

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the VIRTUAL (via Zoom) PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING held on Thursday 6th August 2020 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Cllr S Harte, Cllr N Walker, Cllr M Malsbury, Cllr P Davies

Apologies - Cllr K Perkins

Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or other Disclosable Interests falling within the terms of para 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct. – None declared.

No requests had been received by the Clerk for any Dispensations relating to items on the Agenda (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011)

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME - no questions raised

44/20 PLANNING

The Council considered the following planning application :-

(a)	App No 201982 & 201983 (LB consent)
Site:	Cliffe Arms, Mathon, Hfds WR13 5PW
Description:	Proposed conversion of building to form two dwellings together with the erection of an additional dwelling in amenity area.
Grid Ref:	OS 373624,245872
App Type:	Planning Permission

The Council discussed this application and the Clerk was asked to send the following comments to Herefordshire Council Planning :-

Mathon Parish Council **strongly objects** to these applications and wishes to make the following comments:-

1. Changing the use of The Cliffe Arms would deprive the parish of a social amenity, which is at the heart of the community and important for its health and wellbeing. The value of the pub to the village and locality is without doubt and is clearly demonstrated by Mathon's response when the previous application was submitted last year. At a Planning Meeting held on 28th August 2019, fifty-six (56) residents of the Parish attended and ALL registered their opposition to the proposed 2019 planning applications which were virtually identical to the applications now being submitted. Additionally, a petition opposing the 2019 planning applications and supporting an ACV application was signed by 113 people from within and on the boundary of the parish and was sent to the planning department.

NB – contrary to assumptions made by the applicant, the Cliffe Arms could not be registered as an asset of community value (ACV) only because the formal application was technically out of time. Non-registration has no bearing on the value of an asset to the community.

2. *Herefordshire Council Policy SC1 applies, and as can be seen below, the tests therein have not been satisfied; in particular there has been no effort to sell the business either as a going concern or as a community asset, nor is there any viable alternative venue in the parish. There is no other pub in the village and the only other community space aside from the church is the Parish Hall. The Parish Hall has no licence or suitable licensee nor does it have a cellar. It is considerably smaller in size and is in no way equivalent to the size, quality or accessibility of the facilities which the The Cliffe Arms provided, being situated in the very heart of the village. Furthermore, it should be noted that the The Cliffe Arms has featured as an item on the Parish Council Meeting Agenda ever since its closure. The Parish Council has written numerous letters to the applicant and the co-owner of the The Cliffe Arms which have been largely ignored. The Parish Council supported a Licence Application from the co-owner of the The Cliffe Arms in 2005 but this did not result in The Cliffe Arms being opened again as a pub.*

3. *The reinstatement of the pub would create employment opportunities and would enhance the tourism aspects for the Bed & Breakfast/holiday lets available in the parish.*

4. *Building a separate house in the garden area of The Cliffe Arms would restrict the future development of the pub. The new build would detract from the row of listed cottages adjoining The Cliffe Arms in this AONB area.*

5. *A number of potential buyers for The Cliffe Arms (to retain it as a pub) have approached the applicant, some via the Parish Council, but all offers have been refused. However, a Mathon resident is still able and willing to purchase the pub at market value, restore it and run it as a pub for the benefit of the local community and adjoining parishes. He has written to Herefordshire Planning Department and confirmed this commitment. Due to its location, on the edge of Malvern and close proximity to Ledbury, the pub is a viable business opportunity.*

6. *In the Application Form – item 11 headed Existing Use – contrary to the answer stated on the form the previous use was NOT residential/Public House. The only residential area of the pub was for the management/staff of the pub only and restricted to upstairs rooms. It has never been used wholly as a residence, it has always been a pub.*

7. *The site is a flood risk. Any new build would exacerbate flooding problems, pushing flood water onto neighbouring land and properties. The Cliffe Arms site is the least appropriate new build site in the village.*

45/20 Thumpers Patch, South Hyde Lane, Mathon – App No 191879

The Council considered the response from Mark Tansley, Herefordshire Council Enforcement Officer relating to questions raised by the Council. The Clerk was asked to request further clarification on the points raised by the Council.

..... Chairman

Date

