

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SHEPTON MONTAGUE ON MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup>  
OCTOBER AT 7.30pm**

*(Draft minutes for approval at the next meeting)*

**Present:** Richard Ellis (chair), Paul Williams, Richard Reed, Andrew Wiley, Janet Robinson, Margaret Hill (Clerk), Anna Groskop (County Councillor) and 14 members of the Parish.

1. **Apologies for absence:** were received from P.C.S.O. Tim Russell.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Minutes of last meeting:** were signed as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising:**
  - **Fingerpost restoration:** see item 7 below.
  - **Drains from Welham along Cattle Hill:** These have still not been attended to.
  - **Shipping containers:** are still there and subject to Planning Enforcement.
5. **Planning Application no:18/02384/FUL: Erection of a museum building to partially cover and preserve archaeological remains, construction of replica Roman Villa (for museum use) and associated landscape works. Hadspen Estate.**

Sue Seager, Estate Manager at the Emily Project, Hadspen, was present at the meeting and had previously attended a meeting in the Village Hall on 1<sup>st</sup> October to explain what is happening on the Estate and answer any questions about this current application. This meeting had been attended by approximately 30 local residents. The Chair thanked her for her attendance and for coming again to the Parish Council meeting.

As it had been an issue raised at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October, Sue confirmed that the only public access to the Roman Villa and museum would be from the main Estate entrance and not from the Cattle Hill entrance and read out the notification from Highways that would impose this as a condition of any planning permission.

Those present at the meeting were invited to inspect the plans she had brought with her and Sue answered questions from the floor.

The clerk read out the list of comments and concerns that had been expressed at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October so that these need not be gone over again.

After hearing any further comments, members considered the planning application. The majority of the Council was in favour of this proposal and welcomed the additional employment opportunities that will arise from it. However members noted the objections and concerns that had been put forward at this and the previous meeting and it was resolved to return all these to Planning. i.e.:

- The Parish Council was not officially notified of this Planning Application. This Roman Villa and museum do lie just within adjacent parishes but we would appreciate being directly notified of all future Planning Applications relating to developments at Hadspen Estate as these directly affect our village.

- The Roman Villa itself: this is a huge building and will be significant in a previously green landscape. In terms of its size, design and materials to be used it will be completely out of keeping with the local surroundings. It was felt that there has been a move away from the original proposal to reinstate the former gardens as an attraction for visitors towards something more of a theme park, out of place in this rural area. Although there is to be considerable planting around it, the villa will still be visible from Cattle Lane, bringing unwanted cars to view it.
- Council requests that should this application to build the replica villa be allowed, and should it cease to be used as a museum in the future, then conditions be placed on this building so that it cannot be converted or developed for any other use at a later date.
- Increased traffic and nuisance in the village: Although every effort is being made to make visitors to the Estate arrive at the main entrance at the top of Cary Edge Lane via the (to be) signed route, some will inevitably choose to ignore all directions and drive through the village. Similarly, although the exit is being designed to promote a left turn towards the main road, it will still be possible to turn right and exit via this narrow lane and through the village, exacerbating the existing traffic nuisance currently experienced. Council requests 'No Access to Hadspen/Emily Estate' signs at the appropriate junctions to deter motorists from driving through the village.\*\*
- Parking provision: Inevitably visitors will try to park on the lane or in the village should the carpark be full. With each additional attraction on the Estate, this becomes more likely.
- Construction traffic: Although public access is to be restricted to the main entrance, construction traffic will be using the entrance on Cattle Hill for the next two years whilst this development is taking place.
- Continual Development: There is a 'Will it ever end?' feeling in the village as one development is proposed after another, each adding to local concerns about visitor numbers, traffic and parking and having a negative impact on the very nature of Shepton Montague village.

\*\*It was suggested that Cary Edge Lane should be made one-way to prevent visitors exiting the Hadspen Estate through the village but this would require the bus service to be re-routed and would cause problems for agricultural vehicles in accessing the fields.

A further issue raised at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October was the lack of communication and Paul Williams explained that in order to keep villagers informed about developments at Hadspen and other matters, a flyer was being distributed throughout the village encouraging people to sign up for alerts on the village website. Also, the clerk would add Pitcombe to the list of Parishes for which she receives weekly Planning information.

6. **Accidents on B3081, Stoney Stoke:** Paul Williams said that there had been three car accidents in the last month on the bends on the B3081 in Stoney Stoke. Nobody was killed though cars were overturned. Each time the road had to be closed. He suggested that an additional chevron on the bend outside Park Wall cottage (on the right coming from the Bruton direction) might help alert drivers sooner to this right angle bend. Also the striped warning posts need reinstating on the bend outside Manor Barn. **Action:** Clerk to request this from Gary Warren, Highways.

7. **Somerset Fingerpost Restoration Project:**

Andrew Wiley provided an update. The restoration of six fingerposts is now complete and a further ten are re-painted. Andrew said he would now be placing an order for replacement arms to be cast.

The clerk reported that she had received a generous donation of £500 from Emily Estate towards fingerpost restoration.

8. **Finance:** A cheque was signed for £750 for Mr. Hibberd in payment of his invoice for maintaining the churchyard during the past year. It was agreed he should be asked to carry on with this work next year at a cost of £800, to be held for the next 2 years.

Cheques were also signed for reimbursement of costs incurred in buying materials for fingerpost restoration – Andrew Wiley £116.55, John Hill £213.65.

9. **Correspondence:** The clerk had received Winter Service information from Highways which stated which roads would be gritted this winter and this information was now on the village website. Salt/grit would no longer be supplied free of charge and would have to be purchased by the Parish for use on local roads. The five grit bins in the Parish should still be full from last year and there is a small supply of bags of salt/grit available.

10. **A.o.b.** None

**11. Open discussion**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.26 pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_