

Notes from the Public Meeting on 26th July 2016 to collect opinion on the proposed Development on land off Shrewsbury Road TWC/2016/0603

The Chairman welcomed all present. He outlined the planning application; explained that the PC had called this meeting to receive opinions; explained that the PC would make comments on this application based on the opinions received (at this meeting and via email and personal contact); asked for people to respect others' views and indicated that PC members could hear from people in private if they felt unable to voice their opinion in public.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

1. Gladman could not be trusted as a company - cited the broken promises over the Cheney Hill site. One person called them liars. They are well resourced, determined and capable. This is a serious matter - if this is accepted then the 'flood gates' could be opened. 85 houses obviously isn't 'infill'. By putting in this application Gladman are challenging the 5 year housing land supply.
2. One person thought it was all a 'smoke screen' to get the Egremont Meadow development agreed by distracting us. The Chairman pointed out that this was a different developer.
3. There were a few comments about the benefits of delaying the process as much as we can. This would mean that the Local Plan would be closer to being adopted and would carry more weight. The Local Plan is an important document as it expressly does not support such development. However, it's most likely not to be adopted until next year. Asking for extra information on aspects of the application could cause delay which would be good. If this application was to go through it would drive a coach and horses through the Local Plan and would open the flood gates to more applications.
4. There was concern about the cumulative effect on the infrastructure of the village and the wider area: sewers; water supply; gas; traffic congestion; school; doctors; water; drainage.
5. There was concern over the building on a green field site when there were still so many brown field sites available.
6. There was no need for more housing in the village. There are houses for sale in the village. Concerns about urbanisation of the village.
7. We should all care for the green spaces in and around the village. Infill is OK - but not 85 houses. Too large for the village. Who is going to look after the proposed 'informal space' within the development?
8. This is good agricultural land that should not be taken out of production. Green fields are what are needed.
9. This proposed development is not in the heart of the village. It will spoil the environment and the gentle scenery that provides the setting of the village.

10. There were concerns about the increased volume of traffic. There was a suggestion that a traffic survey should be undertaken to help support objections to the application. The Chairman said that although the PC regularly cites the problems of increased traffic, that this is often not considered to be an important consideration in the planning process. He would ask the clerk to confirm how much notice the planning department takes of increased traffic.
11. There was concern that this development reduces the gap between the village and the University and that there would then be further developments which would result in a further reduction in separation between Edgmond and Newport.
12. It was suggested that using a good planning solicitor would be helpful. Mention was made of a fighting fund to support this.
13. There was a request for a show of hands to see what the strength of feeling was. A show of hands indicated there were no supporters of the application. There were some abstentions.
14. David Llewellyn, from Harper Adams University, stated that the University rented and farmed the land in question. Claims that the development would benefit the University were therefore untrue. The University had to take a neutral stance on the issue which it had already made clear to the PHE & the Parish Council. He noted that when the University's name had been incorrectly used in support of development applications in the past the University had taken this up with those concerned, and it would continue to do so. In this instance, the University's position was simply that it wanted to farm the land proposed for development for as long as possible.
15. One local farmer said that his land was identified on the PHE leaflet as being available for housing. He said that it certainly was not. [The question is....is this an error by PHE or is the SHLAA incorrect?]
16. There were questions about the Neighbourhood Plan. Could it be accelerated and would it be any help in resisting this development? The Chairman said that the NP could not be accelerated because of the statutory timetable that had to be adhered to and could not be changed by the P Council. He also said that although it will be an important document, it would not, in itself, prevent this application from being successful.
17. Questions were asked about when the PC would make its decision? When is the deadline for comments? Have we asked for an extension? There was uncertainty over the precise dates.

All residents were encouraged to make their comments on the T&W website or to write to the Council and make their thoughts known.