flooding in Mudford, Podimore and Queen Camel.**

- Different soil types in the area were discussed and the impact of digging into spring line which resulted into quick fill of the new attenuation ponds. This caused water to run off during heavy rain.

## **3. The impact of the Mudford bridge working as a dam, ditch clearance and diverted traffic going through the village.**

- If the water level is raised by a foot, it would create serious issues.
- Cold Brook has only been cleaned twice in the last 30 years (once paid by the parish council). Local councils are going to take over clearance of ditches from county councils, but a detailed map is needed.
- Should the river Yeo be dredged, and its banks raised?
- Should there be a long-term plan to create more withy beds?
- Diverted traffic (especially lorries) from roads closed due to flooding pushes the water level higher which results in flooded houses.
- Drivers who are not local and therefore do not know how deep the water on the road is and get stuck.

## **4. Farmers.**

- Farmers are concerned about top soil erosion.
- Contributions made to Land Drainage Board but no work being done.

## **5. Flood signage.**

- The need for better, more comprehensive signage has been discussed. Especially needed for non-locals who are not aware of local particulars.
- A need to identify how many signs are needed, where to store them and who can put them up (insurance issue).
- A group of volunteers is needed, particularly from West Mudford Road who would identify where they think the signs would be best placed (for visibility but also to portray the seriousness).
- Liaise with John Nicholson from the Somerset Council Highway Authority.

## **FLOOD ACTION GROUP**

- All present agreed that a formation of a flood action group is needed.
- Mudford Parish Council has set aside £5,000 for the group.
- There is a grant available from the County Council for a formation of the group (£3,000), an emergency plan needs to be created to apply.
- The Group would have more voice to invite e.g. Land Drainage Board to discuss local issues directly.
- A detailed map of where the drains and ditches are is essential. Cllr Bartlett has started to work on this but is seeking volunteers to complete it so the group can then identify where it would be most effective to spend limited resources. The map would also be forwarded to John Nicholson and digitised.

## **FUTURE ACTIONS:**

1. Engage with other parishes in the area to discuss the potential impact of developments on neighboring parishes (Queen Camel, Marston Magna, Ilchester).
2. Form a FLOOD ACTION GROUP and its working committee.
3. Engage volunteers to continue work on a drain and ditches map.
4. Engage volunteers (especially from West Mudford Road) to identify where new flood signage should be placed.
5. Create a long-term strategy to mitigate the current issues (withy beds, tree planting).
6. Develop a strategy for more effective advertising of meetings, potentially create a monthly newsletter.

**Next meeting tbc.**