

Parish Council Statement regarding Headley Court planning application

Tuesday 25th August 2020

Headley Parish Council (HPC) has noted the recent request from some members of the Headley Residents Action Group calling on us to pass an urgent resolution for a Judicial Review (JR) into the recent Headley Court planning application.

HPC has been working for over 6 years to secure a future use of the Headley Court estate that reflects its setting and location and is acceptable to the local community.

Most recently we provided a powerful summary of the planning case against the application and we were surprised and disappointed that it was approved by Mole Valley's Development Management Committee.

At an Extraordinary meeting in July, HPC decided to ask the Secretary of State to call in the decision, but this request was refused.

At the subsequent scheduled Parish Council meeting, HPC decided to lodge a formal complaint with Mole Valley about aspects of the decision-making process. This complaint is progressing and we have asked for various forms of redress, including clarification of which elements of the approved application may be challenged when the Reserved Matters are considered.

We also agreed a framework for making decisions regarding initiating legal action of any sort, including a possible Judicial Review (JR). Such a decision-making framework is essential to ensure that any expenditure of, or possible risk to, the public funds entrusted to us can be justified to all the Headley residents who have contributed via their Council Tax.

We have a duty to ensure that any decision is based on the available evidence and an assessment of the likelihood of success and is only undertaken once other, less costly, avenues have been explored. Since the July meeting, HPC has been continuing to assemble the evidence needed to make a decision under this framework.

At this stage any decision to proceed with a JR would be premature, since no JR can be initiated until the Decision Notice is published (which we have been advised will not be before the next Parish Council meeting), and counter-productive, since it would bring an immediate end to any prospects of elements of redress from MVDC's complaints process.

This issue will be reviewed at our next Parish Council meeting which will be on Monday 28th September at 7.30pm via ZOOM. Please email the Clerk for login details and to submit any questions you may have, prior to the meeting.