

PARISH COUNCIL OF HILLESLEY AND TRESHAM MINUTES

Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Hopkins Hall, Hillesley on Wednesday 4th October 2011

Present: Cllr D Darlow, Cllr A Clark, Cllr T Burden, Cllr S Butcher, L Spratling (Parish Clerk)

In attendance: 26 members of the public

Public Participation:

Cllr D Darlow provided the members of the public with a summary of the current facts about the impending sale of The Fleece Public House including:

- A temporary replacement manager will be installed in the Fleece by the Administrators as soon as possible.
- Several bids (up to 4) have already been received by the selling agents (Christie's) acting on behalf of the Administrators
- There is some talk in Hillesley that prospective buyers may want to apply for a 'change of use' and de-license the pub, and may also wish to apply for planning permission on the car park.
- Change of use will not be easy to obtain.
- Stroud District Council have already been contacted by Cllr D Darlow (as a private individual) expressing his concern and the view of the village (expressed in the Parish Plan) that the pub was a valuable village amenity.

The floor was then opened to the public, and the following comments made, and questions posed, by those present:

Comments:

Affordable Housing:

- the normal procedure for the building of affordable housing is that this should be situated outside the village boundary (under an exception policy) and that there was already a site identified for this.

Building on the Car Park:

- would in effect 'sign the death knell' for the pub, because this would materially affect its viability as there would be nowhere for customers to park.
- Stroud District Council may take note of the Highways Authority recommendations re car parking for the pub, if there was a planning application made which took up some of the available space in the car park.
- there would be an issue with access for a new house from Chapel Lane, which had been refused under a separate planning application for adjoining land in the past.
- the building of one house on the car park may set a dangerous precedent for plans to build further houses.
- There may be an underlying agenda on the part of a prospective purchaser to deliberately cause the pub to run at a loss in order to successfully apply to de-licence and change the building into a private house.

Potential Return on Capital Employed in Purchasing and Renovating The Fleece:

- Any discussion on this aspect of the sale or the level of possible income for the eventual purchasers were considered outside the remit of the Parish Council and this meeting.

Questions:

Q. How did the pub feature in the Parish Plan?

A. 65% of the respondents to the questionnaire confirmed that this was important to the community and should remain open as a public house.

Q. What were the views of the village as regards further development in the village?

A. 70% of the respondents had confirmed they wished to see no development while 30% would like to see development of affordable housing.

Q. What is the Parish Council view of The Fleece?

A. This would reflect the views expressed in the Parish Plan – that it is a valuable community asset. The Parish Council would be unable to stop the sale.

Q. How would Listed Building status affect any plans for the Public House?

A. Any plans would have to comply with rigorous listed building provisions.

The formal meeting then began.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Claire Halpin – accepted, Cllr R Harlow – accepted, Cllr A Doughty – accepted
2. **Declarations of interest:** All councillors declared a non-pecuniary interest in the sale of The Fleece as they were all customers.
3. **To Consider the proposed sale of the Fleece (Public House) in Hillesley and agree relevant actions.** Councillors discussed the actions which could be taken at this point (see below) and agreed that, until an offer had been accepted by the administrators and/or a planning application had been received, they could not plan any further actions until the situation had become clearer.

Actions Agreed:

- Parish Clerk should prepare and send letters to the following authorities. These should express the concern of the Parish Council and the likely formal objection by the Parish Council to any application for a change of use of the premises, to de-license the pub, or the development of the car park:
 1. Stroud District Council (Planning Dept)
 2. The Administrator David Cooper at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 141 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7EQ Price Waterhouse Cooper
 3. Mr P Stimpson, Christie & Co., Embassy House, Queens Avenue, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1SB (the selling agents appointed by the Administrators)
 4. Rachel Andrews, Principal Licensing Officer at Stroud District Council
- The Parish Councillors will engage with the eventual purchasers of the Fleece, to build a productive relationship with them to secure the best outcome for the residents of Hillesley.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

I certify that the above minutes are a correct record of the above meeting

Signed:

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Date:

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