

## **Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Prees Parish Council held at Higher Heath Village Hall on Wednesday 27th Jan 2016.**

**Present were Cllrs P Gill (Chairman), R Hirons (Vice-Chairman), Mrs B Finch, Mrs S Jones, Mrs B Rainford and R List. Mrs L Rumney Clerk to the Council, Shropshire Cllr Paul Wynn, Agent Peter Richards and approx 50 members of the public.**

**Apologies for absence had been received from:** Cllrs J Allen – family commitments, J Smith – work commitments, B Collins – prior engagement, J Whelan – prejudicial interest.

**Disclosure of Interests:** Cllr Mrs S Jones declared a prejudicial interest in item 4, planning application 15/05307/REM.

### **012/16 Public Session**

Cllrs and the Clerk introduced themselves then Cllr P Gill welcomed members of the public to the meeting all of whom wished to comment on planning application 15/05307/FUL, he reminded everyone that the application already had outline planning permission so an out right refusal was not going to be discussed. Several members of the public spoke to the Council raising the following issues:

1. Proposal to relocate bus stop on Heathwood Rd, tree to be removed likely to have TPO and new site is on narrowest part of Heathwood Rd. Cause traffic congestion when buses stop, vehicles trying to negotiate the bus will increase the risk to pedestrians and passengers from the bus. Current location opposite Twemlows Ave has space for vehicles to pass the bus. Two or three school buses, need to consider bus pull-in to get them off the road.
2. Location of shop on the A41 is a concern, not supported by the community. There should be a shop located on the site in the middle of the community with safe access for pedestrians and children. Shop on new development, not impact on existing residents or Heathwood Rd.
3. Impact on Heathwood Rd, no footpaths, unlit, narrow in places, vehicles drive on private verges, increase in traffic will endanger pedestrians and cause traffic problems at junction with the A41. Heathwood Rd is too narrow and unkempt to cope. Consider pedestrian access only on Heathwood Rd, all traffic off development to use access onto A41 – would alleviate local residents concerns.
4. Community building could take form of Village Hall – new appetite to run one, combine with community shop. Ask applicants to reconsider options.
5. Development of site – restrict operating hours to protect local residents, 8.30am-5pm week days, 8.30 -1pm Sat, no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Site access for construction vehicles only off A41 not via Heathwood Rd. Whole site should be demolished prior to development, not piecemeal, potentially leaving site half residential and half industrial use.
6. Overflow of cars from site, parking on streets impact on Heathwood Rd. Site roads look narrow.
7. Infrastructure concerns, water mains and sewage need to be checked, confirm services will cope.
8. Contaminated site, concern for safety of residents and surface water if soakaways can't be used.
9. Provide new broadband and mobile phone links for community and new site.
10. Opportunity to organise main gas for the area.

Cllr P Gill asked public to demonstrate support for shop on site, 27 hands raised. Shop on A41 – 2 hands. Village hall preferred to shop – 9 hands. Joint community shop and village hall – 22 hands raised. Very rough guide.

Peter Richards, the Agent for the applicant given opportunity to respond. Application was to fine tune the development, Highways, access, drainage, layout and parking all been discussed with Shropshire Council (SC) prior to application being submitted. Road layout approved by SC, want it linked into existing developments, would need to discuss moving bus stop with Highways and check status of tree re TPO. All Construction traffic to use A41 access, building start at Heathwood Rd end and progress according to demand/sale of houses. Built in phases rather than demolish whole site, dependent on sale of properties. Following consultation in 2011 village shop preferred, no one to run village hall, shop must be viable – applicants remit to provide dedicated land rather than run subsequent community/retail project.

GroContinental community focused Company, already reduced density to benefit community, £300.000 in S106 agreement for Education and money for Highways. Footpaths throughout site, roads standard approved widths, 2 parking spaces per property, streetlight not a requirement. Layout of site and through access has been scrutinised, design in traffic calming measures, size of site is an issue for a single access. Will provide recreation/play areas on site looking to hand over to Parish Council, commuted sum to maintain. Cllr P Gill thanked everyone for their comments and took the meeting back into closed session.

#### 013/16 Planning.

**15/05307/REM** - Grocott Developments Ltd - Gro Continental Ltd, Heathwood Road, Higher Heath, Whitchurch - Approval of Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to permission NS/09/00111/OUT for the erection of 116 dwellings and associated public open space. Cllrs discussed the application at some length considering all the points raised by members of the public. Comments included:

Higher Heath has no street lighting so any lights on the site should be on, and the responsibility of, individual properties.

Put kerb stones along Heathwood Rd.

Check TPO on tree by proposed bus stop, traffic concerns given width of Heathwood Rd at this point, impact on unofficial bus stop by Gorse Meadow.

Site activity restricted to 8am – 5pm Mon to Fri, 9am – 12pm Sat and no working on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Consider single vehicular access, Heathwood Rd pedestrian access only. Roundabout on A41 access. Contaminated site, ground and possibly asbestos, whole site assessed and declared safe prior to construction.

2 parking spaces per dwelling insufficient, affordable housing for local people.

Little support for shop in proposed location, concerns at viability of shop on site. Village Hall may not be best solution need further consultation on shop/hall scenario.

Brown field site, has planning permission better to see it developed than left derelict, traffic generated by previous use.

Site should be cleared first and fully developed but may not make economic sense.

Provision of play equipment and future maintenance needs to be discussed/agreed.

Appreciate reduction in number of dwellings.

Consider offer from West Mercia Police to comment on application to “design out crime”.

Proposed by Cllr R Hirons, seconded by Cllr Mrs B Finch that the Council supports the application in principle subject to the following comments/conditions.

1. Due to contamination on the site and the age of the buildings no development should take place until the site has been independently assessed and found safe to build on and during demolition and construction for local residents.
2. Concerns about impact of increased traffic on Heathwood Road. A single vehicular access from A41 into the development should be considered with access from Heathwood Rd limited to small number of properties fronting onto it. Full pedestrian access should be provided. A full traffic and pedestrian safety survey should be carried out both for the new development and to assess its impact on Heathwood Road to ensure the increase in traffic can be accommodated along with a proposal for footways along Heathwood Rd to protect pedestrians, particularly if dual access is retained. To stop site becoming a "rat run" there should be a physical barrier to prevent vehicles driving through the site, this will also reduce the pressure on the access onto Heathwood Road.
3. Proposed relocation of the bus stop causes issues. There is a large beech tree which it is proposed will be removed, this tree may be subject to a TPO, this requires clarification. Proposed site is at a narrow point of Heathwood Road and unless a pull-in for busses is provided will restrict vehicle movements and create a hazard for passengers using the bus - including children on school buses. Bus stop should remain where it is opposite junction of Twemlows Ave, the junction affords space for vehicles to pass the bus or provide an off road space for buses to pull into.
4. Provision of a shop as the community asset is still supported but the site proposed on the A41, off the development site, has little or no community support. Too far from centre of Higher Heath and safety concerns over pedestrian access. The shop should be on the development site, if not an alternative community asset could be reconsidered, further discussions needed prior to approval.

5. Higher Heath does not have street lighting, the new development should be lit via individual lights on each property rather than placing the burden of lighting on either the Parish or Shropshire Council.
6. Access to the site during demolition and development should only be from the A41 access, no construction vehicles; particularly HGV's should be allowed access via Heathwood Road, to protect the amenity and safety of residents and road users during the development of the site. Work on the site should be restricted to working hours 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri. 9am -12pm Sat and no working on Sundays and Bank Holidays. To protect the amenity of local residents.
7. The sewage system needs to be surveyed and overhauled if necessary to confirm that it will cope with the increase in use.
8. Green energy should be incorporated into the design for each house to reduce the development's carbon footprint.
9. Encourage the developers to look at ways to improve communication links to the site both mobile and internet access which could also improve the facilities for the whole of Higher Heath.
10. The provision of green space and an equipped play area on site is something the Parish Council would like to be involved in particularly if the future maintenance needs of any facilities will have to be managed. The Council would welcome a multi use games area provided for older children in Higher Heath either on or off the development site along side onsite provision for younger children, which should be a matter for further discussion. **All agreed.** (*Cllr Mrs S Jones did not vote*).

**014/16 Community Policing**

**Higher Heath, Smart Water campaign** – Cllr P Gill presented a summary of the scheme for the benefit of those present. Cllrs had agreed to consider providing further funding for the project, however Police have now confirmed sufficient funding is in place, Cllrs concerned that any further funding committed to the project may not be used in Higher Heath, would support the project further if it were rolled out across other parts of the Parish. Proposed by Cllr P Gill, seconded by Cllr Mrs B Finch that the Council does not commit further funding to the project unless there is a requirement to extend it further in the Parish. **All agreed.** (*Cllr R Hirons did not vote*) Cllrs P Gill, R Hirons and Mrs B Rainford agreed to assist the Police with the physical aspect of the project.

**015/16 Cllr resignation and “Notice of Casual Vacancy”.**

Cllr P Gill had received a letter from Mrs J Stokes indicating that she wished to resign due to health issues. Cllrs accepted the letter of resignation, Clerk to write letter of thanks and authorised the Notice of Casual Vacancy to be published.

*Meeting closed at 8.50pm.*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**DATED** .....

**07/2016**