

Supplement – schedule of questions received for meeting of General scrutiny committee – 22 September 2021

Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from members of the public

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1	Mr. C Haughton	Nothing to date has been sent me and we are left with the impression that the Council are well aware of the unsuitability of their proposals but are pressing ahead nevertheless. Our question therefore is:  Why has the proposed development plans for this site not been openly and transparently shared for comment and discussion with the residents of Holme Lacy, rather than having been apparently shrouded in secrecy and with minimal notice of the meeting on the 22nd September?	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
<p><b>Response:</b> Dear Mr Haughton, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School to allow housing market assessment and for the designs up to and including planning submission for houses at the site. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.</p>			
PQ 2	Mrs Wiseman	More traffic puts pedestrians at a greater risk of accidents or fatalities crossing a busy B road. (Our front garden wall was demolished by a car). The village has automated speed signs. Will the council commit to further traffic calming measures that are desperately needed in the village?	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
<p><b>Response:</b> Dear Mrs Wiseman, there is potential for increased traffic movements in the proposed development, an application for the site will require a Transport Statement/Assessment in support of the proposal, this will consider, pedestrian, cycle and bus connectivity as well as change in traffic generated by the development. The statement/assessment will be vetted by the Highways Transport Team assessing the impact, access strategy, safety implications and what mitigation may be required. The supporting planning information and the Highways/Transport team's report will inform the planning team and help assess the planning application and any subsequent decision.</p>			
PQ 3	Mr Farr	The need for affordable homes in the area is essential, as they are everywhere, is a given. However I would like to ask to see the how a development of 25 plus houses in a village that has no practical amenities whatsoever and a very limited bus service that does not cover each end of a working day, fits in with any Council agenda toward general environmental issues, that regarding the local waste water limitations as well as the local increase in traffic and pollution?	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety

**Response:**

Dear Mr Farr, as outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the LPA. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.

PQ 4	Mr Botterill	<p>It has been brought to our notice today that there is a possibility of development on the disused school in Holme Lacy going ahead? To add 25 homes in a village with no amenities is short sighted and very impractical. We have no shops, no pub, no youth facilities and affordable housing will bring people that need those facilities. The bus service is hit and miss and the roads unsuitable for cyclists.</p> <p>We strongly agree there is a need for affordable housing but these should be in areas that are suitable and have provision for the young generation to be occupied, and the older ones to have reliable public transport etc., and places that they can meet for entertainment and company.</p> <p>Please provide an occasion for the residents of Holme Lacy to comment and express their concerns on this development.</p>	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
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**Response:**

Dear Mr Botterill, as outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.

PQ 5	Mr. N Haughton	Why does there appear to be a complete lack of openness and transparency about this possible development, and a lack of time provided to object/appeal, and this is a current concern in the village.	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
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**Response:**

Dear Mr Haughton, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School to allow housing market assessment and for the designs up to and including planning submission for houses at the site. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.

PQ 6	Mrs Harris	<p>Could the scrutiny committee please ensure that Herefordshire Council keep Holme Lacy Parish Council fully informed directly through its clerk on any future decisions on this site so that residents can be informed as a lot of residents first heard about this through the local press?</p> <p>Local people are very concerned. The Parish council are being constantly asked questions and have not been kept in the loop this far!</p>	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
<p><b>Response:</b> Dear Mrs Harris, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.</p>			
PQ 7	Mr Hewett	<p>Should it not be considered that a public meeting be held within the Holme Lacy Village Hall to address the many fears and concerns of Holme Lacy villagers, there are many who do not understand the proceedings and would want clear explanation in person.</p> <p>The Villagers were given full assurances after the initial meeting to remove the Educational Status from the school, we would then hear again from the Council with its thoughts and recommendations, it seems the villagers have no voice.</p> <p>I look forward in receiving invitation as requested to attend the meeting next week.</p>	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
<p><b>Response:</b> Dear Mr Hewett, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.</p>			
PQ 8	Mr Knappett	<p>The council have put monetary reward before common sense. Why can't executive houses be built, which there is a serious need for, and more fitting for the surrounding community? Affordable dwellers will be isolated in a village with no services.</p>	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
<p><b>Response:</b> Dear Mr Knappett, the Holme Lacy Site offers the potential for delivering affordable homes to progress the council's aspiration of delivering affordable homes within the county. The site also offers the opportunity to be sold on the open market whereby the capital receipt would be used to cross-subsidise alternative developments in other areas of the county. To assess the viability of the Holme Lacy Site as affordable houses and/or providing the potential</p>			

for a capital receipt to cross-subsidise other schemes, a third party design team will need to be engaged to complete outline designs, site surveys and financial viability assessments prior to completing any planning application submission.

PQ 9	Mr. G Haughton	<p>Although relatively close to Hereford city as the crow flies, Holme Lacy remains isolated from it and due to the busy roads without pavements make it impossible to walk to the city centre.</p> <p>In addition to the above point, there is no local convenience store in Holme Lacy and again access the nearest store is way outside of safe walking/cycling distance.</p> <p>There is no school within the village meaning children already have to travel by vehicle to schools, increasing road congestion.</p> <p>The road through Holme Lacy already gets very busy, particularly during rush hour as many vehicles from the Rotherwas Industrial Estate chose to travel this way to the North of the city rather than get stuck in queues over the main Hereford bridge. This proposal will only increase traffic and dangers to children in the village.</p> <p>This proposal, put simply, doesn't make any logical sense. There are large areas of land in the Lower Bullingham area of Hereford that have been earmarked for thousands of houses. There is absolutely no need for affordable housing in a remote village outside of the city.</p> <p>I believe that there may be a school still interested in this site.</p> <p>If this was the case, would the school not get first refusal?</p>	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
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**Response:**  
Dear Mr Haughton, the connectivity of the site, baseline transport data including availability of public transport and the proposed development access strategy will be provided by the applicant in the form of a transport assessment/statement. All applications will be assessed by the Highways and Transport development team as to the acceptability of the proposal. As outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.

PQ 10	Mrs Stubbings	Can the Scrutiny Committee please clarify the following with the relevant Council officers: if the school site is sold for private housing, what other sites exist in Herefordshire where the proceeds of the sale can be reinvested in affordable housing development?"	Cabinet member housing, regulatory services, and community safety
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**Response:**

Dear Mrs Stubbings, the Holme Lacy Site offers the potential for delivering affordable homes to progress the council's aspiration of delivering affordable homes within the county. The site also offers the opportunity to be sold on the open market whereby the capital receipt would be used to cross-subsidise alternative developments identified within the pipeline of sites that the Council are currently assessing. A decision will be taken after a third party design team has completed outline designs, site surveys and financial viability assessments.