

HOLT PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING HELD IN HOLT VILLAGE HALL
AT 8.00 p.m. ON THURSDAY 15 MAY 2025 IN HOLT VILLAGE HALL.

Present :- J. Hill, S. Williams, J. Harper, M. Taylor, B. Curral, C. Adams, C. Lightfoot (Clerk).

In Attendance:- District Councillor Mr D. Clarke, Stennard Harrison (Elgar Properties (Worcs) Ltd), Neil Pearce (Avon Planning Services Ltd), Parishioners.

Absent:- County Councillor M. Fordingham

1. PRESENTATION BY REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATED WITH PLANNING APPLICATION M/25/00400/FUL Land at OS 8144 6324 Holt Heath – land adjacent to the Millennium Green.

Mr Neil Pearce, Planning Consultant gave a summary of the proposed development of the land adjacent to the Millennium Green.

- 33 new homes ranging from 1-5 bedrooms, of these 13 affordable, 60% of which will be social rent and remaining discount market homes or shared ownership.
- There will be a new access to the site off the Shrawley road.
- It is acknowledged the site lies outside the village boundary, but it was felt that it was acceptable due to the current absence of the SWDP and the fact MHDC do not currently have a 5-year land supply.
- The site will remain 40% rural and is therefore considered sustainable as is Apple Tree Close (development off The Heath). The design is landscape led which will offset the negative environmental impact of the development. The plans include an orchard and the retention of the boundary hedge. In this regard it is significantly different to the previous planning application in 2014.
- The previous application in 2014 failed on appeal due to the fact that MHDC had an approved 5-year land supply at the time and the site was not included in this.
- There is MHDC report that states that the village is being upgraded from category 1 to category 2 and therefore has the local infrastructure to support a new development.
- There is a district wide need for housing although no local survey has been carried out to determine whether there is a local need.
- Highways have not objected to the site although they have asked for clarification on some issues and for an extension of the 30mph on the B4196. Amended plans will be submitted following feedback from Highways.
- The proposed development should improve access to the Millennium Green for the village although direct access from the development can be removed if the Millennium Green Trust request this.
- S106 agreement funds could be used to enhance either the Millennium Green or other facilities within village.
- There will be a natural approach to drainage making use of holding ponds and releasing the water into the nearest water course. The developer is aware there have been previous issues with drainage and flooding in the area and will provide further information on this issue to prove that the site will not impact and make worse the current position.
- A decision has yet to be taken on the level of street lighting on the new development and the developer is happy to be led by residents on what they feel is appropriate in the Parish.

Parish Councillor Mr S. Williams, in his role as Chair, thanked Mr Pearce for his presentation and invited questions from the floor.

Q1 – As the proposed choice of heating specified in the plans is air source heat pumps has a noise impact assessment been carried out?

The energy statement shows a number of different heating options and it is unlikely air source heat pumps will be used on the development.

Q2 – Who are independent experts who are used in the planning consultation process? Any consultants that work for applicant (for example providing expertise on drainage, highway, environment) are independently scrutinised by the County and District Councils as part of the planning process.

In addition the NHS, Education and Highways are all consulted at the planning stage and are able to have their say on the impact of the development in the local area.

NHS report – financial contribution towards local healthcare trust.

Education report – financial contribution towards secondary school.

Highways – responsibility to make sure all developments are fit for purpose and that the current road infrastructure can cope.

Q3 – Drainage – who is responsible for managing the drainage system once the site is completed?

A Management Company will be set up following the completion of the site and they will have the responsibility of managing the surface water pipes and drainage ponds in addition to other site amenities in perpetuity.

Drainage is engineered to take 2007+ flood event. It should improve the current situation as the development will reduce the amount of run off which is the main issue at present from the agricultural land.

Q4 – When will the site be completed?

Construction is expected to take 2 years. Construction can start once planning approval has been received. A Construction Environmental Protection Plan will be completed addressing issues such as timings of work, noise impact, environmental pollution etc.

Q5 – How will the development prevent the flooding in this area becoming worse?

The development proposes to use drainage ponds and holding tanks and drain the water into the River Severn. This has not yet been finalised as landowners (including the Millennium Green) have not yet been consulted on this. There is an alternative route across an adjacent field if an agreement cannot be reached with the Millennium Green.

Q6 – How can they ensure access to the site will be safe given the road is already very busy and vehicles do not adhere to the 30mph speed limit?

The developer acknowledged the village's concerns over highways safety and offered to make additional features to alleviate traffic issues (for example bollards and chevrons) a condition of the application.

Q7 – How long will the discount on houses for local residents last?

The discount will last for perpetuity.

Q8 – How has the impact on local doctors' surgeries been addressed?

The NHS in conjunction with the local surgeries have undertaken an assessment of the availability of GP practices in the area. They have asked for a financial contribution to support the local GP practices should the application be approved.

Q9 – Does the Developer have any influence over public transport links as currently these are insufficient for commuting to work?

The developer appreciates work options are limited in the village and there is also a limited public bus service. Unfortunately, the development will only directly impact the provision of school transport and not public transport. However, if the village has a larger population and increased demand it is possible that the bus service may improve.

Q10 – Given that each property is likely to have at least 2 vehicles will there be sufficient parking on the estate for visitors or will there be overspill onto the Millennium Green carpark?

The number of parking spaces on a new development is specified by WCC. The development is low density so it should not be a problem.

Q11 – If the drainage pipes are installed under the Millennium Green would it be replaced to the same condition as previously?

Yes, all grass and tarmac would be replaced, and the Millennium Green would be left in its original state.

The Chairman thanked Mr Stennard and Mr Pearce for their contribution to the meeting.

2. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Councillor Dean Clarke reported the key highlights from MHDC over the last 12 months. Activities of the District Council have been limited by lack of funding and resources and the proposed devolution of District Councils.

He concluded by thanking Parish Council and saying he had enjoyed their working relationship over the last year.

3. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR

County Councillor M, Fordingham had not submitted a report in her absence.

4. REPORT ON PARISH MATTERS

The Chairman submitted his report on the activities of the Parish Council over the past 12 months.

- Village Hall.

The plans for the new Village Hall have been submitted and approved and funding is currently being sought. The Chairman thanked the Village Hall trustees for all their hard work and in particular Parish Councillors Mr J. Harper and Mrs C. Adams.

- Millennium Green.

This continues to be a safe, open space for all the village to enjoy, and it is important that additional footpaths from proposed new development directly onto the Millennium Green do not destroy this tranquillity. Thanks must go to Parish Councillors Mrs J. Hill and Mrs M. Taylor for their work on the Millennium Green Trust.

- Community events.

Both the Summer Fayre and Christmas Carols events were a great success 2024.

The 2025 Summer Fayre will be held on 7 June 2025.

- Parish maintenance.

The street furniture is due to be cleaned later this month. Unfortunately, the cost of this job has significantly increased from previous years. The Wildflower area has been reseeded for 2025. Traffic volume and speeding continue to be the biggest issues in the Parish. The installation of 3 permanent solar powered VAS and increased presence of the speed enforcement van has resulted in a reduction in speeding vehicles. However, there are still a number of drivers who choose to ignore the speed limits. Parish Council continue to seek new initiatives to make the village safer. New warning signs have been installed for the mini roundabout and vehicle monitoring is due to take place on the A4133. At present 4000-5000 vehicles pass through the Parish each day.

- Changes to Parish Council

Our previous Chairman, Dennis Pugh stepped down in July 2024 due to ill health and was thanked for his service on Parish Council. Parish Councillor Mr B. Curral joined Parish Council. There is currently one remaining vacancy to be filled by co-option.

The Chairman finished by thanking all members of Parish Council and the Clerk for their contributions. A copy of the report was passed to the Clerk to be kept on file.

5. PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Clerk presented a summary of the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024.

6. QUESTIONS

All questions from members of the public had been dealt with under the first agenda item.