

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
MALPAS PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 3RD OCTOBER 2016
AT THE JUBILEE HALL, MALPAS AT 7.00PM**

	PRESENT Cllrs. Charles Lowick Higgle (Chairman), Carol Broad (Vice Chairman), Chris Whitehurst, John Webb, Roma Hancock, Sarah Thomas, Tina Barnett. The Clerk. Eleven members of the public attended part of the meeting, including representatives from Alport Primary School, the Board of Governors and CW&C.	
121	APOLOGIES Cllrs. Adrian Waddelove, Eric Bickley, John Bickley, Karen Meredith, Martin Shackleton, Sue Griffiths.	
122	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS None were declared.	
123	OPEN FORUM The following points were raised by Malpas Alport Primary School:- • The planning application to increase the size of the school is in response to the increase in housing in the village; • Central government have contributed £1.2 million towards the school's expansion to accommodate additional children moving to the area; • There are no alternatives should this planning application be refused; • According to a recent CW&C survey there are 203 available car parking spaces in the village; • The school does not have sufficient funds to provide additional parking facilities. The following concerns / observations were raised by members of the public and members of the Parish Council:- • Parking and an increase in traffic congestion in the village; • Lack of an up to date travel plan; • The traffic survey carried out by consultants included in the planning application was carried out during activity week at the Bishop Heber when many children were not in school; • Cllrs enquired whether the school had approached the building companies in the village, such as Bovis and Stewart Milne, to ask for assistance towards parking; • Concerns were raised regarding the design of the proposed building as the school is located within the conservation area, the school advised that the Conservation Officer is aware of the planning application;	
124	PLANNING APPLICATION FOR MALPAS ALPORT PRIMARY SCHOOL 16/03734/FUL - Demolition of the redundant School House and the construction of a new detached building. Expansion of the existing car park. Minor extension and alterations to the existing school building at Malpas Alport Primary School, Chester Road, Malpas The Council made the following observations:- The application site lies within the Conservation area of Malpas, and is at a key point in the village, visible from the road the site is at the heart of the village centre. Being at the core of the village the existing school is a building of major impact. The site is quite small and has limited room for expansion. The new building proposed is of a rather modern bland appearance, and the Council conclude that this is not in-keeping with the character of the conservation area. The roof tiles on the original school building are slate and yet the new building is to have clay tiles. There did not appear to be any features of architectural value	

included, which given the location of the site this is a missed opportunity to enhance the conservation area. The new building will be prominent on the site as it is forward of the original school, as such it will visually impact the street scene. The old school house whilst redundant blended well into the site and the existing school, the proposed building whilst functional does not. In its current form the proposal visually impacts in a negative way.

The Council would want to ensure that any new building or extension blends naturally with the existing buildings, is sympathetic and in-keeping with the conservation area. The current proposal does not comply with policies BE1 (Scale and Form of New Development) and BE2 (Design of New Buildings) of the Neighbourhood Plan.

However the Council's biggest concern related to traffic, and the travel plan provided by the applicants which is both inadequate and erroneous. The site will accommodate 5 new car parking spaces which are to cater for the additional staff being recruited.

The consultants state that the Village has adequate car park provision and on street parking to accommodate the existing traffic generated by the site, plus the new traffic generated as a result of this extension. It is clear however to the village that parking is already at a critical level and major traffic problems exist on Chester Road. The school traffic already causes major highway safety issues, with lengthy tailbacks being generated onto both the High St and Chester Road.

Cars currently line Chester Road blocking the carriageway and restricting the flow of traffic, the road often has to operate on a contra flow system as there is insufficient space for cars to pass. The number of vehicles parking illegally outside the school add to this issue. It is clear that at school start and end times the road is not able to cope with capacity and brings the village to a near grinding halt. To suggest that the village is able to cope with the additional vehicles generated is factually inaccurate, there are no measures outlined that the school or education authority intend to take to help deal with the transport issues they cause.

The volume of cars and the congestion encountered around the school site both on Chester Road and Tilston Road generates a danger to pedestrians, with many having to cross the road between parked vehicles, creating poor visibility. It is clearly evident that cars fail to see the existing zebra crossing putting pedestrian's lives at risk. Coaches and cars have to swing out across the road to pass the school due to the volume of parked vehicles, whilst vehicles exiting the nearest car park; behind the fire station, have to pull forward into oncoming traffic due to the poor parking of vehicles on the grass verges close to its entrance which obscure the carriageway.

The Council has grave concerns that the highway issues are being overlooked, parking is needed to accommodate the many vehicles using the site. Not only teaching staff, but parents and visitors who are inadequately catered for in these proposals.

The report suggests that many children from the new houses will walk to the school, given there is no safe crossing point on Chester Road or Tilston road for families coming from the new developments we find this suggestion implausible. We would want to see an early adoption of the 20mph by school area initiative and that this reduced speed be enforced. We objectively assess that there is a need for a pull in to be created on the site to enable parents to drop off and pick up their children and a need for measures to be taken to allow a more effective method of arrival and departure of children such as a staggered start time initiative, which needs to be reflected in the school transport plan.

It is wholly unacceptable to suggest that the village can cope with these extra vehicles when it is clearly evident this is not the current scenario with 105 less pupils. The assessment undertaken on behalf of the education authority suggests 203 cars can adequately be catered for on Chester Road, High Street and Tilston Road. It assumes that vehicles can safely park on both sides of these roads. If this

happened on Chester Road or Tilston Road it would be impossible for a vehicle to adequately manoeuvre through the limited space left, as it would not be wide enough for a vehicle to pass through. The Parish Council draws your attention to the photographs attached which clearly demonstrate the difficulties currently encountered on Chester Road without the added vehicles this extension will create.

Summary

The Council is aware that the village is continuing to grow and many families are finding it impossible to gain a place for their children in the village schools. Indeed at numerous planning appeals the Council has previously stated to the education authority that school places would be needed if the expansion of the village was allowed to continue. It seems that CW&C failed to have the foresight to see this issue, this has meant many developers have not had to contribute towards additional school places. The current primary school is located on a small site and the expansion is limited as a result of the site and the funding available, however the Council requires that any proposal must comply with the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and be in keeping with the conservation area. This application in its current form does not comply with policies BE1 and BE2 and will further exacerbate traffic issues to a magnitude that would cause significant harm to the village.

Recommendation

The Council recommend that CW&C refuse this application in its current form. We urge CW&C to engage with the Parish Council to address the issues outlined in this report and to formulate a more joined up approach. The Council understand that the executive has already recognised that this village is experiencing an unsustainable infrastructure stress and there requires open dialogue to resolve the issues. Expanding the school without addressing these serious issues will only exacerbate the situation.

Conditions

IF CW&C is minded to grant permission we would want the following conditions attached:-

1. Early adoption of the 20MPH limit on Chester Road by the school
2. No construction traffic onto the site or parking on Chester road between 8.30-9.15 and 14.45-15.45
3. No construction traffic to park on Chester Road
4. No Construction traffic allowed on the High Street
5. The build site to be secure, and screened to limit the impact upon the children, residents and conservation area.
6. Lighting to be erected on the existing zebra crossing to enable motorists to have better sight of the crossing.
7. A zebra crossing to be installed on Chester Road by the Bovis Development and on Tilston Road to allow pedestrians to cross safely to the school.
8. Traffic calming measures to be installed along Chester Road to try and reduce speed and increase highway safety.
9. That a Pull in and drop off point is built within the school site to enable a better flow of traffic.
10. That the school implement staggered start and finish times to reduce traffic difficulties.
11. That additional traffic regulations are explored to assist in the flow of traffic.
12. That a commercial discussion with developers is started re a contribution to the school expansion, outside of section 106.

See attachment for photographs of traffic at peak time.

Resolved:- That the Council accept the above observations. Proposed by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Lowick Higgie.

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.