

Reference No 203/U/152

COMMONS REGISTRATION ACT 1965

In the Matter of the Village Green at Church End, Bledow-cum-Saunderton, Wycombe District, Buckinghamshire

DECISION

This reference relates to the question of the ownership of land containing 0.23 of an acre known as the Village Green at Church End, Bledow-cum-Saunderton, Wycombe — District being the land comprised in the Land Section of Register Unit No VG 44 in the Register of Town or Village Greens maintained by the Buckinghamshire County Council of which no person is registered under section 4 of the Commons Registration Act 1965 as the owner.

Following upon the public notice of this reference Bledow-cum-Saunderton Parish Council claimed (letter of 23 September 1977) ownership of the land in question. No other person claimed to be the owner or to have information as to its ownership.

I held a hearing for the purpose of inquiring into the question of the ownership of the land at Aylesbury on 25 January 1979. At the hearing Bledow-cum-Saunderton Parish Council were represented by Mr J Gibson their clerk.

Mr F Cooke who has resided at Bledow Ridge since 1948, has been a member of the Parish Council since 1960, their chairman from 1966 to 1978 and is their vicechairman now, in the course of his evidence produced 3 photographs of the land dated 1937 and 1925 and undated (perhaps earlier), the Minute Books of the Parish Council from 1934 to 1954, from 1954 to 1967 and from 1967 to 1977, the Minute Book of the Parish Meetings from 1894 to date, and the Parish Council Account Books from 1925 to 1946 and from 1976 to date.

Mr Cooke said (in effect):— the land has always been considered to be a "Village Green": for example, the Eastern Electricity Board pay the Parish Council a wayleave rent for a pole on it, the Red Lion Inn (adjoining on the south) pay rental for a sign erected there, and the Village Brownie Pack asked the Council's permission to plant a tree on the "Green". As long as he could remember local residents have complained of cars being parked on the Green and have requested the Council from time to time to take action; in 1975 the Council decided to have a high kerb installed around the edged to keep off motor vehicles, and this has been done at a cost to the Council of £403.41p. The Green is maintained by the Council and the grass cut in the summer. The Council have no title deeds, but as far as he was aware, neither does anyone else.

The Minute Books show: - 30 March 1937, the Council decided to put up a Coronation Seat (put up, later replaced, but no more: vandals); 26 July 1937, the Council gave permission for the Red Lion Inn to erect their sign on the Green (the old photographs show that before then the sign was by the side of the Inn off the Green); 23 March 1966, the council considered an estimate for erecting concrete posts around the Green (to prevent cars encroaching); 29 March 1967 and 14 March 1974 there were complaints at the Parish Meeting; 27 March 1975 the Council had an estimate for kerbing work



at £400. The account books show receipts of wayleave rents as described by Mr Cooke (the Electricity Board) 26p, and the Inn £2.50p now, originally 2s/6d); and a payment of £403.41p for the kerbing.

On the evidence summarised above I conclude that the Parish Council have for many years been the reputed owners of the land, and that their possession is unlikely to be disturbed. Such a possession is equivalent to ownership. I am therefore satisfied that the Parish Council are the owners of the land, and I shall accordingly direct the Buckinghamshire County Council as registration authority to register Bledow—cum—Saunderton Parish Council as the owner of the land under section 8(2) of the Act of 1965.

I am required by regulation 30(1) of the Commons Commissioners Regulations 1971 to explain that a person aggrieved by this decision as being erroneous in point of law may, within 6 weeks from the date on which notice of the decision is sent to him, require me to state a case for the decision of the High Court.

Dated this 12th

day of Jelmany

1979

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Commons Commissioner