

Agenda Item 7

Request from HRAG regarding their Higherford Sign:

Barrowford Parish Council has received an email from Mr. Simpson secretary of HRAG regarding their Higherford sign and a suggestion contained in an email from Mr. S. Mitchell. The Clerk has copied the wording exactly from Mr. Mitchell's email:

If with the agreement of the Parish Council, the Sign was to be erected under the auspices of the PC then in my view it could be considered to be permitted development under Part !2 (Development by Local Authorities), Class A (b). ie. Minor structures required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by a local authority (including a Parish Council). The service could be construed as say providing information as to your whereabouts .The provision is unaffected by the fact that the locations are within the Conservation Area.

If we can't get the PC to embrace the project, and see us as say project managers supervising the erection, then I think that planning consent will be required. irrespective of the final location.

The Clerk feels that at the current moment the Council should not use its exemptions under Development by Local Authorities to facilitate the installation of the Higherford Sign for the following reasons:

1. Within the limited emails the Clerk has received from HRAG there are no precise details of a site for the erection of this sign but a list of possible sites.
2. The implication in paragraph 2 is that HRAG will select the site and install the sign with the Parish Council allowing HRAG to project manage the project. But given the opposition to the initial location and lack of consideration to Parish Councils suggestions in the past. The Clerk feels that the granting of project management status to HRAG may lead to a repeat of the original situation.
3. If the sign is erected under the auspices of the parish council will the council be responsible for the sign and its maintenance in future?
4. Any site selected under these planning regulations will still be subject to agreement from the highways authority.

The Clerk suggests caution in making a decision until all of these points have been fully addressed and that if the final proposed location of the sign is not favoured by the Council that the Council does not become involved in the erection of the sign.

Attached are the four more recent emails from the Clerk and Mr. Simpson

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Dear Hugh,

The question of where Higherford starts and finishes is a difficult one to answer as the only irrefutable evidence is that the river crossing was called Higherford. Maps which contain the word Higherford usually place it about the bridge with no delineation of a hard boundary.

In the mid to late eighteenth through to the early 20th century the Grimshaw family owned a large proportion of Higherford including the Old Malt Kiln, the New Malt Kiln, Higherford Mill and Crowtrees House, and would have been either responsible for or owners of many of the terraced properties that sprang up during this period as housing for their increasing workforce. The Fold and Holt Square probably preceded this period and were possibly agricultural workers' or hand weavers' dwellings. The 1848 OS map shows the word Higherford opposite Higherford Mill which leads to the assumption that Higherford Mill is within Higherford and that Higherford starts at the Mill's end wall on Paradise Street.

In 1890 the 2nd edition of Mr Blakey's Barrowford Almanac was published containing a street directory which showed Holt Square in Higherford and did so in every edition up to 1905, when the street directory changed to represent the then current Urban District Council wards. At this date the Higherford electoral ward extended through to Green Hill Cottages, which run to the wedding shop at Church Street/Gisburn Road.

The use of a movable local government ward boundary will lead to confusion. It has been changed in the last 20 years and could well be changed in the next 20 years to equalise the number of voters in all wards, particularly if Trough Laithe is built, increasing the numbers of voters in both Carr Hall and Newbridge Ward. It may even be necessary to amalgamate Higherford with Central ward whilst Blacko is tagged onto the Pendleside villages. In this scenario would the sign be moved further down the village? Political boundaries cannot be used to correctly identify parts of a town or village disregarding its history and tradition.

The only sensible way forward is to locate the sign at some significant point within Higherford. The only long established boundary is the one between Barrowford and Blacko, which was established when Blacko ceased to be administratively part of Barrowford; an alternative would be, as mentioned, at some point near the perceived start of Higherford at Higherford Mill.

A third option could be to use the sign as a way marker by placing it parallel to the highway, identifying you are in Higherford. The sign could then go anywhere from Dicky Nook to Higherford Mill and would not look out of place at the area of land you maintain at the Old Malt Kiln. If it was supported as a way marker by the Parish Council it would probably be allowed on the highway and not need planning permission, though consent of location would be needed from LCC.

The Parish Council discussed your AGM at their last meeting and the general consensus is that the parish could not support the sign being installed at the triangle of land at Bankhouse Mews, but may support a more historically correct location.

In your email you asked about the former sign removed some years ago. I can confirm the location and, as I painted it in the mid-eighties, know that it only had "Barrowford A682" on it. I believe it was possibly for the users of Barnoldswick Road which never had a Barrowford sign due to lack of a suitable site coming into Higherford.

In your email it says you will let the Parish know what the residents decide. Will this be a case of just contacting the ones on your mailing list who did not attend the HRAG AGM, or a consultation with all residents who live in Higherford both historical and within the ward boundary?

The Parish Council look forward to seeing some amicable resolution to this matter. I have attached the document that the Chairman brought to your AGM in case you didn't see a copy. It contains copies of maps, almanac pages and three postcards from my personal collection, which after 30 years still only contains two postcards with Higherford in the description.

Yours sincerely

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Dear Friends,

Firstly, we want to thank Iain and Robert for the very impressive research and analysis that you forwarded to us. It was very helpful and was greatly appreciated by all the Committee.

Our Committee held an unscheduled meeting on Monday evening to de-brief after the AGM. We discussed your inputs, Mrs Ridehalgh's observations and the AGM vote about the Higherford Sign location. After taking everything into account we then considered a large number of locations and finally we unanimously decided:

- The Bankhouse Mews site is NOT an option any longer
- Given the absence for support at the AGM for the Red Lane option this too is now a non starter
- The three options that should be the subject of a resident consultation will be:
 - The Blacko Boundary
 - Dicky Nook - at the actual junction of Gisburn Rd/Barnoldswick Road where the temporary advert hoardings are placed.
 - The Malt Kiln site – various options, all parallel with the main road (obviously these are subject to the relevant permissions).

We will be formally advising Mrs Ridehalgh of the Committee's decision in the next day or two (although I understand she has already been verbally informed and is pleased with the outcome).

Before we proceed to the next stage can we please ask the Parish Council the following two questions:

Firstly, can the Parish Council advise us of their re-actions to these three preferred locations for this sign so this can be included in the resident consultation.

Secondly, Mrs Ridehalgh believes all Barrowford residents should be consulted but we assume that consulting the Parish council will cover the Barrowford element and then we will consult Higherford residents. How does the Parish Council feel about this consultation process?

Once again our sincere thanks for your efforts in helping us with this difficult decision.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course

Yours Sincerely

Hugh Simpson
On Behalf of the HRAG Committee
Robert/Iain

I would be most grateful if you would consider the suggestion in the email from Stuart Mitchell below. It would be of great assistance to us, both in saving time and money making applications for consent. If you have any queries do please get back to me. Naturally we would work as closely as possible with you if you agree to the suggestion.

Also, can you please let me know whether this request and my earlier request for a Parish Council response on the sign's possible locations (email dated 30 November) are to be considered by the Parish Council formally and if so on what date and would it help you if HRAG was represented to speak and/or answer questions?

Once again my thanks for your help in this matter.

Hugh Simpson
HRAG

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-----Original Message-----

From: STUART MITCHELL

To: Hughsimpson50 >

Sent: Wed, 6 Dec 2017 17:20

Subject: The Sign & Planning Consent.

Hugh

If with the agreement of the Parish Council, the Sign was to be erected under the auspices of the PC then in my view it could be considered to be permitted development under Part I2 (Development by Local Authorities), Class A (b). ie. Minor structures required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by a local authority (including a Parish Council). The service could be construed as say providing information as to your whereabouts .The provision is unaffected by the fact that the locations are within the Conservation Area.

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Stuart

14th December 2017,

Dear Hugh,

I am sorry I did not respond to the email dated 30th November I assumed it was for information as I am still not copied into all the emails from HRAG with December being a busy time for the Clerk. I briefly raised the matter in the Clerks report at the December meeting but as it followed a planning application for 16 houses within the Carr Hall/Wheatley Lane Road Conservation Area it took a bit of a back seat.

The General consensus was that the Malt Kiln would be the Councils preferred site but as it was only a report of the Clerk no formal decision was made. The next Council meeting will be on the 17th January 2018 and I will add the items to the agenda. If you or a member of your group wishes to speak please let me know before 12 noon on the 17th January.

Yours sincerely

Iain Lord

Clerk to Barrowford Parish Council