Emails to Shropshire Council re. Village Shop closure and Clive settlement status

Clive, Local Plan Review

L Bardsley
Thu 26/11/2020 16:16
To:

- Eddie West

Hello Eddie,
I hope you are keeping safe and well. At our last Parish council meeting SC Cllr Simon Jones said you were likely to get in touch with us last Friday to ask some questions, but we've not heard anything, so wanted to check if there's anything you need from us at this point?

I was also wondering if you had an update for us on the decision re. Clive's settlement status? Is the LPR still due to be discussed at cabinet on 7th Dec?

Thanks and all the best.

Kind regards,

Miss Lydia Bardsley
Clerk to Clive Parish Council

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Re: Important: Clive settlement status

L Bardsley
Thu 22/10/2020 14:59

To:

- Edward West
- Dan Corden

Cc:

-

Hello Eddie,
I hope you are well, and thank you very much for getting back to me. I've relayed your message to the councillors and they feel it is very important for me to reiterate that the closure of the shop is not related to covid-19, but a result of contractual arrangements between the landlord and tenant, and the long-standing problems of commercial viability.

The shop in Clive had already been struggling for years, long before covid-19 arrived on the scene. The previous owner had had the shop on the market for a number of years but was unable to find a buyer until late 2019 due to the viability of the business; I believe it was also mentioned at the meeting you attended in January 2019 that the shop was expected to close before long. When it did re-open last year under new tenants there was a lease in place for 12 months starting from 19th October 2019, and considerable investment and efforts were made to improve the shop and give it the best chance of surviving. The Parish Council also did its best to support and promote the shop to help keep it in business. Sadly, when it came to deciding whether or not to renew this lease, the tenant felt that, despite their best efforts, the business was still not commercially viable and the landlord decided not to seek replacement tenants. Therefore, a mutual decision was taken to close the shop permanently on 16th October 2020. The tenant's judgement regarding the viability of the business echoes that of the previous owner who had been struggling to keep the shop open for years before they eventually managed to sell the business; we understand that they had in fact stopped paying themselves a wage for quite some time in an attempt to keep the business afloat. The current owner has made it very clear to councillors and myself that they have no intention of re-letting the property as a shop at any point in the future. This is not therefore a temporary closure but a permanent closure, and should not be understood as an unfortunate casualty of the covid-19 pandemic.

In our previous email exchanges regarding the original closure of the shop and post office back in 2019, (and indeed at the public meeting you kindly attended in Jan 2019), you did emphasise that the methodology had to be applied consistently across all settlements in Shropshire, and that while the shop and post office were closed those points would be removed. Equally when those amenities eventually re-opened in the winter, the points would be added back on to Clive's settlement score. So logically the expectation of the councillors and, indeed, a significant proportion of the community, is that since the village shop is now closed, and with no intentions for it to re-open in the future, this reduces Clive's settlement score to 47, and therefore below the points threshold for Community Hub status.

Councillors feel very strongly that, as the original methodology was consulted on many years ago, any proposed change in methodology, e.g. lowering the threshold for Community Hubs, should go back to consultation, as this will surely have a considerable impact on many settlements in Shropshire, not just Clive. I hope that our insistence regarding the shop closure, the resulting points score, and the methodology, is not misinterpreted as a cynical

attempt to "beat the system", and prevent allocated development sites in Clive at all costs - we have in fact been very clear with residents that affordable housing will still be an option under both Cluster and Open Countryside, so "no housing" is not an option. The Parish Council has also discussed what might happen long-term if we became Open Countryside again, and there are concerns that dropping to the bottom of the hierarchy could ultimately lead to loss of further services in Clive and could potentially lead to the "death" of the village. The Parish Council is indeed very concerned about the impact these decisions regarding development will have on Clive's future, and we still plan to conduct our own engagement with the community regarding preferences for settlement status, i.e. Cluster/Open Countryside, **once** we have confirmation that Clive will **not** become a Community Hub. Without that confirmation however, we do not feel it would be appropriate to potentially waste taxpayers' money and Council resources on further community engagement, if it turns out that Cluster/Open Countryside are no longer options after all.

I know you will be very busy working on the revised plan right now, but if you have the time and would like to discuss any of this further with either myself or the parish councillors, we would of course welcome the opportunity.

Thank you again for your time and all the best.

Kind regards,

Miss Lydia Bardsley
Clerk to Clive Parish Council

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From: Edward West
Sent: 16 October 2020 12:38
To: L Bardsley Dan Corden
Cc:
Subject: RE: Important: Clive settlement status

Dear Lydia,

Thank you for the information. Whilst I do fully appreciate the need for certainty as quickly as possible, we will not be in a position to provide that level of clarity by Monday 19th October.

As you would expect, having undertaken such a large consultation exercise we do need to reflect upon the responses and what they mean for the Plan going forward. We also need to consider if we need to reflect upon the impact Covid 19 is having on services and facilities, and if this requires us to take a different approach to our current methodology for identifying hubs. We are moving forward quickly with this, and are aiming to get to Cabinet with a revised Plan by the end of November, and clearly if we were to seek a change in Clive's emerging Hub status we will inform you and other interested parties (site promoters for instance) as quickly as possible.

However, clearly this does not stop Clive Parish Council taking a view in the meantime, and providing this view to Shropshire Council for consideration.

Kind regards,

Eddie

Eddie West
Interim Planning Policy and Strategy Manager
Shropshire Council
Tel
e-mail:

From: L Bardsley
Sent: 16 October 2020 11:19
To: Edward West Dan Corden

Subject: Important: Clive settlement status

Hello both,
I hope you are keeping safe and well. Further to my previous emails, Clive village shop is now closed as of today (16th October). Please could either of you (or anyone else in the Planning policy dept) confirm that Clive will no longer be a Community Hub, and that it will default to Open Countryside?

As we will need to consult the local community on whether they prefer to stay as Open Countryside or opt in as a Community Cluster, (so that the parish council can pass this on to SC and respond accordingly at the final round of public consultation) we really do need to know for certain that Clive will not be a Community Hub. Please could someone confirm this by end of play on Monday 19th Oct, to allow us enough time for us to prepare, deliver, and collect surveys, analyse the results, and then consider it at the next PC meeting. We do not normally meet in December so we are aiming to have our survey results by 19th November.

As part of our community engagement, and to ensure that the community is fully informed of the implications of both options, we'd also be extremely grateful if someone in the planning department could please provide us with a short summary of the pros and cons of both Open Countryside and Community Cluster options?

Hopefully if we can get moving on this quickly, this will also help Shropshire Council factor in any necessary amends to the Clive-specific parts of the draft Local Plan.

Thank you very much both and all the best.

Kind regards,

Miss Lydia Bardsley
Clerk to Clive Parish Council

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Village shop and Community Hub status, Clive

L Bardsley
Thu 08/10/2020 14:06
To:

- Eddie West
- Daniel Corden

Hello Eddie and Dan,
I hope you are both well. Just wondering if either of you could help with some LPR queries we have in Clive?

I understand from the landlord that the village shop will close on 16th October (sooner than we expected), so would either of you be able to confirm please that Clive will drop 4 points to 47 points total, and would therefore default back to Open Countryside, rather than becoming a Community Hub as currently proposed in the draft Local Plan?

The other question we have is what would SC consider a shop in terms of points for Community Hub status? I.e. would an ordering and delivery service for basic groceries be classed as a shop, or would only bricks and mortar retail outlets be classed as shops for the purposes of the points system? We only ask because a resident has approached a councillor to ask about this, this is not an approach that the parish council is currently planning on pursuing/promoting.

On the assumption that the Clive does drop to below the points threshold for amenities and service and defaults back to Open Countryside, is there any key information we need to be aware of (outside what is already in the draft Local Plan) if Clive remains as Open Countryside, or alternatively if the community decides it wants to opt in as a Community Cluster? Our next Parish Council meeting is Thurs 15th Oct, so it would be really helpful to be able to inform residents on where we stand in terms of Community Hub status (given the closure of the shop), what would constitute a shop in SC view, and what the key points would be if we a) remained as Open Countryside, or b) opted in to be a Community Cluster. That way we can start to plan our next round of community engagement to establish whether Clive should stay as Open Countryside or become a Cluster.

I do recognise you must both be very busy right now, so thanks very much in advance for your help, and all the best.
Kind regards,

Miss Lydia Bardsley
Clerk to Clive Parish Council

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Re: Update - Village shop, Clive

L Bardsley
Tue 29/09/2020 17:22
To:

- Edward West

Hello Eddie,
thanks very much for getting back to me. I absolutely understand that Shropshire Council will need to consider this situation carefully (as will the Parish Council), but would you be able to say whether some kind of local grocery delivery service or mobile shop, or a shop run from the village hall on certain days of the week (another suggestion I've seen recently), would be classed as a shop for the purposes of the points system?

At this point there are still quite a few unknowns, (we do not yet have a date for the closure for example), but in order to try and clarify some questions, it would be really helpful to have an idea of where Shropshire Council would stand on this, so that we can inform residents accordingly.

Thanks again for your help and all the best.

Kind regards,

Miss Lydia Bardsley
Clerk to Clive Parish Council

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From: Edward West
Sent: 28 September 2020 09:10

To: L Bardsley
Subject: RE: Update - Village shop, Clive

Dear Lydia,

Thank you for passing on this information. Clearly Shropshire Council will need to reflect upon this and not rush to any hasty decisions on the status of the village, although of course you are welcome to factor this into your response.

Kind regards,

Eddie

Eddie West
Interim Planning Policy and Strategy Manager
Shropshire Council

e-mail:

From: L Bardsley
Sent: 26 September 2020 11:55
To: Edward West
Subject: Fwd: Update - Village shop, Clive

Hello Eddie,
I hope you are well. Following on from the conversation we had about a group of residents looking into the possibility of deliberately closing a service/amenity in Clive (the post office was mooted as one possiblity), you may have since heard that the landlord of the village store has sadly announced (unexpectedly) that they will be closing the store in the next customs of months. This would then mean that Clive drops to 47 points and I assume would take us out of Community Hub status and we would default back to Open Countryside I presume. We have been assured by the landlord that the timing of this is decision was coincidental, and that it is a permanent not a temporary closure, and that the building (7a High Street), will not be reopening as a shop in the future.

We'll be factoring this into our official response to the Local Plan Review consultation, but unfortunately due to the timing of this revelation, we don't have time to engage the community (before the consultation finishes) about whether - assuming the closure does go ahead - they would prefer to remain as Open Countryside or become a Cluster. But once we have an idea of when exactly the shop will close, we will certainly be engaging with the community again.

However, as you'll see from the email below, someone has asked the parish council for our views on a mobile shop. Would something like the below be classed as a shop and take us back into Community Hub status?

If it doesn't, and Clive does stop being a Hub, is there any further information you can provide us re. Community Clusters, and Open Countryside, besides what is already published in the current draft of the local plan? Assuming the village shop does close, we want to make

sure we have all the necessary information ourselves to share with the community, so that when we do ask residents for their preferences, they can make an informed decision.

Thanks very much and all the best.

P.s. Sorry for emailing you on a weekend, I certainly don't expect a reply immediately, but wanted to get this sent to you asap.

Kind regards,

Lydia Bardsley

Clerk to Clive Parish Council

Sent from my Android

Get Outlook for Android

From:
Subject: Mobile shop

Hi,

I have been approached by someone in the village looking into the idea of a mobile shop. This would be a list of items villagers can ring up and order, and they would be delivered to the villagers home that day. This resident has also said they were considering offering a newspaper collection service from their house.

They wanted to know what the parish councils views on this would be.

I explained about the current situation with the Development points system and that villagers might not want a service that takes them back over the points, but I said I would ask for your thoughts.

Would Shropshire Council consider this delivery service, of the basics bread, milk, eggs etc, to be a shop?

Kate