

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 1st February 2022 at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors David Fenwick, Mike Grace, Wilfred Grainger, Chris Tyler, Duncan White (in the chair)

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Councillor John O’Dowd, five members of the public

1. Apologies

None – all Members were present.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members’ Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 11th January 2022 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered:

21/06001/VAR Bourton Manor, Bourton, Much Wenlock, TF13 6QE	Variation of Condition No. 2 attached to planning permission 19/04926/FUL to allow for an amendment to the garage roof Condition Number(s): 2 Conditions(s) Removal: Amend the roof to the garage to reduce the impact. It was RESOLVED no objections.
22/00115/FUL The Dell, Homer, Much Wenlock	Erection of replacement single storey front porch. It was RESOLVED no objections.
21/05911/FUL Site Of Burnetts, Callaughton, Much Wenlock	Renovation and reinstatement of dwelling to include single storey rear extension. It was RESOLVED no objections. Members supported the recommendation by SC Archaeology (Historic Environment) that a programme of archaeological work be undertaken on the site.
21/05717/LBC The Corn Exchange, 62 High Street, Much Wenlock	Replace 2no windows to rear elevation. As this application had been submitted by the Town Council, it was RESOLVED to note.
21/05023/OUT Proposed Residential and Commercial Development Land, Tasley, Bridgnorth	Hybrid application for phased development for: Outline planning permission (access only for consideration) for mixed use development of up to 550 dwellings, foodstore, neighbourhood centre, B2/B8 business use, 'sui generis' uses to include hotel, public house, petrol filling and electric vehicle charging station, livestock market, lairage and ancillary uses, green infrastructure and associated ancillary works, demolition of the existing livestock market; Full planning permission for five arm roundabout, spine road south of A458 and north of A458 with associated footway/cycleways and landscape verges, formation of junction with the spine road and Church Lane, upgrading of existing Livestock Market, drainage, associated earthworks, infrastructure and ancillary works.

Councillors noted the expected impact of traffic generated from the development on Much Wenlock, as well as the lack of information on traffic matters in the application.

It was RESOLVED to object to the application, as per the draft response provided by the Transport Working Group, and to additionally raise concerns about the impact of the retail proposals, as follows:

1. Much Wenlock Town Council is concerned about what appear to be serious omissions from the Transport Assessment reports associated with this application and we ask for these concerns to be taken into consideration and properly addressed.
2. Five months ago, in connection with planning application 19/05560/OUT (Buildwas Power Station), Shropshire Council Highways department produced a Highways Briefing Note for Members to consider at the upcoming planning committee meeting (10th August 2021), which was held to determine the aforementioned application. Section 8 of the Highways Briefing Note refers to *this* Tasley application and states:- *'Any application will need to be supported by a Transport Assessment which will fully assess the likely impact on the surrounding network to include the A458. This will inform any highway contributions that will be required to make the development acceptable from a highways perspective.'*
3. The Note goes on to say:- *'Any significant development in the Bridgnorth area is likely to have an impact on the Gaskell Arms junction.'*
4. That section of the Technical Note was written to assure Members of both Shropshire Council and Much Wenlock Town Council that their concerns about the impact of developments on the Gaskell Arms junction were being addressed.
5. Unfortunately, contrary to the assurance given in the Highways Briefing Note, Much Wenlock Town Council can find no reference at all to the Gaskell Corner junction in any of the Transport Assessment reports that accompany the Tasley application, *including the Scoping reports*. Neither can we find any distribution diagrams that clearly indicate the percentage distribution of development traffic; nor turning-movement diagrams that distribute development traffic through the local junctions. There appears to be a lot of output demonstrating the results of the junction traffic modelling, but we are unable to locate any clear description of the input data.
6. At the very end of Appendix J there are some turning movement diagrams that relate to Saturday traffic flows, but even these do not include development traffic.
7. Consequently, Much Wenlock Town Council cannot find out from these documents exactly how much newly-generated or attracted traffic, associated with the Tasley development, will be using the Gaskell Arms junction. This is not acceptable. And if, as it appears at the moment, the Tasley developer was not instructed to carry out a full assessment of the Gaskell Arms junction, how will Shropshire Council successfully demand a contribution to improve a junction that the developer has not even considered?
8. Much Wenlock Town Council has expressed concern before about what appears to be a disjointed Shropshire Council approach to the provision of necessary infrastructure to accommodate all the developments that are being proposed and that will detrimentally impact the Gaskell Arms junction. We still have no solution, even in outline, to the problems at the junction and now, it appears that developers are not even being told to include it in their analysis.

	<p>9. It is vitally important to the town that Much Wenlock Town Council is fully aware of how much additional traffic will be using the Gaskell Corner junction should these proposals go ahead. This information is not available in the current application documentation. Consequently, Much Wenlock Town Council will maintain an OBJECTION until the information is available and an appropriate contribution is agreed, as outlined in the Shropshire Council Highways Briefing Note.</p> <p>10. Shropshire Council's Core Strategy and SAMDEV policies only allow for a convenience store as part of a neighbourhood centre for the Tasley area. The current application proposes a much larger, discount store. The impact of the retail proposals is not clear and Much Wenlock Town Councillors are concerned that the proposals could draw trade away from Much Wenlock, impacting adversely on the town's retailers (Objective 2, Policy EJ4 of the MWNP). This has potential wider implications for the town. These include the likelihood of additional traffic movements associated with drawing trade from Much Wenlock (Objective 4 of the MWNP). There are no suggestions being put forward for improving public transport links. The threat of undermining existing retail may also affect community facilities in Much Wenlock, for example the Post Office is now integrated into the Spar; should the Spar be affected, then the Post Office facility will be under threat (Objective 5; Policy CW2 of the MWNP). If the developers' retail and traffic assessment cannot categorically assure Shropshire Council and its communities that these impacts will not arise, the application should be refused.</p>
<p>21/04033/FUL Wenlock Edge Inn, Easthope, Much Wenlock TF13 6DJ</p>	<p>Stationing of 3no holiday letting units, supporting infrastructure and installation of package treatment plant and associated works (amended description).</p> <p>Members noted that the application would be considered by Shropshire Council's Southern Planning Committee on 8th February 2022, with the recommendation Grant Permission.</p> <p>When Councillors had considered the application in October 2021, it had been resolved to object due to lack of information. Additional information had subsequently been added to the Shropshire Council website.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that Councillor White would represent the Town Council at the Planning Committee meeting and present the Council's objections.</p> <p>Members agreed to reiterate the comments of the National Trust and Easthope, Shipton and Stanton Long Parish Council. The information presented in the application was still not clear, particularly with regard to the future of the pub. In this regard, Councillors considered that any approval needed to connect the three holiday lets with the continued use of the pub. The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan encouraged existing uses and commercial uses but any development needed to minimise the impact on the landscape and ecology.</p>

7. Planning Decisions

It was RESOLVED to note the following planning decision:

<p>20/01751/EIA Farley Quarry, Farley, Much Wenlock, TF13 6NX</p>	<p>The recycling of construction, demolition and excavation wastes and the construction of a development platform in the quarry by means of the placement of materials and soils that cannot be recycled, together with ancillary activities and improvements to the site access.</p> <p>Decision: Refuse</p>
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8. Planning Appeal

Members noted that a planning appeal had been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of Shropshire Council to refuse to grant planning permission for application 20/04580/FUL, Erection of two detached dwellings following demolition of existing buildings; formation of parking area; to include removal of several trees, at land adjoining The Old Vicarage, Victoria Road, Much Wenlock.

It was RESOLVED to maintain the Council's previous objections.

9. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 - 2038

- a. Members noted that no date had been set for the Examination in Public. A paper updating Members on preparations would be presented to full Council for consideration on 3rd February. It was noted that the Inspectors would like local groups to collaborate, rather than present the same issues several times.
- b. Councillors considered a deposition received from a member of the public concerning issues associated with the operation of Travis Perkins. This had been submitted to the Town Council for possible inclusion in preparations for the Council's case for the Examination in Public.

It was RESOLVED to write to Travis Perkins to request that they consider reducing the size of the vehicles delivering to the site, as the extremely large lorries were causing significant issues for other users of highway.

A discussion could be held with Shropshire Council about the specifics of the situation and included in consideration of the overall traffic management for the town.

10. Flooding issues

- a. Members noted a written update from the Flood Group. It was clarified that members of the Flood Group were updating the contact list in the Flood Action Plan, not the Plan itself, which was covered by copyright.
- b. Members received a report from the meeting of members of the Strategic Flood Working Group held on 25th January 2022. Councillor Tyler advised that the meeting, in fact, had not been a meeting of the Strategic Flood Working Group but an opportunity for members of the Planning & Environment Committee to meet representatives from Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Harper Adams, who could act in an advisory capacity. It was noted that membership of the Strategic Flood Working Group, in addition to Town Councillors, had yet to be determined.
- c. Members noted that despite repeated requests to Shropshire Council and an officer at the Environment Agency for information connected both with the flood risk from Shadwell Quarry and its proposed development, no response had been received.

It was RESOLVED raise the concerns with Shropshire Councillor Daniel Thomas with the request that he follow these up and to ask whether the Town Council should escalate the matters further within Shropshire Council.

It was RESOLVED to also raise the concerns about flooding and development with the National Flood Forum.

- d. Members noted that at the meeting held with Shropshire Council's Drainage & Flood Risk Manager in November 2021 it had been agreed to hold regular meetings between the Town Council and Shropshire Council. The Clerk was asked to arrange a further meeting to discuss flooding matters.

11. Tree Planting

- a. The Chair welcomed to the meeting Mrs Lesley Durbin and Mr John Tuer, members of Much Wenlock Tree Forum.

Mrs Durbin noted that the Tree Forum had submitted a report to the last meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee on tree cover in the Conservation Area. She reported that, since then, the Town Council's Finance & Asset Management Committee had agreed to a tree planting scheme in the old part of Much Wenlock Cemetery. It had been agreed that the Council would underwrite the cost of the trees and donations would be sought from the local community. Several donations had already been made or promised. The planting would take place on Saturday, 19th March.

Mr Tuer outlined a scheme to plant an avenue of 6 – 8 trees on the approach roads to the town. This might be possible on the Farley Road and was certainly possible on the Bridgnorth Road, although due to the width of the verge it was probable that this could only be done on one side. The trees could be planted on the opposite side to the cemetery, working towards Bridgnorth from the existing oak, with a distance of around 10 yards between the new trees. Members suggested planting into the hedge or in the field on the cemetery side of the road, however, planting into the hedge would be difficult due to the existing roots and planting in the field would require permission from the landowner.

Members raised concerns about the impact of proposed development adjacent to the Bridgnorth Road but agreed that this should not stop the tree planting from going ahead.

It was noted that Shropshire Council's Tree Officer was supportive of the idea in principle, although the highways department would need to consider the scheme. Shropshire Highways had been copied into the email exchange but had made no response so far.

It was RESOLVED to strongly support the idea of planting trees along the approach to the town on Bridgnorth Road and to write to Shropshire Council's Highways Department concerning the initiative.

- b. Members of the Tree Forum had also initiated discussions with Shropshire Council and Star Housing regarding tree planting on Star Housing land. After consultation with the residents, who had responded very positively, four trees had already been planted by the Southfield Road/High Causeway bungalows. Star Housing had some budget and limited areas of land in the town and were considering further tree planting alongside Southfield Road.

It was RESOLVED to write a letter to Star Housing supporting further tree planting on their land in Much Wenlock.

In connection with the Town Council's planning application for new windows at the Corn Exchange, Mrs Durbin suggested that the Town Council might install swift boxes at the rear of the building at the time the work was carried out. She also drew attention to the presence of slow worms at the cemetery, and the need to look carefully at the management of the site to ensure their wellbeing, as a protected species.

12. Transport Working Group

Members considered a report from the Transport Working Group:

- A meeting had been held to review the parking proposals with a Shropshire Council officer.
- Members of the working group had discussed ways of improving safety at the crossing from Oakfield Park to the primary school with the local Shropshire Council highways engineer. Costings had been obtained for the extension of the pavement to Oakfield Park and railings on both sides of Bridgnorth Road to stop pedestrians cutting across the road at places other than the crossing point. The highways engineer had advised that CIL funding was available to cover the cost of the work, at no cost to the Town Council. Members of the working group were also drafting an application to the Police & Crime Commissioner for funding for signage associated with the crossing point.

There was uncertainty about the process for accessing CIL funding as Shropshire Council had recently informed town and parish councils that consideration of all future Expressions of Interest for CIL funding was 'on pause' until April 2022. Councillor Tyler undertook to request contact details for the appropriate officer/department at Shropshire Council and the Clerk would check whether the request to access CIL funding required full Council authority.

- Members were advised of difficulties between residents of Southfield Park and Wheatland Care Home over workers and/or visitors to the care home parking on the road and residents blocking access to the care home. As this was a highways safety issue, members of the working group would make further enquiries about the situation and then suggest recommendations to Shropshire Council.

13. Litter

Concerns about litter on the Priory Car Park had been raised by English Heritage staff at the Priory. The local policing team patrolled the area regularly with regard to anti-social behaviour and the town's volunteer litter pickers included the car park on their monthly litter pick. However, due to frequent littering, English Heritage staff were having to clear the car park on a daily basis.

It was RESOLVED to write to the English Heritage area manager, sharing the concerns of the local staff and asking what action English Heritage might take, including consideration of CCTV.

Members also noted frequent fly tipping at the end of the unofficial footpath onto Merrywell Lane, as well as at Farley Quarry.

14. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies

In response to the suggestions made by Mrs Durbin earlier in the meeting, it was **RESOLVED to recommend the installation of swift boxes at the Corn Exchange to the Finance & Asset Management Committee.**

The Clerk was asked to seek advice and explore options for protection of the slow worms at the cemetery.

15. Consultation*

- a. Members considered a further response to consultation regarding Shropshire's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan. **It was RESOLVED to submit no additional comments.**

- b. Members noted information regarding the Government’s response to the Independent Landscapes Review carried out in 2019 (the Glover Review) and proposals for support for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Councillor Grace offered to review the documentation and report back to the next meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee, if appropriate.

16. Street Lighting*

Members noted information regarding the upgrade of Shropshire Council’s heritage street lighting in the town.

17. Street naming *

18. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders*

19. Footpath Diversion Orders*

20. Road closures*

Members noted the following road closure:

- Location: B4378, Bourton
- Date/Time: 21st to 23rd March 2022, Monday - Friday 09:30 - 16:00
- Agency: Kier on behalf of Shropshire Council
- Purpose: Rockface inspection

21. Highways matters *

- a. Members considered information from Shropshire Council regarding the provision of grit bins in the town and the disappointing response to the Town Council’s requests for additional bins. However, Shropshire Council had offered to provide a grit bin for Station Road and **it was RESOLVED to recommend that the additional grit bin be located near to the coach drop-off point in Station Road.**

It was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9 pm.

- b. Members noted an update on highways matters:
 - No update had been provided by Shropshire Council regarding the matter of lorries mounting the pavement at the junction of Queen Street and Back Lane.
 - With regard to parking proposals for the town, the bus drop off point in St Mary’s Lane had been removed and would be considered in conjunction with proposals for the Gaskell corner.
 - The parking proposals would also incorporate a break in the parking restrictions for the layby in Farley Road.
 - The first parking space next to the alleyway from the High Street to Falcons Court car park was to be removed as this was a right of way to the old Barclays Bank and should not be a parking space.

22. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)*

23. Stopping Up Orders*

24. Speed Limit Orders*

25. Prohibition Orders*

26. Date of next meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 1st March 2022 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present.

27. Planning Enforcement

Members noted enforcement issue 22/08474/ENF and the resolution of 21/08422/ENF.

The Clerk was asked to check whether any enforcement action was being taken in connection with tipping at Farley Quarry, now that planning permission for the site had been refused.

The meeting closed at 9.08 pm.

Signed.....(Chairman) Date.....