

**Heytesbury Imber and Knook Parish Council  
Minutes  
Extraordinary Meeting  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017 @ 7-15pm**

**Councillors:** A Perry (Chair), D Bond (Vice Chair), S Buttenshaw, E Colvin, T Eastman, P Fellowes, L Gould, D Hiscock, A Moore, L Morris, and V Sturmeay.

**Present:** Cllrs Bond, Buttenshaw, Colvin, Eastman, Fellowes, Gould, Hiscock, Moore, Morris, Perry and Sturmeay.

**Officers:** H Parks

**Public and Press:** There were 52 members of the public and one member of the press.

**PC/17/119 Apologies**

None

**PC/17/120 Declarations of Interest**

None

*Standing Orders were suspended to allow for public participation at 7.19pm*

**PC/17/121 Public Participation**

**Julian Harvey** spoke in favour of the application, saying that there were very few places in England that did not have a village hall. This was a final chance to have a state of the art hall to belong to the village. The village consultation showed that 65% of the village were in favour of the provision of a village hall. He felt that any housing development would be intrusive to a degree, but change is inevitable. 23 houses should bring younger blood to bolster the viability of the school and support some re-energising of the village. He submitted a statement which is held with the plans.

**Anthony Wilson- Team Heytesbury** spoke about the aims of the group which were to secure ownership of the playing fields, provide a village hall and take ownership of the parkland. The sports clubs have no security and the provision of affordable housing is welcome. He was in favour of the application.

**Colin Dipper** spoke in favour of the application. He was the last booking secretary of the Raymond Hall and 13 different groups came in from outside the village. He felt that the provision of a village hall would build a community and he was always a supporter for housing.

**Krishnakali Sinha** felt that progress could not be stopped. The UK needs more houses, we will need houses. We need somewhere to gather as this will improve our mental health.

**Luke Woods** spoke in objection to the application and said that the property he lives in would be surrounded on three sides and his access to light would be a problem. The

provision of social housing would also be difficult for him and his family to accept. He felt that the village hall plans were too large and the impact on traffic would be an issue.

**Col Peter Andrews** – the village had fund raised for various village halls in the surrounding areas. All the other halls except Sutton Veny are not financially sound. This plan is at the wrong end of the village and he believed the plans for the hall were not sustainable or workable.

**Bob Wellard –The Piscatorial Society** hold leasehold and freehold fishing rights over 6 miles of the River Wylye. The Society also owns the strip of woodland between the public footpath and the river along the Heytesbury meadow. The society have requested from Wiltshire Council development management, clarification on water quality, phosphates in the water system, how sewerage would be dealt with and flood risk assessment. The societies approach to the application is neutral. A full statement is held with the plans.

**Kevin Canty** had concerns with the housing development and the risk of flooding. He lives close to the river and the current soakaway is already overstretched. The flood risk assessment carried out has raised further concerns as the developers have only used a computer model and don't appear to be concerned on the impact of the development and the flood risk elsewhere in the village. There appears to be no improvement for education, broadband and NHS requirements. A reduction in the width of Park Street would impact on agricultural traffic. A full statement is held with the plans.

**Martyn Spratt – Heytesbury Football Club** asked that the PC take into consideration the long-term future of the football club which was founded in 1900 which has enjoyed playing in the village throughout that time. The club operates under licence with the owners of the land and the club covers the whole cost of maintaining the land that it uses. He stated that he believed that everything should be done to ensure that suitable facilities continue to be provided for the enjoyment of future generations. He submitted a statement which is held with the plans.

**Becky Mundy** felt that we were not ready to make a decision. The issue of traffic has not been discussed. The hall plan is robust in some respects, but how many people are going to use it? The developers are going to make an awful lot of money. Social housing is not likely to be given to residents in Heytesbury. There is so much that hasn't been considered.

**Steve Mundy** - Housing will generate substantial funds, could we not do a better deal with the estate?

**Daniel Jenkins** - Security of the village and housing stock is important. What happens if the village hall goes bankrupt and the land goes back to the trust?

**John Agate** - We need a referendum.

**Michael Hutchins** - The principle issue is whether the land is suitable for development.

**Mike Fowler – Fowler Architecture and Planning Limited** - I have been involved with the project for 15 years. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with a recent exhibition and 80/90% of those attended supported this proposal. The scheme has been changed in response to feedback. The first 16 houses built and sold will fund the village hall. The land will be gifted as public open space, and this will form a legal and enforceable condition of the planning. The trust is giving away the land.

**Judith Hutchins** felt that the figures quoted from consultations were taken out of context and it did not truly reflect the concerns people had about sewage, flooding, and traffic so the developer quoting 80/90% of the residents wanting a village hall was not fair.

In view of the large number of public attending the meeting, the Chairman took the opportunity to gauge opinion on the following:

- 35 members of the public were concerned with Agricultural traffic accessing Park Street should the road be reduced in width.
- 40 were concerned with sewage discharge.
- 37 were concerned with wildlife.
- 48 were concerned with the loss of sports facilities.
- 33 people were concerned with flooding.

**Cllr Christopher Newbury -Unitary Member, Wiltshire Council** advised the meeting that he was a member of the planning committee at Wiltshire Council and therefore it is difficult for me to say too much, but I can deal with a couple of points that have been raised. This application has 8 weeks to gather comments from all the statutory consultees, the Parish Council being one of them. If you as a Parish Council wanted extra information, this may be extended but it would need to have the agreement of the applicant. If the application is to be called in, this would preferably be at the request of the Parish Council who would hopefully do this on behalf of the village.

The were questions on the potential Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and how much this would likely raise for the village.

The current use of parkland/ recreational land should be advised to the planning authority. Would a referendum result affect the planning decision?

**PC/17/121.2** None

*Standing Orders were reinstated following public participation at 8.09pm*

### **PC/17/122 Planning Applications**

#### **PC/17/122.1**

**17/11163/FUL** Hybrid Application (1) Full planning permission for the erection of village hall with access, car parking, associated landscaping, and change of use of land as public open space on land north of Park Street.

(2) Outline planning permission, with all matters reserved except access to Park Street, for the construction of 23 dwellings with access, parking, associated landscaping, and open space on land south of Park Street.

At Land at Park Street Heytesbury.

Councillor Buttenshaw proposed that Heytesbury Imber & Knook Parish Council object to the planning application to build a village hall on parkland, on the grounds of location, size, design materials and car parking.

Firstly, the location is at the wrong end of the village. The proposed site is over one third of a mile from the main centre of the population at the west end of the village. This site will mean an increase of cars using the High Street from the west as most residents will not walk that distance to a village hall, especially at night. It may also increase traffic along the private, unadopted part of Newtown.

The building on rough grass, will block the present grass access road for vehicles going to the cricket pavilion and pitch. The plans do not show an alternative vehicular access. Dog walkers and others have used the rough grass area for many years.

Secondly the proposed building is too large with a maximum capacity of 175.

Thirdly the materials to be used in the design of the hall are totally out of keeping with all other buildings in Heytesbury, as shown in the Design and Access Statement para 2.3. The materials that are to be used will be Cedral Lap weatherboard cladding with a metal roof. This point is especially relevant as the proposed building is so close to the Grad II listed St John's Hospital.

Fourthly the proposed car parking space is inadequate for a building with a capacity of 175. There are only 45 car park spaces shown on the plan: 8 on tarmac and 37 on grass. Only 2 spaces are allocated for Disabled Parking. The Business Plan (page 29) allows for overflow car parking on the streets which is unacceptable.

Therefore, for the reasons given I proposed that the parish Council objects to these plans. Proposal Seconded Councillor Morris.

A debate took place on the proposal which concentrated on the village hall section of the application. Some members felt that the proposed village hall is in the right place and didn't believe traffic would be an issue. Some members discussed why they thought the proposed village hall too big. If there is capacity to hold 175, the proposed plans would deliver a bigger hall than in Codford which is thought to be struggling financially. The Core Strategy provides for development up to 2026, the land is outside the village boundary.

It was observed that all attendees to the meeting were all crammed into the school hall sitting on small chairs to discuss this application, because there is nowhere else to meet.

Park Street is considered to be already busy with traffic and might cause difficulties with agricultural vehicles which frequented the area should the road be reduced in size. Increased traffic would cause issues with crossing the A36.

The offer of parkland and sports pitches offered to the village were also discussed. Currently nobody has rights over the land, some of which is licenced to the Football and Cricket Clubs, but if this belonged to the village it would be available to all. The Business Plan states that a 40ft container will be sited on the land. This is not shown on the plans, but it is believed this will be required for storage of village hall equipment.

The sports clubs are not safe with their annual licence and some members felt that this is being offered as a gift. It was believed that the clubs have not been involved in discussions

and a lot of people had been alienated in the plans and discussions. The size of the hall did not include facilities for the sports clubs.

It was noted that changing rooms in the first planning phase was refused planning permission. Both clubs had indicated that they wanted to be independent of each other. It was believed that the Football and Cricket Club had no security of tenure and there was no idea what the Sassoon estate would do if these plans are turned down. If the Parish Council didn't secure the land and the pitches, the members did not know what would happen.

What would happen if the trust fails in running a village hall, will the land go back to the trust. The planners will deal with flooding issues, but the offer needs to be considered as a whole.

What we do know is that if we accept the offer, we secure the land for the village.

The members moved to the vote on the proposal put forward. Those in Favour 6. Against 5. Abstentions Nil.

The proposal was carried for refusal at item 1 of the application.

Councillor Moore spoke on the whole application and said that his concern has always been that the wishes of the village as a whole were respected. The fundamental issue is "Does the village want a village hall?"

Proving this case was a stumbling block for the last planning attempt, and today, as then, we have no valid test of village opinion.

The presentation and questionnaire provided by Fowler Architecture in February was attended by 130 people, 20% of the population and of those 70% voted for the scheme although those approving of a hall were slightly more. The number represents about 14% of the population. Hardly an acceptable statistic for supporting a scheme of this nature.

By contrast the Parish Council election in May elected 2 Councillors who campaigned on the village hall ticket. They received 16% of the vote, again hardly a positive result.

I move that the wishes of the villagers have not been proven or respected and I propose rejection of the whole application on the grounds of lack of public participation. The proposal was Seconded by Councillor Bond.

The debate that took place revolved around the provision of a referendum for the village. A reminder that the developers had an exhibition and made available all the plans with an open question asked as to how many consultations were needed?

Voting in favour of the proposal 6. Against 5. Abstentions Nil. The proposal to object to the whole scheme was carried.

Councillor Sturmeay proposed that the application is called in at Wiltshire Council. Seconded Councillor Buttenshaw. Voting in Favour 9. Against 1. Abstentions 1. Proposal carried.

Meeting Closed 8.50pm