

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 9th January 2024 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick (in the chair), Wilf Grainger, Dan Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West
In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, two members of the public

1. Apologies

None – all Councillors 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 5th December 2023 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

Members considered a response to the following planning applications:

23/05131/FUL Brooklands, Farley Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of two storey rear extension, alterations to front elevation. Members noted that the decision to grant permission for this application had been notified by Shropshire Council earlier in the day.
23/05114/LBC 54 High Street, Much Wenlock	Alterations to an existing window to create a new doorway to the side of the property. It was RESOLVED no objection.
23/05212/FUL and 23/05213/LBC 48 High Street, Much Wenlock	Alterations to gates and boundary wall. It was RESOLVED to support both applications.
23/05388/TPO Lime Grove, Smithfield Road, Much Wenlock	Pollard down to a 7 metre pole 1no Lime (T1) protected by the Bridgnorth District Council (Smithfield Road, Much Wenlock, Salop) TPO 1978 (Ref: BR/TPO/28). Members noted that the reason for pollarding the tree was unclear. It was RESOLVED to defer to the opinion of the tree officer with the comment that Members would have liked more information on which to base a decision.

7. Planning Decisions

It was **RESOLVED** to note the following planning decisions:

23/04509/FUL The Stables, Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of standalone photovoltaic array comprised of 2No. rows of 11No. panels each. Decision: Grant Permission
23/03985/FUL Proposed Barn Conversion Barn 6 At Hill Farm, Bourton, Much Wenlock	Conversion of existing traditional single storey cow byre into a two bedroom dwelling with a courtyard and parking area Decision: Grant Permission

<p>23/04840/TCA The Gables, Racecourse Lane, Much Wenlock</p>	<p>Reduce height by approx. 30% and overhanging branches (See Correspondence) of group of Bay (T1), 1no Lime (T3), 1no Acer (T4), 3no Silver Birch (T5,T6 &T7), 1no Scotch Pine (T8) and 2no Leylandii (T9 &T10), thin Hazel cluster (T2) & reduce height by approx. third of 1no Beech (T11) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area</p> <p>Decision: No Objection</p> <p>It was noted that the tree officer had expressed concerns about the extent of height reduction proposed to the mature beech and Scots pine, both of which could be damaged by overly heavy or insensitive lopping, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the work. Councillors were pleased that their comments in this regard had been taken into account.</p>
<p>23/04843/TCA Mary Way House, 7 St Mary's Lane, Much Wenlock</p>	<p>Reduce back branches overhanging property (See Photo) of 1no Leylandii (T12) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area</p> <p>Decision: No Objection</p>

8. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 - 2038

- a. There appeared to have been no recent developments with the Local Plan review as the latest posting on the Examination website was 17th November 2023.
 - b. Members noted that no date had been announced for the submission of representations for Stage 2 of the Examination in Public. Councillors considered the draft representation prepared by the Town Council's Associates and proposed for submission on behalf of the Town Council and Associates. They agreed that the document was very well written and had clearly taken a lot of work. However, they were minded that there had been no call so far for representations for Stage 2 of the Examination and that further information might come to light before that time which could necessitate an amendment to the content. They also expressed concerns about some of the wording relating to potential development sites.
- It was RESOLVED to circulate the draft to all Councillors and to present it for consideration at a forthcoming full Council meeting when the submission date for representations for Stage 2 of the Examination in Public was known.**

9. Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Members reviewed discussions held with the Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultant, Alison Eardley, on 4th January 2024. The meeting had been positive and the consultant had agreed to prepare a project plan to help move the review forward. It had been agreed to arrange a meeting with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group and Civic Society to discuss the scope of the review. Following this, a launch event would be organised to seek views from the community and engagement with the review process. The Clerk was asked to check the availability of the consultant and make arrangements for the meeting with representatives of the Refresh Group/Civic Society.
- b. Some Councillors had already provided comments on the draft of the Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines prepared by AECOM. Any further comments should be passed to the Clerk by the end of the week. Councillor Thomas had been pleased to see how closely the new document aligned with the Much Wenlock design statement from 2000.

10. Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan

Members considered a response to the Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan consultation by the extended deadline of 31st January 2024. The Transport Working Group recommended that a formal objection should be submitted due to concerns about increased traffic through the Gaskell corner arising from development plans. The Council's Transport Working Group had undertaken modelling which demonstrated that the developments proposed would increase vehicle movements through the Gaskell corner by 40-50 during peak hours. Members noted that contact had been made with Buildwas and Leighton Parish Councils to ask whether they would like to submit a combined objection.

It was RESOLVED to submit an objection to the Telford & Wrekin Draft Local Plan due to concerns about the increased traffic which would be generated through Much Wenlock. The Transport Working Group would prepare a draft for circulation and approval prior to submission.

11. Wah Lai Chinese Takeaway

The Clerk had written to the owner of the Wah Lai premises in the High Street on 14th December 2023 but no response had been received to date.

It was understood from another source that matters were moving forward with occupation of the premises.

12. Flooding Issues

- a. Members of the Strategic Flood Working Group reported that a further meeting with Philip Dunne and others regarding flooding matters had been proposed for Friday, 23rd February at 2.30pm.

It was noted that the capital drainage work planned for Stretton Road had been postponed from the scheduled January start date until later in the year in response to concerns from the businesses along Wenlock Edge. Councillors were disappointed that the work would need to be rescheduled. A new date was awaited.

- b. Members considered information received from Severn Trent Water in relation to the sewerage system in Much Wenlock and sewage escape. It was noted that CCTV investigations had been carried out in July 2023 in Sheinton Street and the Bull Ring. Further CCTV investigations were planned to check more of the network. There were proposals for work between 2025 and 2030. Councillor Thomas agreed to seek clarification on some of the points raised.
- c. A response had been received from the Environment Agency (EA) regarding a potential environmental incident at Quality Liquid Feeds and contingency plans to deal with any such incident, including the effects of a possible breach at Shadwell Quarry. The EA had responded: "Our technical officer has checked their permitting database and we do not appear to regulate this site and we have no permit/licence records for the site at all."

Replies were awaited from Severn Trent Water and Shropshire Council.

- d. Members considered the response to correspondence to the Reservoir Safety Team at the Environment Agency regarding potential risks from collapse of the boundary at Shadwell Quarry. The Reservoir Safety Team had advised that this was not a large raised reservoir and so they could not help. They recommended referring the query to the Health & Safety Executive.

It was RESOLVED to pass on the response from the EA to the Flood Action Group for them to consider reporting the concerns to the Health & Safety Executive. It was acknowledged that the Flood Action Group had more evidence of the potential risks associated with the quarry than the Council. Councillor Benbow agreed to contact the Flood Action Group.

- e. It was noted that the recent heavy rain had not resulted in any flooding in the town, and that regular clearing of drains in the town had helped. It was understood that Much Wenlock was now scheduled for frequent drain clearing by Shropshire Council, although it had not been possible to obtain a copy of the timetable. It was noted that the Shropshire Council drain gulper was not permitted to go beyond the 30mph speed limit without traffic management, which affected the frequency of cleaning on parts of the Bourton Road and Oakfield Park.

13. Transport and Highways Matters

Members considered a report from the Transport Working Group. It was understood that proposals for the Gaskell corner were still under discussion by Shropshire Council and WSP. The parking proposals for the town were awaiting further amendment.

14. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies*

- a. Members noted information on new local authority guidance from Buglife, an invertebrate conservation charity, and an invitation to an online launch event on 24th January 2024. **It was RESOLVED that Councillor Linda West should attend, as the Council's 'Climate Champion'.**
- b. Members noted an invitation to attend an online workshop on putting together a climate change plan for towns and parishes on 16th and 23rd January.

15. Consultation*

16. Street Lighting

It was understood that the street light in Southfield Road that had been uncovered following the cutting back of trees was now working. The light had been added to the Town Council's inventory.

Councillors noted that the Shropshire Council street light outside 42 Barrow Street had been flickering for months and had been reported frequently on FixMyStreet. Councillor Thomas was asked to follow this up.

17. Street Naming *

18. Footpath Issues*

Members noted that the kissing gate at the entrance to the Bull Ring footpath had been replaced with a gate that was accessible for pushchairs and that 12 metres of stone had been laid on the path. This area of the path was much improved. Shropshire Council and the landowner had no objection to more of the path being stoned, although there was no funding available for this at present.

19. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders*

20. Footpath Diversion Orders*

Members noted the response from the Rights of Way officer at Shropshire Council to the Town Council’s objection to the diversion of footpath 177 in Barrow parish.

21. Road Closures*

It was noted that signs had now been displayed for the 24 hour High Street road closure for electrical work between 15th January and 7th February. The A4169 from William Brookes school towards Buildwas would be closed for patching between 12th and 25th January, between 9.30am and 4pm on weekdays, and residents along the road had been notified by letter.

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, 6th February 2024 at 7pm at the Guildhall or Corn Exchange (tbc), 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 an update on the following enforcement issues: 22/09018/ENF, 23/09619/ENF and closed case 23/09833/ENF.

The Clerk was asked to query the situation with enforcement issues 23/09961/ENF and 23/09704/ENF.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....