

# Whittington Parish Council



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## MINUTES of the meeting of Whittington Parish Council held on 11th November 2014 at 19.30 at Whittington Village Hall

### Democratic Period/ Question Time:

#### Agenda 11/14

#### 1) Attendance and Apologies - To record those present and to receive apologies for absence.

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr S Brooker

Vice Chairman: Cllr S Macleod

Councillors: Cllr M Baker, Cllr A Guy, Cllr F Richards, Cllr Wood

Officers: Mrs C Chambers (Parish Clerk)

- 1) **Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Mr & Mrs Hallmark, Taylor Wright and Ann Lodge.

**Mrs Chamberlain had submitted her resignation as WPC Councillor.**

#### 2) Declarations of Interest and Ethical Matters.

- a To receive declarations of Personal (non prejudicial) Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature. Cllrs Guy and Richards declared a personal interest in agenda item 5C (Swinsherd late inclusion into the South Worcestershire Development Plan) as their properties annexed the site in the SWDP. It was also noted that Councillors would lodge their personnel objection/support regarding both/either plans listed under agenda item no 5.
- b To receive declarations of Prejudicial Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature.  
**None.**
- c Ethical Matters. **None.**

- 3) Minutes of Previous Meetings of the Council. The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9 September 2014 had been circulated to all Members with the agenda. It was moved by Cllr MB, seconded by Cllr FR and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true record.

- 4) Police Report - To receive the reports from West Mercia Police. **None.**

#### 5) Whittington Village Hall - New Planning Application - This Agenda Item was moved to Item no 2. *The meeting was opened to members of the public/parishioners.*

- a. **Application Number :** W/14/01442/OU-Outline

**Applicant :** Mr N Hodgetts

**Location :** Pond Farm, Church Lane, Whittington, Worcester, WR5 2RD

**Proposal :** Full planning application for the relocation of village hall and play area; car park to serve church; provision of sports cricket and football pitches; provision of allotments;

nature walk; village green and pond. Outline planning application with all matters reserved for up to 25 dwellings, including up to 7 affordable dwellings. Hard Copy of the plans will be available at the meeting.

***The meeting was closed to the public at 8.45pm for the Council to consider their comments.***

Whittington Parish Council **RESOLVED** (with 4 votes against and 2 for) to recommend that the application be refused as the proposal was considered to be overdevelopment in a rural area, concern was expressed at the additional traffic generated by the housing development and village hall/leisure services, also the access and egress onto a narrow country lane with no pedestrian footpath would not support the increase in traffic and footfall.

***An outline of the views that were made by parishioners(annex 1) of which have been outlined and a report from the Whittington Village Hall Management Committee (annex 2) are annexed and form part of the main body of these minutes.***

b. **Whittington Village Hall - Old Planning Application**

**Application Number** W/11/02852/PN - **RESUBMISSION**

**Applicant:** Whittington Parish Council

**Agent:** Mr M Brown, Michael A Brown Design, Manor Farm Barn, Hadzor, DROITWIC

**Location:** Whittington Village Hall, Church Lane, Whittington, Worcester, WR5 2RQ

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing hall and repositioning and rebuilding of new hall

Planning Application W/11/02852/PN to demolish existing village hall and rebuild new village hall was granted permission on 22/02/2012 (the date the decision was signed) and therefore any pre commencement conditions must be discharged and a material start must be made by 22/02/2015. Extension of time applications are no longer available, therefore if works have not started by 22/02/2015 the application will need to be resubmitted together with all the necessary documentation. The Clerk sought Councils instruction on whether WPC re apply for planning permission for the demolition of the existing village hall and repositioning and building a new hall on the existing site. It was **RESOLVED** that the application be resubmitted.

***The meeting was adjourned at 9.10pm for refreshments and was reopened at 9.25pm.***

c) **South Worcestershire Development Plan**

Whittington Parish Council had become aware that land East of Swinesherd Way between Swinesherd Village and Whittington Village had been included in the South Worcestershire Development Plan. The late inclusion detailed the intention to build circa 300 homes. Members were unanimous in their disbelief at the proposal to build a further 300 homes on top of the 275 houses that were already under construction. Swinesherd land had been inserted without consultation. Cllr Guy also reminded parishioners that land adjoining the site had been used to bury livestock that had been infected by Foot & Mouth disease and that it drains into the watercourses crossing the site, he also reminded Members that he had gone to Wychavon District Council and made a personnel recommendation and asked District Councillors not to support the SWDP, although Cllr Adams did not support the late inclusion WDC had supported it. The Chairman had written on behalf of Whittington Parish Council and the residents of Swinesherd Village to various heads who were involved in the SWDP, he read out his letter to them, (Annex 3) also a letter from Cllr Rob Adams to the planning inspectorate. ***Copies of these letters are annexed and form part of the main body of these minutes.*** it was noted that

although the Council acknowledges the need for housing this late inclusion was seen as an affront to the SLAA papers that had previously ruled out this site.

***The Chairman opened the meeting to the public at 9.40pm.***

Concern was expressed at the over development and the cumulative effect of the area with talks of future development and the development that was already under construction, traffic was at peak times at a standstill Swinesherd Villagers already had problems getting out of the village onto the dual track which would remain a 70 mph limit. Cllr Richards had under the freedom of information Act requested to view all files, he added that the infrastructure was not present, the emergency services would have difficulty, there were environmental issues such as water/flood problems. Cllr Guy also reminded parishioners that the land adjoining the site had been used to bury livestock that had been infected by Foot & Mouth disease.

***The Meeting was closed to the public for the Council to consider their comments at 9.55pm.***

It was **RESOLVED** that Whittington Parish Council oppose the development of land East of Swinesherd between the villages of Whittington and Swinesherd and would continue to challenge the inclusion of land East of Swinesherd Village in the SWDP and to continue to support Swinesherd Village.

**6) Finance.**

a. **Receipts:** The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a report which itemised the receipts that had been received in September and October 2014. It was **RESOLVED** that the receipts which totalled £3,592.21 of which included 2nd half of Precept of £3,222.00 and Support Grant of £191 be approved.

**Payments:** The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a report which itemised all payments that had been made in September and October 2014. It was **RESOLVED** that all payments which totalled £1,203.79 be approved.

b. **Proposals for expenditure:** The Clerk had purchased an Epson WF - Ink System for the new printer for £27.90, also receipts totalling £32.94 were tabled at the meeting for refreshments. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be refunded £60.84. The Clerk also tabled at the meeting an Lengthsman invoice of £176 for works completed in October 2014 which had been paid online.

c. The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a WPC Health & Safety policy which was recommended in the internal Auditors report. It was **RESOLVED** that the Health & Safety report be approved but with the addition of further Health & Safety/risk assessment to include meetings at the Village Hall.

d. The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a Half Year Actual V Budget Report for 2014/2015 it showed all expenditure and income from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, all headings showed that the Council was within the current year's budget figures. Members **Noted** the report. The report also showed draft budget for 2015/2016, Further expenditure discussed for next year's budget was Magna Carta anniversary, Sound proof boarding, enhancement of village entrance and a bonfire night party, due to the lateness it was **RESOLVED** that the budget be discussed at the next meeting.

**7) New Planning Applications - See Agenda Item No 5**

**8) Highways & Byways.**

To receive reports of Highways (Roads & Pavements) & Byways (bridleways & footpaths).  
The Clerk reported that the DFS had been repaired and would be reinstated w/c 24/11/14.  
Comment was made with regards to a refuse collection vehicle which reversed into a residents vehicle parked on the public pathway in Narrow Walk , because of this incident it was suggested that the Clerk write a letter to all the residents in Narrow Walk to refrain from parking on the public pathway.

**9) Training, meetings and seminars To receive reports of relevant training, meetings and seminars attended or offered to the Council and to consider attendance by Members and or the Clerk.** No reports were discussed under this agenda item.

**10) Neighbourhood Development Plan – New Homes Bonus – Section 106**

No reports were discussed under this agenda item.

**11) District and County Councillors' Report .**

Cllr Rob Adams was present at the meeting and advised at the Council's request to give guidance on agenda item no 5a.

**12) Reports by Councillors, and Items for Future Agendas.**

a) To receive the reports of Committees and Working Groups and of Councillors representing the Council on outside bodies, to ask relevant questions, and to consider appropriate action.

WPC staffing Committee: Staff review to be held on 13 January 2015 at 6.30pm

Envirosort Site, Norton (CMRF) Liaison: **None**

West Wychavon PACT: **None**

Worcestershire CALC: All information had been previously emailed

Whittington School: **None**

Whittington Village Hall: **None**

Neighbourhood Watch: **None**

**13) Correspondence & Council Consultation.**

**14) IT - Facebook & Communication** - Face book security was discussed, the Clerk would continuously monitored

**15) Enhancement - None**

**16) Date of Next Meeting.**

The date of the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be Tuesday 13th January 2015 at Whittington Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.00 pm.

Councillor S Brooker  
Chairman

**MINUTES of the meeting of Whittington Parish Council held on 11th November 2014 at  
19.30 at Whittington Village Hall**

**Democratic Period/ Question Time: Minutes of democratic period**

**This Agenda Item was moved to Item no 2 and forms part of the main body of the minutes.**

**Those in attendance - Mike Brown Planning agent, Mr Hogetts (planning applicant)  
Roger Philips Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, Parishioners - circa 53.**

**Agenda item No 5 - Whittington Village Hall - New Planning Application -**

a. **Application Number** : W/14/01442/OU-Outline

**Applicant** : Mr N Hodgetts

**Location** : Pond Farm, Church Lane, Whittington, Worcester, WR5 2RD

**Proposal** : Full planning application for the relocation of village hall and play area; car park to serve church; provision of sports cricket and football pitches; provision of allotments; nature walk; village green and pond. Outline planning application with all matters reserved for up to 25 dwellings, including up to 7 affordable dwellings. Hard Copy of the plans were available at the meeting.

Chairman Cllr Brooker opened the debate and encouraged members of the public to speak on the planning application, he reminded the public of a previous survey that had been conducted in the parish which had highlighted the need for a community centre.

Concerns from the public were that the new village hall would bring more visitors into the village as parishioners would not organise football or cricket matches, (it was noted that no representation from cricket/football clubs were present at the meeting) previous experience was that the village hall would not be used by parishioners, but preference booking should be given to parishioners, also village roads were not equipped for extra traffic with no footpath, no street lighting, it would increase the volume of traffic with new houses and extra visitors to the village hall. Also additional traffic in Church Lane specifically the corner of Church Terrace Cottages, as residents have no off road parking. A parishioner was also concerned that the affordable housing would not be cheaper houses for parishioners and may be social housing/housing association. Although the current village hall was in great need to be upgraded parishioners felt that the hall was traditional and in keeping with the village scene and should be repaired and refurbished. Two emails were received by the Clerk from parishioners who were unable to attend the meeting, both noted they did not want the development.

Roger Philips Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee explained that there was currently only one room and more rooms were needed to make it multi use, he advised that the Village Green, tennis & football pitches would not be flood lit, he read out a report by VH Management Committee (which is annexed to this report) in answer to parishioners questions he confirmed that there was no agreement with Berkeley Estate, which was an alternative 'plan' to

convert the area where the Dutch Barn was sited. He advised that the original village hall plan (agenda item 5b application W/11/02852/PN) be re submitted.

The Chairman referred to Highways impact statement of the application and added that parishioners would have a say on how the new Village Hall would be managed, he also confirmed that the pitches would not be flood lit and funding for facilities could be from 106 funding. He reminded parishioners that the plan was an outline plan and that details could be ironed out.

A parishioner noted that Social housing had been in the village for 50 plus years, with no additional problems and also Whittington had had a sports facility in the past. Comment was also made that the 'new' village hall project had been discussed for several years, and supported the plan but would like more traffic restrictions and reduce the number of houses on the plan.

David Chestney Whittington Church Representative advised parishioners that they had not made a decision the Church wanted to hear how the village felt, he expressed concern about the additional traffic, he added that they would like designated parking for the Church as the car park would be shared with Village Hall customers and would like to see governance/management of the new facilities.

The Chair asked the agent dealing with the application Mike Brown Design Consultant about the 'details' of the plan, he confirmed that they were happy to discuss the detail. Mike Brown also confirmed that if the application was successful then building would start next summer.

No other representations were made by other interested groups/parties

**Meeting was closed to the public at 8.45pm for Council to consider comments.**

All of the views that were made by parishioners of which have been outlined above were taken into consideration. Whittington Parish Council Resolved the following:

Whittington Parish Council **RESOLVED** (with 4 votes against and 2 for) to recommend that the application be refused as the proposal was considered to be overdevelopment in a rural area, concern was expressed at the additional traffic generated by the housing development and village hall/leisure services, also the access and egress onto a narrow county lane with no pedestrian footpath would not support the increase in traffic and footfall.

## Whittington Village Hall Management Committee

Chairmans Address - Parish Council Meeting 11th November

### 'Whittington Green Project'

The Committee are agreed unanimously to support this project in principle. We feel there are many benefits to enhance village life and community spirit by the creation of a new village green and community hall. The proposed hall will provide more space, be energy efficient and in a convenient location adjacent to both village green and the Church. The car park will provide close access to both, so alleviating the need for users to walk in the roadway. The new multi-purpose hall will provide opportunities for the school to hold events and new village based activities can proceed without disrupting the Pre-school Club. The Village green will not be floodlit and any new hall activities will not impact on the local community.

Nick Hodgetts has advised the Committee he is prepared to gift the present After School Club, car park and three acres of land, together with a sum of £250k +£50 car park formation.

He will also undertake to fund all negotiations/planning options with Wychavon DC.

We, The Committee, will in return, gift the present Hall site if agreed by the local community.

Our Hall is in desperate need of replacement and despite our best efforts we are still way short of funds. This is a great opportunity to develop and encourage community engagement and we hope the Parish Council will take our views into consideration when discussing the application.

Roger Phillips

20<sup>th</sup> October, 2014

Mr. Jack Hegarty,  
Managing Director,  
Wychavon District Council,  
Queen Elizabeth Drive,  
Persore,  
WR10 1PT

**Whittington Parish Council, Last minute inclusion of green fields off Swinesherds Way in SWDP housing allocation.**

Dear Mr. Hegarty,

It is of some concern that land off Swinesherd Way has, at the eleventh hour and perceived to have been surrounded by secrecy, been included in the revised South Worcestershire Development Plan. (SWDP)

The SWDP had, until then, been open and transparent with a meaningful public and community consultation process. During this process and development of the SWDP, the land off Swinesherd Way, in the Parish of Whittington, was identified as ‘Strategic gap’ – a new term, as explained by a Wychavon Planning Officer, for ‘Green belt’.

The land in question consists of beautiful green fields, abundant in flora and fauna, situated between two rural villages of Swinesherd and Whittington. Any new high density housing development will destroy the existing wild life and will be completely out of character, a transition from a rural setting to an urban existence. A survey of residents during the initial stages of the SWDP consultation process overwhelmingly implied a desire to maintain a rural identity. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 2014, Mr. Eric Pickles, the Communities Secretary was reported in ‘The Telegraph’ newspaper as saying that *“Britain must remain a ‘green and pleasant land’ with new housing development concentrated on brownfield sites – We’ve always been a green and pleasant land and we must stay that way, preserving the best of our countryside and other green spaces.”*

Whittington Parish Council accepts and supports the national need for more housing. Indeed for a small rural community of some 250 houses a further 273 houses are currently under construction. A further 300 homes proposed for the green fields off Swinesherd Way is a harsh and unacceptable decision which will inevitably shift the boundaries of Worcester City, further clog up the already congested roads and change a rural setting to an urban setting. An exacerbating factor is that the 273 homes plus the proposed further 300 homes, whilst being developed on Wychavon are for the Worcester City allocation figures yet there appears to be (to the casual observer) plenty of ‘Worcester City’ land available particularly on the ring road north of the city and close to Junction 6 of the M5.

Someone could be forgiven for thinking that there appears to be an element of the ‘developer’ influencing the SDWP as opposed to the ‘community’ – contrary to the Governments guidance on ‘Localism’ – ‘Local Communities being able to influence development within their area’.

May I ask for your comments please in respect of the following?

- Is Wychavon, before accepting the need to provide land for Worcester City housing allocation, confident that all other options for land on Worcester City have been exhausted?
- Why the secrecy and the inclusion of this land for development in the SWDP at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour and without public consultation?

- Confirmation that the inclusion of this land is not just because a developer has pre-empted the process by identifying or having purchased the land.
- That should development of this land continue contrary to the wishes of the local community, that Wychavon Planning Officers will permit Whittington Parish Council to play a major role in determining the design (including density) and access (in conjunction with Highways) in our desire to try and preserve and influence a development in keeping with 'rural characteristics'.
- An undertaking that in view of the proposed development of 573 houses on Whittington Parish in the District of Wychavon to meet Worcester City housing needs allocation, there will not in the foreseeable future, be a change in the City boundary, i.e. Whittington Parish becoming within Worcester City - ex Wychavon.

I look forward to your response so that I may brief the Whittington Parish Council and interested residents of both Whittington and Swinesherd Communities.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Brooker.  
Chairman.  
Whittington Parish Council.

cc.  
Cllr. Rob Adams.  
Rt. Hon. Sir Peter Luff MP  
Rt. Hon. Robin Walker MP.  
Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles. Secretary of State for Communities.  
Planning Inspectorate.  
Chief Executive for Campaign to Protect Rural England.

Our Ref: CllrRCAdams/RJ H

29 October 2014

Inspector: Roger Clews BA MSc DipEd DipTP MRTPI  
c/o Programme Officer: Helen Wilson BA (Hons)  
32 Pennyford Close  
Brockhill  
REDOITCH  
Worcestershire  
B97 6TW

Dear Mr Clews

## South Worcestershire Development Plan - Proposed Modifications

I am writing in my capacity as Ward Councillor for Norton and Whittington. I would ask that you regard this letter as a formal representation pursuant to the consultation on the Proposed Modifications.

I have supported the progress of the plan consistently at Council and I am still keen to see an adopted plan for South Worcestershire at the earliest possible date to enable development to be appropriately planned, as advocated in the National Planning Policy Framework.

However, at the Council meeting on 30 September 2014 I was extremely angry at the proposal for Wychavon to include land at Swinesherd Way for up to 300 dwellings (PM116 - SW DP45 refers) to meet the housing needs of Worcester and, as such, abstained from the vote to approve the Proposed Modifications for consultation.

I strongly oppose this proposed housing allocation and object to this aspect of the Proposed Modifications. I urge you to inspect this site personally and consider in detail its suitability for inclusion in the SWDP. The site is well beyond the defined development boundary and is effectively detached from the village. It performs very poorly in planning terms and it is incomprehensible how it can be regarded as sustainable development. The land provides an effective green buffer. In the grand scheme of things Worcester's current housing needs would be better met elsewhere. In any event the likelihood is that the need will be met through planning permissions within the city before the end of the examination process.

One significant aspect is the fact it lies between two 70mph national speed limit roads i.e. the A4440 and M5 which provides for a poor residential context for new houses.

Councillor R C Adams  
Norton and Whittington Ward

Direct Dial 01905 345223  
rob.adams@wychavon.net

The soundness of the plan and the total housing supply is not dependent on the inclusion of this site and I implore you to delete it after due consideration of the Proposed Modifications. This is the worst performing site in the whole of the plan and it would be a testament to poor planning if it were to be included : I wish to point out that, I am not against development in the village per se (the allocation at Walkers Lane (SW DP 61/16) is testament to this) rather that it should be in the right place and of an appropriate scale. I understand that the site was put forward as a proposed allocation, rather late in the day and the County Council, as the Highway Authority, raised no in-principle objections. Of course the detailed access arrangements are an entirely different matter and I am convinced that the site will not allow residents to safely access local services on foot or bicycle.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR R C ADAMS

Ward Councillor for Norton and Whittington

Copy to: Fred Davies , Policy Manager