Langworth Group Parish Council

Serving the grouped parishes of Barlings, Newball, Stainton by Langworth and Reasby
E:mail: clerk@langworthgroup-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of Langworth Group Parish Council held at Langworth Memorial Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7 July 2026

Present: Cllrs M Herbert (Chairman), A Curtis, S Taylor, A Hyatt, B Sharpe, J Jarvis, P Bowser, Mrs M Vail (Clerk), D/Cllr M Palmer. There were four members of the public.
Meeting began at 7.32pm

1. **Open session:**
   As all members of the public were in attendance in respect of planning application WL/2026/00502, it was advised that the Open Session would therefore be held within the planning agenda item, and that the planning agenda item would be moved to earlier in the meeting and follow item 4.

2. **Apologies:** Cllr K Tyrrell (family event), Cllr R Waite (work), C/Cllr & D/Cllr T Bridgwood (away).

3. **Declarations of Interest:** None

4. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026:**
   RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026 as a true record, and these were duly signed. ***Action: Clerk.***
   Proposed: Cllr S Taylor, seconded: Cllr P Bowser. All in favour.

5. **Planning:**
   i. **WL/2026/00573:** Planning application for drop kerb: Providence View, Station Road, Langworth, LN3 5BB
   RESOLVED to support this planning application. ***Action: Clerk***
   Proposed: Cllr S Taylor, seconded: Cllr A Curtis. All in favour.

   ii. **WL/2026/00502:** removal of the existing agricultural buildings, upgrade of the existing access, construction of 4no. dwellings, and change of use of the land to residential: Abbey Farm, Barlings Lane, Barlings, LN3 5DG
   To include consideration of resident's comments.

   A summary of the recent planning history of this site was provided, including that a Class Q planning application had been granted by WLDC. Noted that Parish Councils are not consulted on Class Q applications, and often do not hear about them, but in this instance, LGPC had been alerted by local residents. Class Q allows for the conversion of redundant outbuildings into dwellings without planning permission, and significant rebuilding is not permitted.
   WLDC have advised that this new application should be treated as separate to the previous Class Q application. WLDC had also made three points, that: great weight is given to 'betterment', Class Q fallback is a major consideration (ie that if this current application is not granted then the default is to just fall back to the original, granted Class Q application), and that this is a contentious issue being tested around the country.

   Standing Orders closed at 7.48pm to allow the public to speak.

   One resident read a prepared report, which is attached to these minutes as Appendix A, with the resident's permission.
   RESOLVED, with one against, that the resident's report be included in the minutes.

   Standing Orders resumed at 8.12pm

   Noted that LGPC is working to the Central Lincs Local Plan, overseen by the National Planning Policy Framework. The Chairman detailed several areas within both where the planning application falls short.

   Standing Orders closed at 8.20pm to allow the public to speak.

   There then followed a conversation with the residents, including to stress the need to refer to policies to support arguments as made by the residents in their submissions to WLDC.

   Standing Orders resumed at 8.35pm.

   Comments were taken from Councillors on the planning application. A number of observations were made which will form the basis of a comprehensive response to be submitted to WLDC.

RESOLVED unanimously not to support this planning application***. Action: Clerk***

All four residents left the meeting at 8.44pm.

6. **Comments from County Councillor, District Councillors and Chairman:**
   D/Cllr M Palmer:
   More details on the Scampton site, and the Local Government Review are expected in the very near future.
   Chairman:
   Four dog signs have been obtained: two to be located at the country park, and two on the bridleway
   Three posts have been installed for the speed indicator devices. A fourth is still to be installed as it needs to be slightly repositioned.
   The Chairman is to attend a Community Resilience Conference on 7th October 2026 at Woodhall Spa. Councillors were requested to advise the Chairman if they were also interested in attending.

7. **Review Action Log:**
   The Action Log was reviewed. Updates included:
   Replace 3 benches: work is in hand.
   Parish Council Facebook: Clerk now has admin access, so use of Facebook is about to commence.
   Overgrown hedging hindering footpath repair (Barlings Lane and offshoot roads): no progress, so Clerk will chase ACIS

8. **Clerks Report**
   i) **To receive the financial report for June 2026:**
   RESOLVED to approve the financial report. ***Action: Clerk***
   Proposed: Cllr A Curtis, seconded: Cllr B Sharpe. All in favour

   ii) **To receive Spend Against Budget Report April – June 2026:**
   RESOLVED to receive Spend Against Budget Report
   Proposed: Cllr A Curtis, seconded: Cllr B Sharpe. All in favour

   iii) **To approve HMRC's revised increase to mileage rates to 55p per mile up from 45p, backdated to April 2026:**
   RESOLVED to approve HMRC's revised increase to mileage rates to 55p per mile up from 45p, backdated to April 2026. ***Action: Clerk***
   Proposed: Cllr B Sharpe, seconded: Cllr S Taylor. All in favour

   iv) **Noticeboards – maintenance:** Item deferred
   v) **To note Clerk's annual leave w/c 17th – 31st August 2026:** Noted
   vi) **Bus shelter quotes (grant up to £3000.00 available):** Item deferred

9. **Correspondence: <u>To note only:</u>**
   Noted as received:
   i) LCC June newsletter
   ii) WLDC June newsletter
   iii) LALC Annual Report 2025 – 26
   iv) Witham Valley Access Group – letter re. their annual meeting in November (thank you, arrangements)

10. **Policy Review:**
    i) Grievance Procedure & Policy:
    RESOLVED to approve the reviewed Grievance Procedure & Policy, with no amendments required.
    Proposed: Cllr A Curtis, seconded: Cllr B Sharpe. All in favour
    ii) Disciplinary Procedure & Policy
    RESOLVED to approve the reviewed Disciplinary Procedure & Policy, with no amendments required.
    Proposed: Cllr S Taylor, seconded: Cllr B Sharpe. All in favour

11. **Date of the next meeting:** Tuesday 1st September 2026, 7.30pm, Memorial Hall

Meeting ended at 9pm.

Mrs Michelle Vail – Clerk to the Council **Dated: 30 July 2026**

LANGWORTH GPC - BANK RECONCILIATION 1st June - 30th June 2026

CURRENT ACCOUNT, ACCOUNTS PAID

Date	Description	Money In	Money Out	Bank Balance	VAT
	OPENING BALANCE			**8429.02**	
03/06/2026	HMRC VAT RECLAIM	1785.78		10214.80	
05/06/2026	M Herbert, reimburse paper for Council use		7.00	10207.80	
05/06/2026	Glendale 2827		840.00	9367.80	140.00
05/06/2026	C Rooke Management, Internal Audit Fees		306.00	9061.80	51.00
05/06/2026	Mrs M Vail, (homework allowance £22.50, mileage £10.80, print £16.50)		49.80	9012.00	
18/06/2026	Sage, payroll		13.20	8998.80	2.20
19/06/2026	HMRC PAYE/NI		80.58	8918.22	
19/06/2026	LCC Pension		235.69	8682.53	
19/06/2026	Mrs M Vail, salary		901.72	7780.81	
29/06/2026	Service charge on bank account		4.25	7776.56	
	TOTALS	**1785.78**	**£2,438.24**	**7776.56**	
	CLOSING BALANCE			**7776.56**	193.20

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

Date	Description	Money In	Money Out	Bank Balance	
	OPENING BALANCE			**75179.10**	
09/06/2026	Interest	29.87		75208.97	
	TOTALS	**29.87**	**0.00**		
	CLOSING BALANCE			**75208.97**	

Non-regular Accounts for Payment in ~July			**VAT**
	TOTAL	**0.00**	0.00

Ear Marked Reserves		
Elections reserve	£4,000.00	
CIL monies	£356.25	Planning app. 144897
New play equipment	£11,262.85	
Total	**£15,619.10**	

Barlings WL/2026/0502

Chair, and members of the Parish Council, thank you for the opportunity to speak. I am asking you not to support this application because it is not a modest or natural continuation of Barlings.

It is an urbanising form of development in a historic rural hamlet, in a location where the applicant has not demonstrated local need, sustainability, Green Belt acceptability, or a realistic fallback case.

For those of you who know Barlings, this is not just a line on a planning map.

It is a small, quiet rural community with a long memory, a distinctive character, and a landscape that people value precisely because it has not been overwhelmed by modern estate-style development.

The central issue is not whether new housing can physically be arranged on this land. It is whether this proposal is right for this place. In my submission, it is not.

1. Rural character and historic settlement pattern

The applicant who does not reside in or near Barlings describes the site as being in a rural location, characterised by agricultural land, with a cluster of dwellings immediately to the north and west.

However, Barlings should not be characterised merely as a cluster of dwellings.

It is an ancient hamlet with documented origins dating back to 1154, when it formed part of a foundation gift made by Ralf de Haya, son of the Constable of Lincoln Castle.

The settlement is also recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086.

Several existing properties are of considerable historic interest, including Abbey House, which dates from the 1700s, and The Old Vicarage, which appears on Ordnance Survey mapping from around 1800. St Edward's Church and The Grange are Grade II listed buildings.

The dwellings within the hamlet are generally set within substantial plots, contributing to its spacious rural character and historic settlement form. No new dwellings have been constructed in Barlings since the 1960s.

The proposed development would introduce a form and density of built development that appears urban in character and would be at odds with the established rural nature, historic settlement pattern and spacious plot layout of Barlings.

That matters, because the character of Barlings is not defined by the simple presence of houses; it is defined by low-density settlement, large plots, agricultural surroundings, historic buildings and a clear rural sense of place. Once that character is eroded, it cannot easily be put back.

The quiet openness, the sense of space, and the historic relationship between buildings and countryside are not incidental features; they are what make Barlings feel like Barlings.

This is not just a matter of personal preference. Established planning case law confirms that whether development is physically and visually related to an existing settlement, whether it would appear isolated or out of keeping, and whether it would harm rural character are all matters of planning judgment.

The principles in City & Country Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State and Braintree District Council v Secretary of State support the need to consider the ordinary meaning of isolation, physical separation, relationship to settlement, and the effect of new housing on countryside character.

The heritage authorities are also relevant. Barnwell Manor and Forge Field make clear that where development affects the setting of listed buildings or heritage assets, considerable importance and weight must be given to preserving that setting.

Even less than substantial heritage harm must be treated seriously. The Parish council should therefore be cautious about treating the harm here as minor simply because the site is not itself a listed building.

The setting, experience and historic pattern of the hamlet are part of what gives these heritage assets their significance. Including the relationship with the ancient monument, Barlings Abbey , located in Low Barlings

2. Impact on neighbouring residential amenity

I also object to the assertion that there is adequate distance and existing screening between the site and the neighbouring residential properties to the north, specifically Abbey House .

The only existing screening appears to be the farm buildings.

However, according to the applicant's email dated 17 June 2026, submitted as additional information, it is intended that these buildings will be demolished.

It should be noted that the artists impression shows a 5th dwelling located in this area, directly on my boundary. This property is not mentioned in the plans, the applicant states 4 properties.

Once those buildings are removed, there will be no effective screening between the proposed development and neighbouring properties.

The present relationship between the site and nearby homes is therefore being assessed against a level of separation and enclosure that will no longer exist.

The result would be a direct and permanent change in outlook, with increased noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and overlooking. For existing residents ,including myself, this would not be a small adjustment to a familiar rural setting.

It would mean looking out from homes that have long enjoyed a quiet agricultural outlook and instead facing a more intensive residential environment, with all the daily activity, movement, headlights, voices, doors, deliveries and disturbance that come with it.

Traffic is also relevant. A minimum of 24 traffic movements daily could arise, with additional delivery vans, service vehicles and visitor movements. In a quiet hamlet, those movements are noticed.

They change the feel of a place. They bring noise, disturbance and pollution into lanes and surroundings that are currently valued for their peace and rural character.

They also raise questions about the effect on local ecology and the practical achievement of biodiversity net gain.

On biodiversity, the Parish Council should not be reassured by the headline claim of a 10% net gain unless it is clear how that gain will actually be delivered, protected and maintained.

Without robust, enforceable measures, there is a real risk that gardens, driveways, patios and future domestic alterations will gradually erode the very green infrastructure relied upon to justify the scheme.

3. National Planning Policy Framework: rural housing

The applicant refers to Chapter 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework, but the relevant rural housing provisions appear to be paragraphs 82 to 84, not as stated by the applicant in their documentation.

The current NPPF was updated in December 2024, and Chapter 5 addresses delivering a sufficient supply of homes, including rural housing policy. The proposal does not appear to demonstrate compliance with those provisions.

Paragraph 82 requires planning decisions in rural areas to be responsive to local circumstances and to support housing developments that reflect local needs.

This application has not provided clear evidence of an identified local housing need in Barlings, nor has it explained why this number, form and layout of dwellings is the right response to that need.

As you will be aware planning has already approved for approximately 20 houses in Langworth, with the site facing numerous issues.

In the absence of that evidence, the proposal looks less like a locally responsive rural housing scheme and more like an opportunistic residential development on agricultural land.

Paragraph 83 seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas by locating housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

This site is not well served by local amenities. There are no shops, no school, limited or no practical public transport provision, the nearest bus stop is around 1.2 miles away in Langworth, and there is no safe pedestrian route or footpath linking Barlings and Langworth.

Future occupiers would therefore be likely to depend heavily on private cars. That is not a sustainable pattern of development; it is car-dependent housing in a countryside location.

Paragraph 84 says that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more specified exceptions apply.

The proposal appears to rely, at least in part, on the status of existing agricultural buildings. However, those buildings were used for grain storage and were still in use as recently as August 2024.

The application has not clearly demonstrated that they are genuinely redundant or disused, nor that the proposal would enhance the immediate setting. These are not technical details; they go to the heart of whether the policy exception is available at all.

4. Class Q fallback and agricultural utility

The Design and Access Statement refers to a Class Q fallback position and states that the farmland is effectively unusable.

That is a serious claim, because it is being used to influence the planning balance. It should not be accepted as a bare assertion. If land is to be treated as effectively unusable, the applicant should provide clear, robust and independently verifiable evidence addressing agricultural quality, condition, access, drainage, viability and practical capacity for continued agricultural use.

On the information available, the land appears capable of continued agricultural use and does not appear to be of such poor quality, condition or accessibility that it could reasonably be treated as unusable.

The applicant should be required to identify the evidence relied upon, explain the methodology used, and provide any relevant agricultural land classification, land-quality, drainage, access, viability or management assessment.

The statement also suggests that over time there would be pressure for the land to be brought into residential use. In my view, this reasoning is not sufficient to justify the loss of agricultural land or to support further residential development in this location.

It assumes that future pressure for residential use is inevitable, rather than demonstrating that the present proposal is acceptable in planning terms.

5. Green Belt harm

Given the site's location within the Green Belt, the Parish Council should carefully consider whether the applicant's argument has been fully assessed and whether it carries any planning weight.

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy as preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

It also identifies safeguarding the countryside from encroachment as one of the purposes of the Green Belt.

Any loss of agricultural land for residential development in this Green Belt location should therefore be justified by clear planning evidence.

A general assertion that residential development may be inevitable does not demonstrate compliance with the development plan, overcome Green Belt harm, or amount to very special circumstances.

The Green Belt is not protected only from large estates or obvious sprawl; it is also protected from incremental encroachment that gradually changes the openness and rural function of the countryside. Each individual development may be presented as limited, but the cumulative effect is the slow loss of the very countryside the policy exists to protect.

If the proposal harms openness or encourages encroachment, substantial weight should be given to that harm.

6. Class Q betterment and realistic prospect

The applicant also appears to rely on a betterment argument when compared with a possible Class Q fallback. The Court of Appeal in Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council confirmed that a fallback position may be a material planning consideration where there is a realistic prospect of it being implemented.

It remains a matter of planning judgment for the decision-maker to assess that prospect in the circumstances of the case.

That realistic prospect requirement is directly engaged here.

A theoretical ability to convert buildings under Class Q is not enough.

The committee must ask whether there is a real, practical and commercially credible prospect of that fallback being implemented. If the fallback is unlikely to happen, it should not be allowed to carry decisive weight.

Otherwise, a hypothetical scheme would be used to justify a different and more intrusive development.

The need to advance a betterment case itself suggests that the fallback is not the preferable planning outcome.

Abnormal infrastructure, clearance and conversion costs may materially undermine its viability.

A different assessment might arise for a single, bespoke, owner-led dwelling, where exceptional costs could be justified by personal or architectural value.

But that is not the same as demonstrating a realistic commercial prospect for the Class Q fallback relied upon in support of this application.

7. Overall planning balance

When the issues are considered together, this application should not be approached as a simple choice between new homes and no new homes.

The correct question is whether this particular scheme, in this particular location, satisfies the development plan and national policy when its real impacts are weighed fairly.

The answer, in my submission, is no.

The harm is cumulative and mutually reinforcing.

The proposal would introduce an urbanising density and pattern of built form into a historic rural hamlet. It would remove existing screening and expose neighbouring residents to new impacts from overlooking, noise, lighting and activity.

It would increase vehicle movements in a location that lacks safe pedestrian links and practical access to services.

It would rely on agricultural, Class Q and betterment arguments that have not been sufficiently evidenced.

It would also risk harm to Green Belt openness and countryside character.

Taken together, these are not marginal concerns; they are fundamental planning objections. They are also real, lived consequences for the people who live beside this site and for the community that will be left with the development long after the application has been determined.

For those reasons, I respectfully ask the Parish Council to give these objections significant weight.

The applicant has not adequately demonstrated that the proposal is responsive to local circumstances, that it meets an identified local need, that it would enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural community, that the relevant NPPF exceptions are satisfied, or that any claimed fallback position has a realistic prospect of implementation.

Where the evidence is uncertain, the benefit of that uncertainty should not be given to a proposal that would permanently alter the character of this historic hamlet.

Accordingly, I ask that planning permission not to be supported.

If the Parish Council is not with me on every point, I ask that you at least recognise the cumulative harm: to rural character, to heritage setting, to residential amenity, to Green Belt openness, to sustainability and to the integrity of the policy framework.

Barlings has remained a small rural hamlet for centuries. Its character has survived because decisions were made, generation after generation, not to allow inappropriate development to overwhelm it. I ask you to make that same careful decision today.

This is the wrong development in the wrong place, and it should not be approved.

Thank you for your time.