

HENLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the
Parish Council meeting
on Tuesday August 1, 2017 at
7.30pm in Henley Community Centre

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| | District Cllr John Whitehead and Parish Cllrs Kevin Griggs, Steve Brock, Bryan Marks and Martin Redbond were present. Cllr John Field had sent apologies. Seven members of the public were present. |
| 1/010817 | Apologies for Absence and Approvals |
| | Alex Harrison is away. |
| 2/010817 | Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation |
| | None |
| 3/010817 | To consider planning application - DC/17/03074 Proposal: Planning Application - Change of use of existing public house to residential dwelling including removal of part of existing car park (revised application following refusal of Application 3349/15). Location: The Cross Keys Inn, Main Road, Henley, Ipswich Suffolk IP6 0QP |
| | After discussion, Councillors felt there had been no substantive change which would alter the Parish Council's previous decision to oppose change of use. Consultee comments were agreed as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Parish Council has consistently opposed applications for change of use to residential by the current owner of the pub, and sees no reason to change that view in spite of the paperwork provided in support of the new application by the owner's planning consultant.2. The Council also believes the application should be considered by the District Council's Planning Committee rather than by planning officers.3. It is incorrect to infer that the Parish Council does |

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| | <p>not support the pub as an asset.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. The formal listing of the pub as an Asset of Community Value was initiated by CAMRA, not by the Parish Council. The Parish Council felt that it was unlikely a community bid to buy the pub could successfully be mounted; but that did not mean that the Parish Council places no value on the pub itself. The Council takes the view that in the right hands and with proper planning and marketing, the pub could be a successful venue bringing visitors to the village and providing employment.5. The consultants' planning statement states clearly that three full-price bids were received by the owner while he was marketing the property through Fleurets, and all were declined because they were not of interest, as the buyers did not propose to continue with the current use. No explanation is offered as to what the proposed uses were, but the Parish Council knows that at least one of them was planning a future for the property as a licensed hospitality venue including a café/tea-room and vintage shop. An email from those proposed buyers has been seen by Parish Councillors. In the view of the Parish Council, the argument that the property could not be sold fails on the basis of that bid alone.6. The planning statement makes much of the distance of the pub from the village, its lack of attractiveness as a site, and its inaccessibility. However the Parish Council takes the view that many examples of successful venues in the region demonstrate that with the right offering, distance is not a deterrent, and nor is setting.7. Also it has to be said that the lengthy argument in the planning statement about the Cross Keys' disadvantages raises an acute question about the current owner's decision to buy it in the first place, given his experience and acumen in the licensed trade.8. The Parish Council is not in a position to comment on the argument that the Planning Inspector who dismissed the owner's appeal against the last refusal of change of use made errors of law. But it notes that no effort was made after that appeal to seek judicial review of the decision.9. In the Parish Council's view it is incorrect to suggest that Henley Community Centre in some way meets all the needs of everyone in the village for |
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| | <p>hospitality. The Community Centre is a valued feature but it does not provide any kind of restaurant or café service except on special occasions, and the bar is only open on a very limited basis. It is clear that villagers travel on a regular basis to pubs, restaurants and cafes in Barham, Claydon, Westerfield, Witnesham, Swilland and further afield, and there is no reason whatever to suppose they will not be willing to travel to the Cross Keys if the offering is right.</p> <p>10. The Parish Council notes that the owner only opened the Cross Keys for business from November 2014 until the summer of 2015, since when it has stood empty (apart from the owner’s residence) and unused for any commercial purpose. Having reviewed the latest set of trading accounts submitted with the application, the Council finds it cannot take them any more seriously than the previous two sets of accounts for the same period.</p> <p>11. It is impossible for the Parish Council to speculate or guess as to the owner’s long-term intentions. But the fact that the pub was only open for about six months, the fact that the owner has been offered the full asking price for it on three separate occasions, and the fact that he has not been prepared to enter into any kind of dialogue with the Parish Council or the wider village, all raise serious questions. While Henley may well need new housing in the future, the Cross Keys is not a suitable site for housing development. The Parish Council is currently engaged in a Housing Needs Survey and will play a full part in consultations leading to the new Local Plan being developed by MSDC.</p> <p>12. The Parish Council believes the Cross Keys site has potential as a hospitality venue of benefit to the village and the wider area, and that the current application should be refused on the grounds outlined above.</p> |
| 4/010817 | Urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council |
| | <p>Three other planning applications had been received after publication of the Agenda.</p> <p>17 Gascoigne Drive, 17/03431, Erection of two-storey</p> |

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| | <p>and single-storey extensions</p> <p>After discussion which included the owner of 15 Gascoigne Drive, it was agreed not to oppose this application provided boundary and technical issues could be resolved between the two properties.</p> <p>3 St Peter's Close, 17/03429, Erection of part two-storey, part single-storey extension.</p> <p>No objection was made to this application.</p> <p>Chestnut Cottage, Henley Square, 17/03426, Erection of replacement building and detached cartlodge</p> <p>No objection was made to this application.</p> <p>It was noted that a recent accident at the Copdock roundabout had caused severe traffic congestion at the Valley Road/Henley Road crossroads and this re-emphasised traffic concerns when and if the Henley gate/lpswich Garden suburb development proceeds.</p> <p>It was also noted that the results of the Henley Housing Needs Survey should be known in August.</p> |
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