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HIGHLEY PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 12/5/2026 at 6pm Severn Centre, Highley

Present: Cllrs T. Quinn (nominated as acting Chair) D. Thakrar, S. Bunn, H. Hancox.

Clerk: A. Palmer

County Councillor: Sharon Ritchie-Simmons

Members of Public: There were no members of public in attendance.

PL26-27.12 Apologies for Absence

A. Hancox (no apologies received) T.Pinches.

Power: Local Government Act 1972, Sch.12, para.40.

PL26-27.13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made

PL26-27.14 Parishioners' Question Time

There were no members of public present.

PL26-27.15 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on **Tuesday 12th May 2026**. *Power: Local Government Act 1972, Sch.12, para.41(1).*

PL26-27.16 Planning Applications

There were no applications to be discussed.

PL26-27.17 Standing Agenda Item: County Councillor Report

The County Councillor reported that Shropshire Council's Enforcement Team has advised the residents at Silverwoods that they will be required to submit a new planning application.

PL26-27.18 Planning Breaches – Reported Concerns and Required Action

For information only – no action required:

- Email from **Tracie Witkiss** (13/05/26) requesting that the objection to the *Land to the rear of Beechcroft* application be revoked and then withdrawing that request.
- **Email from Julian Beeston (27/05/26)** – Update received regarding recent enforcement visits to sites in Highley. Members noted concerns that the replacement hedge planting at The Malt is not of the species originally required and does not meet native hedging expectations. Members also raised the legal issue of the removal of the hedgerow early spring, which may constitute a breach of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 if undertaken without consent or outside permitted periods.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will seek clarification from Shropshire Council on:

1. Which department holds responsibility for ensuring correct species replacement and whether the landowner can be required to replant with an appropriate native hedgerow species in line with the original specification;
2. Whether the spring removal of the hedgerow was carried out in accordance with the *Hedgerows Regulations 1997*, including confirmation of whether a Hedgerow Removal Notice was submitted and approved, given that the hedgerow is understood to be ancient (certainly over 30 years old); and
3. If the removal was undertaken without consent or outside permitted periods, whether this requires formal investigation by Planning Enforcement or the Tree/Environmental Maintenance team/Ecology Team.

Members felt that the actions taken by the landowner were inappropriate and requested that the matter be reviewed to determine any available remedies.

Power: Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (consultation powers only).

PL26-27.19 Updates to Respond Back to Committee from Previous Actions

There were no updates to report back on.

PL26-27.20 – Local Plan Consultation: Discussion and Actions

Members received an update on the Local Plan Consultation and discussed potential actions for Highley Parish Council.

Councillors noted that the consultation document is extensive (approximately 20 pages) and that much of the proposed development strategy is not readily applicable to Highley, given the village's significant constraints. These include:

- only one road in and one road out of the settlement;
- no motorway access and limited transport links;
- inadequate public transport provision, with limited bus services and no realistic alternatives for commuting or accessing employment;
- a lack of local employment opportunities, making it difficult for new residents to work locally or commute;
- ongoing issues with road closures and inadequate signage, which already affect residents' ability to travel in and out of the village;
- repeated emphasis within the Local Plan on the need for adequate local infrastructure, which Councillors felt Highley does not currently have.

Members expressed frustration that responding to the Local Plan can feel fruitless, given the scale of the issues and the limited applicability of many proposals to Highley. However, Councillors agreed that disengaging from the Local Plan would not be in Highley's best interests. Full engagement is essential to secure additional infrastructure investment, including Priority A strategic provision, and to ensure Highley is positioned to benefit from future CIL funding.

Members also noted the importance of completing the Housing Enabler Survey to support future planning needs and to strengthen Highley's evidence base within the Local Plan process.

ACTION:

- Highley Parish Council will submit a representation to the Local Plan Consultation, raising concerns about public transport inadequacy and highways capacity, alongside wider infrastructure issues.
- Councillors will encourage individual responses from residents.
- A draft representation will be prepared for consideration by Full Council.

PL26-27.20 Next Meeting Date

To confirm the date and time of the next Planning Committee meeting: **Tuesday 7th July 2026**
6pm in the library.

PL26-27.21 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve that, under **Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**, the press and public be excluded for the following item(s) due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Signed:

Dated:

