

MATHON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Diana Taylor – 9 – Lambourne Avenue – Malvern Link – Worcs WR14 1NL
Tel: 01684 569430 – E-mail: dtaylormathonclerk235@gmail.com

THE CLIFFE ARMS – MATHON - CONVERSION PLANS PLANNING APPLICATIONS 201982 & 201983

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, the Parish Council held a Virtual Zoom Planning Meeting at 6.30 pm on Thursday 6th August 2020 to consider newly submitted Planning Applications 201982/201983.

These newly submitted applications 201982/201983 are virtually identical to the 2019 proposals which were considered last year.

As you know, a large number of residents attended the Parish Council Planning Meeting held in August 2019 and signed a petition supporting the ACV application and objecting to the proposed conversion plan for The Cliffe Arms. The petition was also widely circulated throughout the parish. It was then sent to both the Communities (ACV) department and the Planning Department at Herefordshire Council.

We are unable to organise another petition due to Covid 19 restrictions. Whilst we have no reason to believe you might have changed your mind about the proposals in the last 12 months, we have been advised that we should seek as many comments as possible from parishioners **a second time - as your 2019 comments will not count.** We are therefore asking you to **Please post your comments** onto the Herefordshire Planning website (details below) as soon as you can – the deadline is **30th August 2020**. It is important to have as many comments as possible on the website.

Please ignore the “invalid proposal” note attached to the applications. This refers to the applicant not fully completing paperwork re ownership and will be validated when this paperwork is received. It does not invalidate the planning applications.

TO MAKE YOUR COMMENTS

Please click on to Herefordshire Council Planning Applications – Search Planning Applications – Search Applications and enter under key words the planning application numbers - 201982 and 201983 – click search (details will appear) and then click select - Scroll down to comments.

OR

Send in your comments by Post to Herefordshire Council Planning Services – PO Box 4 – HEREFORD HR4 OXH quoting the Planning Application Numbers 201982 & 201983

PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF the comments Mathon Parish Council has sent to Herefordshire Planning Department:-

**COMMENTS FROM MATHON PARISH COUNCIL RE:
PLANNING APPLICATIONS NOS 201982/201983 – THE CLIFFE ARMS**

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.

