
Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Draft Minutes

of the extra ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council
Wednesday 14th August 2024 at 7.30pm in Risbury Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman)
Cllr. Tim Yair
Cllr. Derek Silk
Cllr. James Hinton
Cllr. Richard Thomas
Cllr. Ken Bemand
Cllr. Janette Fulwood
Cllr. Chris Marston
Cllr. Anne Grace

Ward Councillor: Bruce Baker
Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

Up to 21 residents attended for parts of the meeting

81/24 Apologies for absence

Cllr Pugh sent his apologies

67/24 Declaration of interests and dispensations

None received

83/24 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman announced-

- there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor in Humber Parish. An election had not been claimed and Council now agreed to move to co-option to fill the vacancy.
- the 50mph speed limit on the A44 in the region of The Drum is now operational. He thanked all Councillors (and in particular Cllrs. Grace & Marston) for their efforts in securing the new speed limit.

84/24 Public participation

Under Standing Order 8, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and ask or answer questions. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.

No member of the public had a comment to make

85/24 Planning Committee and planning applications update

(a) To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.

Ford & Stoke Prior

**241774 The Dingle Stoke Prior HR6 0NB
rear extension together with minor alterations.**

Proposed demolition of lean-to's and construction of

The applicants were present but had no comments to make. No members of the public wished to comment. Councillors discussed the application and clarified that there was no contaminated land. The application was considered straightforward with the new addition being sympathetic with the existing core building. The Design & Access statement was a model of clarity.

Council supported the application and the following comments were submitted to Herefordshire Council-

241774 THE DINGLE, STOKE PRIOR. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council discussed application 241774 (The Dingle) at its extra ordinary meeting on 14 August 2024.

The Council decision is to SUPPORT the application.
Council agreed that the application was excellent in that-

- The design is sympathetic to the existing building.
- The existing layout is rationalised and much improved as living space.
- The design and access statement was particularly informative and well structured.
- There are no drainage issues associated with the application.

Humber

241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed Conversion of Building to a self-build Dwelling House.

The applicant was present and took the opportunity to address the meeting. Residents had a number of questions-

- **Exact location of the site?**
- **Why is this application being considered when it is outside the NDP settlement boundary?**
(Outside the settlement boundary the location is classed as "open countryside". Only very exceptionally is new building consent granted in open countryside. But when there is an existing building there is a set of Herefordshire policies applied to open countryside which allows the re-use of redundant buildings. This application falls into that category and Local Plan policies RA3 and RA5 apply).
- **The building is not redundant but is in use.**
(Applicant replied that although he had five horses on the site he did not use the building. The remainder of the site had provision for shelter so the barn/stable is redundant).
- **Concerns about the increased traffic and disruption during construction. There are no pavements, the road narrows at this point and large construction vehicles will add to these problems.**
(Applicant explained that when he actually lived on the property things would improve since he would have off-road parking. The statutory transport consultee had assessed that traffic would not increase as a result of this application.)
- **The application contains errors.**
(The Clerk had already noted that the building was not "agricultural" but "equine".)
- **Councillor Baker queried if the application should be under Class Q.-Unused building in the countryside could be converted.** (
Applicant confirmed that this was not a class Q application).

The applicant explained his policy on phosphate mitigation based around a "short rotation coppice" - SRC. His consultant had specified 75sq.m of SRC and he intended to provide 150sq.m. He will also re-instate an existing pond and develop a wetland to increase bio diversity.

Council was concerned that errors on the application (concerning current usage of the entrance/highway) might have overstated the current traffic level so leading to the transport conclusion that there would be no significant change in traffic levels. Cllr. Silk mentioned the Council comments of a previous application 210974 where increased traffic had been a material matter in the Council's decision to object. Traffic levels blend into highway safety and both traffic and safety can be material considerations in an application.

At Council's request the Clerk clarified the current Herefordshire policy on open countryside development. In his reading of the Local Plan, this development would, at least in principle, be viewed as compliant. The application satisfied policy RA3 so the principle of development is established. It is then necessary to also satisfy policy RA5 which describes specific criteria for the re-use of rural buildings.

There was general Council concern about the very limited number of smaller houses available and this development was of modest size.

As a Parish the target for new housing had already been achieved. However, Cllr. Baker pointed out that very recent announcements had increased the housing target for the County from 16,000 new homes to 27,000 for the lifetime of the new Local Plan.

Council noted the widespread public interest with around 20 objections to the application.

After discussion Council resolved to object to the application and the Clerk submitted the following agreed comments to Herefordshire Planning-

241806 OAK TREE VIEW, RISBURY. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council discussed application 241806 Oak Tree View at its extra ordinary meeting on 14 August 2024.

The Council decision is to OBJECT to the application.

Council noted that the applicant had secured pre-application advice and that the principle of development under Local Plan policy RA3 had been accepted. The issue now is the extent to which the application satisfies the requirements of policy RA5 – re-use of rural buildings.

Until purchased a few months ago by the applicant the building was used as a horse stable. Although described as agricultural the building's use is equine. It is Council's view that the application does not accord with points 4 and 5 of policy RA5 in that the existing building cannot be converted without the need for major re-construction.

Council also noted the comments from Herefordshire's ecology consultee which raised concerns around-

- Phosphate mitigation using short rotation coppice as not scientifically certain at the scale proposed. Hence nutrient neutrality has not been scientifically nor legally demonstrated.
- The current use of the barn as equine stabling creates nutrient pathways whose management post development has not been demonstrated.

The comments by the transportation consultee also highlighted areas of concern and non-compliance but these concerns can be met by modifications to the design.

In summary as the application currently stands it requires further attention so Council's only option is to OBJECT to the application.

241787 Workshop at The Woodlands Risbury HR6 0NN Proposed conversion of a redundant workshop to one self-build dwelling and associated works including the replacement of an existing septic tank serving The Woodlands.

The applicants were present and were prepared to answer questions. A resident explained some of the planning history of the site including that Poplands Lane was excluded from the NDP but that the lane offered "more scope for some limited development".

Other residents were concerned about the narrow lane and its very limited suitability as sustainable infrastructure. Years ago there were 12 properties and now there are 18 properties but the lane has deteriorated during that period due to overuse.

On some better surfaced parts of the lane speeding is a concern.

The Clerk read out similar concerns from a lane resident, Mr Kevin Parker. Additionally, Mr Parker highlighted the failure to upgrade the connectivity systems from copper to fibre. Given the limits of copper at these distances then every new connection degrades performance to existing users to a point where the service is now unusable.

The applicant confirmed that their drainage arrangements resulted in a net reduction in phosphates which is a key point in favour of applications.

Council recognised that this application represented another modest development which was a benefit. It was well located in the area and it appeared that the lane might be re-surfaced in the near future under current plans.

In conclusion Council voted to object due to-

- Poor infrastructure (access road, connectivity) having already reached or exceeded its capacity to support further development.
- Safety issues with increased traffic, in part due to withdrawal of public transport services.

The following agreed comments were submitted to Herefordshire Planning-

241787 THE WOODLANDS, RISBURY. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council discussed application 241787 The Woodlands at its extra ordinary meeting on 14 August 2024.

The Council decision is to OBJECT to the application.

Council noted that the applicant had secured pre-application advice and that the principle of development had been accepted.

The Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior NDP (para 10.2.6) recognises “more scope for some limited development” (in Poplands Lane). It is Council’s view that this limit has now been reached given that the Group Parish has already achieved its housing target in the NDP.

This position is re-enforced by Council’s real concerns about the capacity of the local infrastructure to cope with more dwellings-

- Residents present at the meeting pointed out the difficulties with using Poplands Lane (where the development is sited) as an access route for an increasing number of dwellings. The lane is narrow, often very muddy and the drainage system has not been adequately maintained for some years now.
- Traffic along the lane not only increases due to more residents from each new dwelling but also from the increasingly necessary van-based delivery services supporting these residents. Part of this problem stems from the gradual withdrawal of public transport services. Not many years ago there were 12 properties along the lane, that number has now risen to 18 with no commensurate infrastructure investment.
- Connectivity concerns stemming from a degradation to the current, copper-based service every time a new connection is added. These problems are exacerbated by the failure of Herefordshire’s nominated contractor, Gigaclear, to provide an upgraded fibre broadband service serving the lane.

In summary, until there is more infrastructure investment in areas such as Poplands Lane by the local authority Council’s only option is to OBJECT to the application.

(b) To note: updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

233094 Priory Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0ND. The construction and retention of a rural worker's dwelling, seminar room and a range of eight stables with ancillary tack and hay store. Undecided

223610 Land north of Bowley Court farm Change of use from a water storage lagoon to a water and anaerobic digestate storage lagoon (retrospective). Undecided.

This application was scheduled for the Planning Committee (Herefordshire) on 21 August 2024 but has been withdrawn from that meeting. A revised date of 4 October is currently likely. Since Council last discussed this application on 1 February 2023 there have been significant developments in terms of more rigorous information and assessment of the application. The current Council position is that there was insufficient information to either support or object to the application but the additional information (Habitat Regulations Assessment, Environment Agency comments and many objections by residents) now available requires that position to be updated.

The applicant was present and willing to answer any questions on the application.

Council noted a significant number (about 50) of objections recorded on the Herefordshire Planning website. One resident was present who lived close to the site and spoke at length about her concerns of the nature of the site and the poor handling of the application by Herefordshire Council.

Cllr. Baker (member of the County Planning Committee) confirmed that the application will be heard by the Planning Committee with the date finally confirmed as 4 October. The officer report/recommendation will not be available until one week before the meeting and Cllr. Baker is unable to take a position until he has read that report. Additionally, the Committee will make a site visit but only the day before the meeting.

Council noted that the need for the lagoon to become additional storage was partly caused by the change in the Environment Agency rules about when digestate can be spread.

A concern, (perhaps the major concern) of both Parish Council and the Planning Committee is the technical nature of the anaerobic digester process.

Councillor Fullwood suggested that, to help Councillors understand the processes involved, a site visit to the lagoon by Councillors would be most helpful. The applicant felt that such a visit could be arranged and it was agreed that the applicant would give the Clerk suitable dates for such a visit.

(It was later agreed that a site meeting would be held on 27 August and five Councillors were able to attend. The very useful background information will help Council make informed final comments on this application at the next meeting on 18 September 2024.)

200705 Land adjoining Croft Gate Farm Stoke Prior. Proposed new dwelling and garage adjacent to Croft Gate farm. THIS IS A RE-CONSULTATION FROM A 2020 APPLICATION

Undecided

Humber.

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).
Undecided - on hold due to phosphates

212473 Dev 1 Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage Risbury HR6 0NG

Proposed permission for the siting of a caravan to provide accommodation on site during the construction of a dwelling on Plot 5 approved under application ref 181648.

Undecided- on hold due to phosphates.

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687.

Undecided

86/24 Planning law.

To receive: a paper from Cllr. Thomas regarding possible changes to planning law and potential consequences for the Group Parish.

It was agreed that there was insufficient information presently available to make informed comment. The topic will be held over to a future meeting

Date of next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 18th September 2024 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior village hall

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Appendix 1 – Draft Traffic Management Plan & Draft Traffic Action Plan

Headline Issue: Speeding & dangerous driving A44. The Drum crossroads & Steen's Bridge

Specifics	Proposed Action / Suggestions	Action taken	Responsible/ date
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blind bend travelling East just after The Luce farm. Residential properties, with drives opening into the A44, just after the bend with little or no visibility of oncoming traffic, are at risk each time vehicles enter or leave properties. 2. Lack of police speed monitoring vehicle presence, particularly at known high traffic times, for example weekend motorcyclists and early morning quarry lorries. 3. Traffic speeds excessive approaching The Drum crossroads and restricted visibility due to bends on both eastern and western approaches. 4. Pedestrians, including school children, having to walk in the road as verge is uneven, unkempt and deep ditch is hidden by overgrowth. 	<p>Speed limit reduction to 50 mph on the approaches to the Drum crossroads, currently out to public consultation. Fully supported by the PC.</p> <p>Apply for speed reduction from 50 mph to 40 mph through Steen's Bridge.</p> <p>Apply for funding from the PCC for the supply and operation of a Traffic monitoring survey and speed indicator device (SID)</p> <p>Additional signage and road markings, such as bend warning sign, SLOW road markings, concealed entrance sign</p> <p>Work with the local police to ensure regular speed camera monitoring, especially at weekends to focus on motor bikes and early weekdays to focus on quarry lorries.</p> <p>Pavement or pathway along verge to allow pedestrians safe walking route towards SP, currently have to walk on verge, which is uneven, unmaintained, muddy and with concealed deep ditch or on the highway.</p> <p>Traffic surveys to be carried out to support the above actions/suggestions.</p>	<p>Arrange on site meeting with Callum Bush (Highways HC) to discuss: Date speed limit will be actioned, Steens Bridge & A49 Ford turning; Options & solutions to items 1 & iv;</p> <p>Confirm PC can apply for movement of signs and speed limit changes & procedure for doing so.</p> <p>Follow up with Ian Connelly (WMC) for data required to support additional mobile speed camera van visits</p> <p>Contact Bodenham PC to discuss how they obtained SIDs camera</p>	

Headline Issue: Turning off A49 Towards Ford. Poor visibility when its dark.			
Specifics Turning right from the A49 into Ford road, travelling north from Hereford, is difficult to see in the dark. This results in vehicles carrying out dangerous turns and adjustments.	Proposed Action / Suggestions Reflective markers to ensure road entrance is clearly visible in darkness or poor light.	Action taken	Responsible/ date
Headline Issue: Poor visibility at junctions B & C roads due to hedge overgrowth			
	Proposed Action / Suggestions Audit of affected junctions. Contact land owners/Lengths Men/BB to advise they need to cut back and manage – need agreed plans for when cutting will take place each year.	Action taken	Responsible/ date

Headline Issue: SP school parking during drop off & pick up. Speeding drivers around school during school hours.			
Proposed Action / Suggestions	To Do	Responsible	TSG Review
<p>Drop off is naturally staggered and not a major issue. Pick up is more problematic, collections are staggered between 3.00 and 3.10 pm. Parents asked collect children and move on without socialising and causing congestion, but they still do it. Parents speeding through village to and from school.</p> <p>Discuss with Academy for approach to neighbouring farm to purchase/lease a section of the adjacent field to create staff and parents parking.</p> <p>If parking area is agreed and set up, apply for yellow no parking lines to be laid along both sides of lane outside school.</p> <p>Apply for speed reduction to 20mph along lane – ideal but not easy to achieve</p> <p>Apply for funding for the supply and installation of a timed flashing school warning sign – find out who can fund.</p> <p>Voluntary one way system for parents to pick up and drop off, with angled parking bays</p>			

Humber Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Traffic Management Plan 2023/2024 Action Report

Plan to be read in conjunction with the Traffic Management Plan 2023/2024

Headline Issue Speeding & dangerous driving A44 from The Drum crossroads through Steen's Bridge		
Specifics	Actions taken & Date	Target Timescale
<p>The Drum crossroads has restricted visibility from all entry points. Current speed limit is 60mph which is too fast. Extension of existing 50mph speed limit area to the west of the crossroads to be extended to incorporate The Drum crossroads.</p> <p>Blind bend travelling East just after The Luce farm. Residential properties, with drives opening into the A44, just after the bend with little or no visibility of oncoming traffic, are at risk each time vehicles enter or leave properties.</p> <p>Frequent incidents of dangerous driving witnessed by residents, for example overtaking on bends, excessive speed, cars and motorbikes racing</p> <p>Lack of police speed monitoring vehicle presence, particularly at known high traffic times, for example weekend motorcyclists and early morning quarry lorries.</p> <p>Pedestrians, including school children, having to walk in the road as verge is uneven, unkempt and deep ditch is hidden by overgrowth. Passing traffic not giving due care and attention and often harassing pedestrians.</p>	<p>02/04/2024: Meeting held with HC Highways Officer Callum Bush (CB) , Councillors Grace & Marston in attendance. Actions agreed:</p> <p>There are currently no plans to reduce the speed limit through the village. Last reduced to 50mph approx. 4 years ago.</p> <p>Traffic data survey: Callum (CB) to arrange for a data survey to be conducted on the A44 through Steen's Bridge and to share the data provided. This will provide evidence of excess speeds and support future actions.</p> <p>Lack of signage to indicate blind bend heading east from Leo: CB to review and advise what signage/road markings would be appropriate.</p> <p>Installation of new speed limit at The Drum crossroads: CB to follow up with BB for a works date.</p> <p>Installation of pavement or pathway along verge to allow pedestrians safe walking route towards SP, currently have to walk on verge, which is uneven, unmaintained, muddy and with concealed deep ditch or on the highway. Installation of pavements would need to be raised by Ward Councillors for discussion at full Council level.</p> <p>We discussed whether residents/PC could purchase and install hazard warning signs or similar on private land. It was indicated this would not be an issue.</p> <p>AG has been in contact with PCC to complain about lack of response from West Mercia Police in respect of attendance of mobile speed monitoring vehicle. PCC office have undertaken to follow up in this and ask WMP to contact AG direct. Once we have the contact we will request details of dates and times when van has been at Steen's Bridge and try to obtain commitment for regular visits.</p>	<p>Summer 2024</p> <p>2026</p> <p>Winter 2024</p> <p>Winter 2024</p> <p>Summer 2024</p> <p>2025</p> <p>April 2024</p>

Headline Issue Stoke Prior School parking, vehicles driving at inappropriate speeds around school during drop off/pick up times and through village		
Specifics	Actions taken & Date	Target Timescale
<p>No dedicated parking provided for staff and parents leading to vehicles parked on rough ground at side of the lane. This restricts visibility and access for passing vehicles. Children not adequately supervised by parents/guardians running into the road during pick up and drop off times.</p>	<p>02/04/2024: Parking issues outside school: CB to check and see if there are any existing Traffic Orders in place which could be added to and advise on timescales and other relevant information.</p> <p>Existing speed limit signs to be moved back nearer to Bowley Lane end and 30mph to be painted on the road – CB (Note: potential imposition of mandatory 20mph speed limit outside all schools is under consideration)</p> <p>Installation flashing 20mph sign in school hours: CB to provide guidance. (see note above)</p>	<p>Winter 2024</p> <p>Winter 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Headline Issue: Turning off A49 Towards Ford poor visibility in the dark		
Specifics	Actions taken & Date	Target Timescale
<p>Turning right from A49 into Ford road, travelling north from Hereford, is difficult to see in the dark. There is no right turn indicator arrow in the turning land on the A49 so it is not clear to see where the junction is in the dark. This results in vehicles carrying out dangerous turns and adjustments.</p>	<p>02/04/24: (Note: I have been advised today an accident occurred at this junction approx. 2 weeks ago). Road from A49 up to change of road surface is Highways Agency responsibility.</p> <p>Signs on bridge are dull and may not be fully reflective: CB to arrange for Locality Steward to check reflectivity and clean the signs to see if this improves reflectivity.</p> <p>No right turn arrow in central turning lane on A49 so not clear where turning is when dark. CB to provide contact details of person at Highways Agency to contact direct to discuss this issue.</p>	<p>Autumn 2024</p> <p>Autumn 2024</p>
<p>Poor visibility at junctions B & C roads due to hedge overgrowth</p>	<p>Audit of affected junctions. Contact land owners/Lengths Men/BB to advise they need to cut back and manage – need agreed plans for when cutting will take place each year.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Regular meetings with Hereford Council Highways team		To be held monthly to discuss and assess progress on above mention points.	May 2024 and ongoing
A44 Traffic Safety Group		<p>02/04/24: The group is ongoing with the local ward Councillors now involved. There is a general lack of effort on behalf of the other parishes, and this will be monitored moving forwards to establish if they are prepared to take responsibility for their own Parishes or expect us to do it all for them. We won't be doing that!</p> <p>We are planning to apply to the PCC Safer Roads Fund 2024/25 for money for SID's cameras. These may be shared with a couple of parishes or we try for one per parish.</p> <p>The request to the PCC for funding for SID's and traffic =data surveys was directed back to the PCC SR Fund application. This is shame but not unexpected and if nothing else it has let them know we are around.</p>	