

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF HANKELOW PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT HANKELOW METHODIST CHURCH, HANKELOW ON 17 AUGUST 2016**

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Lee In the Chair  
Councillor C Ainley  
Councillor I Jones

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors G Foster and G Cope

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**25 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That, in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Councillor A Lee be elected Chairman for the meeting.

**26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any non-pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

No declarations were made.

**27 PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 16/3664N – THE WHITE LION PUBLIC HOUSE  
DEMOLITION OF THE WHITE LION, AUDLEM ROAD, HANKELOW, CW3 0JA  
and ERECTION OF FIVE DETACHED DWELLINGS**

The Parish Council was invited to comment on planning application No. 16/3664N.

**RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council object to Planning Application No. 16/3664N on the following grounds -

- The application is contrary to Paragraph 70 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the need for the delivery of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services which are required by the community; this includes the need to '*plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments*'. The NPPF also makes it clear that communities need to guard against the unnecessary loss of such facilities.

The applicant contends that the Golf Club at Hankelow and the Community Rooms in Hankelow Methodist Chapel represent appropriate alternative facilities for the community. This is not the case. Both of these venues are operated privately and in respect of the Chapel, where pre-booking for hire is required, there are covenants which restrict its use, including a prohibition on the serving of alcohol. Brookfield Golf Club, although open to non-members, is a private concern orientated towards the needs of its member clientele who pay a premium for the facilities provided by the Club. It is not an alternative to The White Lion, nor does it seek to be. Moreover, it is only available for part of the year (closed between September and April after 5.00 pm).

The pub has been used for myriad activities over the years including quiz nights (monthly from 2011-2015), dominoes, meetings of Hankelow Amenities Group; the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the annual community dinner. It also serves a wider community than Hankelow parish, drawing residents from Audlem, Hatherton, Buerton and surrounding area.

The pub has a 200-year history as a successful public house as evidenced in the application under the Community Right to Bid scheme, despite a few recent turbulent years. During 2013-2015 the pub won two awards and was drawing favourable customer comments from a wide area.

It features not only as a building, but also as one of the reasons why some residents moved to the village and is an important part of community cohesion.

- The application is contrary to -
  - (a) Paragraph BE1 (Amenity) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, viz.
    - The proposals must be compatible with surrounding land uses;
    - Do not prejudice the amenity of future occupiers or the occupiers of adjacent property by reason of overshadowing, overlooking, visual intrusion, noise and disturbance, odour or in any other way;
    - Do not generate such levels of traffic that the development would prejudice the safe movement of traffic on surrounding roads, or have an adverse impact on neighbouring uses; and
    - Do not lead to an increase in air, noise or water pollution insofar as this might have an adverse effect on the other use of land.
    - The application represents an inappropriate use of the site taking account of the local area.
  - (b) Section 11.15 CF3 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, i.e. Retention of Community Facilities, viz. *'Proposals which would result in the loss of community facilities which make a positive contribution to the social or cultural life of a community will not be permitted unless a suitable alternative provision is made.'*
- The creation of five dwellings is excessive and the traffic movements required for access and egress from each dwelling will cause road safety issues.
- The application represents an inappropriate use of the site taking account of the local area.
- There are currently 30 planning applications which have been granted in the parish and there is no requirement for a further five dwellings to contribute to the housing stock as part of the Borough Council's housing land supply requirements for its Local Development Plan.
- The applicant did not consult the Parish Council about the application and under the Localism Act 2011, developers are required to consult communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments to give local people an opportunity to comment at a time when there is genuine scope to make changes to the proposals. Although this might be a development which falls outside this requirement, the Parish Council contends that the applicant should have made pre-application consultation with the Parish Council and the community as a whole, as Hankelow is a small *'quintessential English village'* and the development, if permitted, will have a significant adverse impact on the community.
- The White Lion has now been accepted by Cheshire East Council under the Community Right to Bid scheme as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), and for this reason, the procedure should be allowed to continue to its conclusion to provide an opportunity for the community to operate The White Lion as a community pub. Pubs are the most common type of community asset registered by Councils, making up more than one-third of the total assets listed and this is supported by the following:
  - A Ministerial statement published in January 2015 announced an intention to change the law to provide event greater protection for pubs which play a crucial role at the heart of communities and this would stop valued community pubs from being demolished or converted into different uses against the will of local people.

- The Government provided £250,000 to 'Pub is the Hub' and to the Plunkett Foundation in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 to help pubs to diversify into providing a wide range of community-focused services to help local residents buy and operate co-operative pubs. The Community Right to Bid, which came into effect in 2012, gives community groups a fairer chance to prepare a bid to buy community buildings that are important to them.
- The Government has provided a £19m support programme to help eligible community groups to take on community ownership.
- The applicant's 'Market Demand Report' is considered to be flawed. The reason for the failure of the business pre-January 2016 can be attributed, in part, to the fact that the public house was only open for part of the week and a large part of the premises was not heated. Moreover, the future success of the pub cannot be gauged accurately on the short period from January 2016 to date.

As noted above the Parish Council will seek to establish the building as a community pub, applying for financial support from e.g. the Plunkett Foundation. There is overwhelming community support for retaining this building as a public house and an independent village committee has been established with the aim of taking this forward.

- The Parish Council challenges whether the owner has marketed the building for sale or proceeded direct to seeking planning permission to demolish.

## **28 COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID – THE WHITE LION, HANKELOW**

It was reported that Cheshire East Council had accepted The White Lion, Hankelow for registration as an 'Asset of Community Value' (ACV) under the Community Right to Bid scheme.

Arrangements would now be made for an independent village committee to be established to take forward the creation of the pub as a community pub.

Members recorded their thanks to Councillor Colin Ainley for his work in carrying out research and submitting the application on behalf of the Parish Council.

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.55 pm and concluded at 8.40 pm