



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th December 2023
at the Pavilion, Fownhope**

Page
Number:

Present:

Cllrs Kevin Braybrook (in the Chair), Tim Jones, Gareth Williams, Mike Simmons, Frank Hemming, Will Morris, Lavinia Smith, Michael Short and Tony Kelk.

In attendance:

0 members of the public; Ward Councillor Graham Biggs; Clerk Helen Tinson

1) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Claire Patel. The Chairman announced the resignation of Cllr Alison Martin who has resigned with immediate effect. Members acknowledged the time she had given to Parish Council matters and wished her well.

2) **To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Written Requests for Dispensation:**

To receive any declarations of interest: Cllr Mike Simmons declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5d, FRFA fees and 6b FRFA Patio Improvements; and Cllr Will Morris declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 7a (Planning 231655/232308) and a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9b (Traffic Calming Scheme). The Declarations of Interest book was signed accordingly.

To consider any written requests for dispensations: there were none.

3) **Open Session:**

a) **Report from Ward Councillor:** The Ward Councillor presented his report which included the following items:

- The current cold spell has triggered the council's winter response. All present were urged to be mindful of the needs of their neighbours;
- The condition of the highways network is proving difficult with increasing numbers of potholes. Cllr Biggs has reported some potholes in the village and offered to receive photographs from members of the public. The Clerk was asked to pass along the urgent response line provided by BBLP (01432 261800). Problems can also be reported online at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/report-problems-road>;
- Council is meeting on the 8th December to approve the Capital Plan;
- An additional £16million has been allocated to highways plus £7million for surface dressing in 2024/25;
- Council is still working on producing a balanced revenue budget for 2024/25 but a 4.99% increase in council tax is expected;
- A response from Welsh Water to clarify the capacity of the sewage treatment works is still awaited. Cllr Biggs is considering next steps.

b) **Representation from the Public:** There were none.

4) **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 1st November 2023.

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

5) **Finance and Policy:**

a) **Finance Report:**

Members received a financial report as appended (Appendix A).

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	<p>It was RESOLVED: to approve the report.</p> <p>b) Draft Budget 2024/25: Members considered the draft budget and were informed that no comments had been received during the consultation period. The Clerk suggested that the Projects budget is split, £1000 to Projects and £1000 to Participatory Budget which invites members of the public to propose and vote on projects to be delivered by the Parish Council. It was RESOLVED: to approve the budget as appended (Appendix B) and to set the precept at £38,000. It was RESOLVED: to approve the division of the Projects budget as proposed and allocate £1000 to a Participatory Budget. A number of caveats were suggested and it was agreed that the detail would be agreed at a later date.</p> <p>c) NJC recommendation for increase in salary scale: Members considered the revised salary scales as agreed by the National Joint Council and endorsed by NALC. It was RESOLVED: to approve the increase in salary scale to be backdated to 1st April 2023 as proposed.</p> <p>d) Payments: It was RESOLVED: to approve the following invoices for payment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nick Maddy Coaches, Bus Service November, £90.00 • FRFA, Meeting Room Hire November, £35.00 • Adrian Hope Tree Services, Tree Works, £880.00 plus £176.00 VAT • Suzi Bruce, Lengthsman, £155.00 • Cloud Next, Email Hosting, £149.00 plus £29.99 VAT • Herefordshire Council, Election Expenses, £197.77 • RoSPA Play Safety, Playground Inspection Sheets, £60.00 plus £12.00 VAT • Terry Griffiths Contracts, Drainage, £900.00 plus £180.00 VAT • Helen Tinson, Reimbursement John Finch Computer Services, £37.50 plus £7.50 VAT • Helen Tinson, Salary November, £852.10 </p> <p>6) FRFA/Recreation Field:</p> <p>a) FRFA Report: Members received a report noting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FRFA have agreed to lay membrane and gravel around the noticeboard; • The second outside toilet will be made available to bookings; • The FRFA are to start marketing the Pavilion. Bookings are steady but the Pavilion has capacity to take more; • The next FRFA meeting will be held at the Pavilion on Wednesday 13th December at 6pm. </p> <p>b) Patio Extension Plans: Members received a revised proposal for the patio extension which incorporates earlier feedback to increase the surface area but stops before the land slopes away, which had previously increased the cost significantly. Estimated costs for the revised plan are in the region of £10,000. It was RESOLVED: to approve the concept of the revised plan but members expressed a wish to consider the choice of paving slabs at a future date.</p> <p>c) Play Area S106 Programme: Members considered a proposal for the S106 funded Play Area Programme. Initial proposals included a scheme for Phase A (to replace the balance bars with an accessible roundabout and appropriate floor surface, infilling the shelter with activity panels and installing talk tubes if the budget allowed); Phase B (an activity trail to include the refitted balance bars); and Phase C (extending the playground and installing new pieces of equipment). A number of concerns were raised concerning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lack of data to support the proposals; </p>	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT/ FWG</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>MS</p> <p>304/12 /2324 2 of 5</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the S106 money should be used to replace existing equipment as it has a limited lifespan; and • the lack of facilities for older children. <p>A further query was raised about whether the S106 funding was constrained to the playground or could apply to providing play facilities on the wider field. It was noted that the chains for the swings need to be shortened and this had been offered free of charge by Thomas' Forge.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: that the Playground Working Group consider a revised plan and seek feedback from members of the public.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: to seek clarification on the scope of the funding from the Lead Officer at Herefordshire Council.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: to shorten the swing chains as proposed.</p> <p>7) To Consider Comments on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:</p> <p>a) 231655 and 232308 (LBC): Mill House Farm, Fownhope, HR1 4NT. Addition of handmade oak framed two storey garden room and bedroom with wrap around balcony. Members were informed that this application has been withdrawn. There was no discussion therefore Cllr Morris did not leave the room.</p> <p>b) 233379: Brooklyn, Court Gardens, Fownhope, HR1 4PA. To pollard a weeping willow situated in the lower garden south west of the property. Members considered the application. The Parish Tree Warden raised no objections to the proposals. It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application</p> <p>c) 233338: Ringfield, Fownhope, HR1 4PJ. Yew tree – cut back from house 20%. Members considered the application. The Parish Tree Warden raised no objections to the proposals. It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application</p> <p>d) 233401: Scotland House, Fownhope, HR1 4QA. Proposed existing single storey garage to be demolished and replaced with as close to a like-for-like as possible. Members considered the application. There were no objections raised. It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application</p> <p>e) 232195: Land adjacent to Fownhope Medical Centre. Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 171637. Members received a presentation detailing the reserved matters to be considered and noting where the developer has responded to previous concerns. It was noted that the open space will be maintained by a management company, to be paid for by the owners of the properties. The Parish Tree Warden questioned who will have responsibility to prune and maintain the trees in the orchard. Cllr Braybrook offered to take this question back to the developer.</p> <p>Members considered communication concerning the surface of the Green Lane Footpath which stated that Herefordshire Council will only allow standard tarmac or a High Friction Grit Finish (HFGF). The developer is currently considering if they will pay the additional cost for the HFGF. Cllr Biggs informed members that this may not necessarily be the case and that the Senior Officer would be open to discussing the matter further. It was agreed that Cllr Braybrook would make contact.</p> <p>A question was raised concerning the legality of the business name used in the planning application but it was determined that questioning this could not change the decision for outline planning or the housing mix and therefore it was agreed not to pursue it further. It was noted that the questioner may write to MF Freeman Ltd documenting his concerns.</p> <p>Members were asked to consider whether to request a referral to committee once the Case Officer has indicated the intended decision. It was RESOLVED: not to request a referral to committee (7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstain)</p> <p>Members were asked to consider a response to Planning Consultation 232195: Approval of Reserved Matters following outline approval 171637.</p>	<p>PWG</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT/DI</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>KB</p> <p>KB</p> <p>305/12 /2324 3 of 5</p>
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homes will be maintained throughout, though there will be a diversion for through traffic (still under consideration).

A query to clarify that the proposed 2m wide footpath on both sides of the B4224 between the entrances to the Mill Field and Potato Barn developments would extend into the road and not require the removal of any existing hedgerow had been put to BBLP ahead of the meeting, but a response had not yet been received. It was noted that a footpath on both sides of the road did not form part of the original plan.

Further concerns were raised regarding:

- the rationale for including a footpath on the Potato Barn side of the road;
- installing a tarmac footpath parallel to a PROW;
- whether the surface of the PROW could be improved rather than installing a separate footpath; and
- whether, if neither of these footpaths were installed, funds could be diverted to improve the road surface between the shop and Woolhope Road junction.

It was RESOLVED: to ask BBLP to answer these questions.

KB

10) **Environment:**

a) Concerns were raised regarding extending the meeting past 9pm and therefore no report was presented. It was noted that the Environment Working Group meeting notes had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

b) **Public Space Protection Order Consultation:**

Members considered responding to Herefordshire Council's consultation on dog control. A draft response had been circulated by the Clerk proposing the Recreation Field as a public space to be protected by the order.

It was RESOLVED: to approve the draft consultation response.

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11) **Footpaths:**

Members were informed that some minor repairs have been carried out and permission received to replace two more stiles with gates.

12) **To appoint members to serve on current working groups:** this item was deferred to the next meeting.

13) **Clerk Report:** Members noted the report as appended (Appendix E).

14) **Next Meeting:** Parish Council Meeting: 7pm, Wednesday 7th February 2024.

15) **Agenda Items Raised for Next Meeting:**

- To consider and approve the updated Risk Register
- To receive and consider update on voluntary registration of Tan Brook Land Ownership
- To consider the matter of cars parked on pavements
- To appoint members to serve on current working groups

Meeting closed 9.06pm.

Signed Dated
Chairman

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Appendix A: Finance Report

REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 6th December 2023
REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO
AGENDA ITEM: 5a, Finance Report

Bank Balances:

Lloyds: £4393.21 (excludes payments to be approved 6.12.23 £3757.85)

Lloyds Reserve: £33,804.89

Hargreaves Lansdown: £21,191.62 (at 30.11.23)

Total funds held across all banks and investments at 30.11.23 = £59,389.72

As the balance of the current account would be reduced to £635.36 once payment of the invoices has been made, I have transferred £2000 from the reserve account in accordance with FR5.5(c). Therefore, the new balances are:

Lloyds: £6393.21 (excludes payments to be approved 6.12.23 (£3757.85)

Lloyds Reserve: £31,804.89

PWLB Repayment:

The second loan repayment (£513.47) was taken by DD on 1st December 2023.

Wayleave:

The National Grid wayleave payment of £45.63 has been received and banked.

PATA Payroll Service Annual Charges:

Will be £10.35 per month for the basic service, applicable from January 2024.

Grants:

Invoices have been submitted for reimbursement of funds to:

- 1) Herefordshire Council for Q1 and Q2 of the Lengthsman Grant -£1,030.00
- 2) Herefordshire Council for the matched funding for drainage work - £980 plus VAT
- 3) FiPL Grant - £2921.18 - note, three more gates are to be installed on the Coronation Walk

Budget 2024/2025:

The draft budget has been published in the Flag and on the website for public consultation. No comments have been received.

Parish Tax Bases:

HC have now issued the Parish Tax Bases for 24/25 (441.07), an increase of 6.07 from 23/24 (435.00).

Fownhope Parish Council	441.07	435.00
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This means that the precept will increase from £77.45 to £86.15 per Band D equivalent property, which is an increase of £8.70 per property per year.

Parish Tax Bases are calculated using a multiple of factors. HC have confirmed:

“Whilst new properties, once they are completed and ready for occupation can increase the tax base, this can be offset by an increase in those in the parish qualifying for council tax support where no income is then received. And of course the tax base is based upon if the equivalent number of Band D properties, new premises may not all be Band D.”

Investments:

A further report has been received from the Investment Advisory Group:

“It is, I am afraid, a very grim picture for the Stock market at the moment but there is nothing intrinsically wrong with any of our investments. I am expecting the dividend/interest return will be very largely maintained – we will have to wait until April to see whether that prediction will be fulfilled. Meantime I am not proposing any changes. The market gurus are expecting an improvement next year which could see the first interest cut from the BofE. Let’s hope there are no further black swans!!”

I am proposing to add this to the agenda for the next Finance Working Group meeting (6pm January 15th January)

Appendix B: Approved Budget for 2024/25

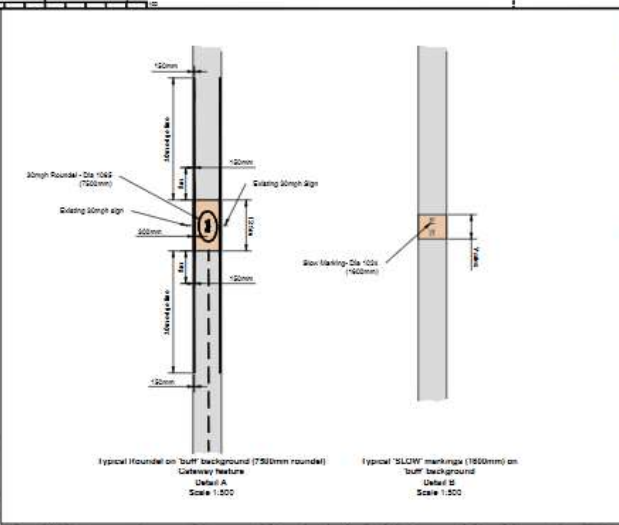
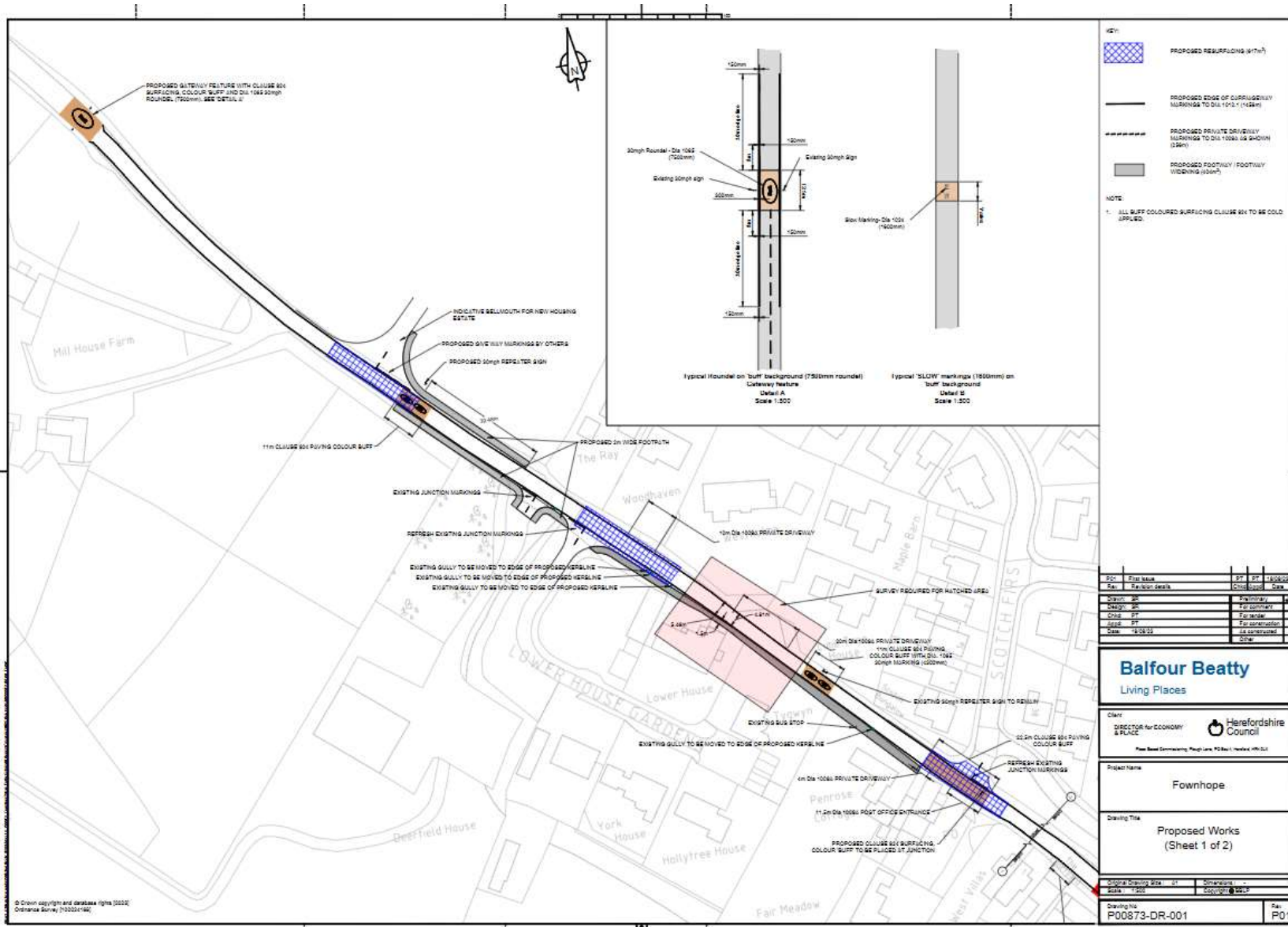
	23/24	24/25
	Current budget to 31.3.24	Draft budget to 31.3.25
INCOME		
Annual Precept	£33,500	£38,000
Wayleave	£45	£45
Investment Income	£1,700	£2,000
Common Hill Management	£339	£339
DMGPC Ross Bus Contribution	£300	£300
Lloyds Interest (Reserve ac)	£2	£225
TOTAL INCOME	£35,886	£40,909
EXPENSES		
Clerks expenses inc travel	£400	£400
Admin expenses	£500	£650
Comms/Community Engagement	£500	£500
Insurance	£975	£1,100
Meeting Room Hire	£450	£450
Audit Costs	£500	£500
Website/Computer Costs	£475	£500
Training (Clerk, Councillors, Volunteers)	£650	£650
Subscriptions	£1,250	£1,300
Clerks Salary	£14,000	£14,728
Memorial Hall PWLB Repayment	£1,050	£1,000
Youth Support	£200	£200

Play Inspection Fee	£165	£175
Community Library	£550	£550
Ross/Ledbury Buses	£1,530	£1,530
Parish Lengthsman materials	£500	£500
Parish Lengthsman labour	£2,250	£3,000
Parish Footpaths PROW labour	£2,500	£3,000
Common Hill Management	£339	£339
Grass cutting	£800	£800
Parish Maintenance & Improvements	£2,000	£2,000
Tree survey and tree remedial work	£2,500	£3,000
New Projects	£2,000	£2,000
Community Groups & Habitat Grant	£500	£500
Winter Gritting	£450	£450
Traffic Calming Measures	£1,000	£0
2023 Election Provision	£1,500	£0
Church Support (when allowable)	£0	£1,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	£39,534	£40,822
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	-£3,648	£87

Appendix C: Planning Decisions Report

Planning Number	Address	Application	FPC Response	HC Decision
233195	Land at Glen Ridge Common Hill Fownhope	Non-material amendment to approved application 214617 - (Proposed demolition of two storey house and outbuildings and construction of replacement single storey dwelling with detached garage/store/workshop) - amendment to the garage design.	Comments not being accepted	Still valid
232840	Fownhope House Fownhope HR1 4PE	Proposed replacement of the windows to the front elevation and the rebuilding of the upper section of the northern chimney stack.	Support	Approved with conditions
232912	Westholme Fownhope HR1 4NN	Proposed works removal of low value ornamental Conifers becoming a nuisance within boundary of Westholme, blocking access on our property up the garden stairs, mowing the lawn, wheeling a barrow, parking our car beside the overgrown, dying, ornamental conifers. (2) Also cutting back sparse-leaved Holly tree at rear of our house to hedge level for roof clearance.	Support	Works can Proceed
232943	Rockhurst Fownhope HR1 4NX	T1: To remove large Conifer that has grown to large for the site. It is also causing excessive shading. T2: Hornbeam, to prune away from service power lines to the shed and neighbouring ornamental trees. Removing a few lower branches, essentially a crown raise of 8-10feet.	Support	Works can Proceed
233341	Bowens Fownhope HR1 4PS	FIVE DAY NOTICE Two ornamental cherry trees (T1 and T2) on the property boundary close to the B4224 are dying/diseased and dropping branches into the road. Arborist Justin Peebles advises that trees be felled ASAP for safety reasons. Work is scheduled for Wednesday 15th November. Brush and timber will be retained/burnt on site. This application is to notify the tree officer of intended works.	Comments not being accepted	Approval given
231393	Nash Farm Fownhope HR1 4PS	Proposed creation of a new access from the highway, a driveway, garage & car port building.	Support	Withdrawn

Appendix D: Traffic Calming Scheme



KEY:

- PROPOSED RESURFACING (47m²)
- PROPOSED EDGE OF CURB/LEGALLY MARKINGS TO DIL 1000 (142m)
- PROPOSED PRIVATE DRIVEWAY MARKINGS TO DIL 1000 (6.54m) (22m)
- PROPOSED FOOTWAY/ FOOTWAY WIDENING (100m²)

NOTE:

1. ALL BUFF COLOURED SURFACING CLASS 64 TO BE COLD APPLIED.

NO	REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
01		Issue for approval	PT	14/08/23
02		Issue for construction	PT	14/08/23

Balfour Beatty
Living Places

Client: DIRECTOR for ECONOMY & PLACE

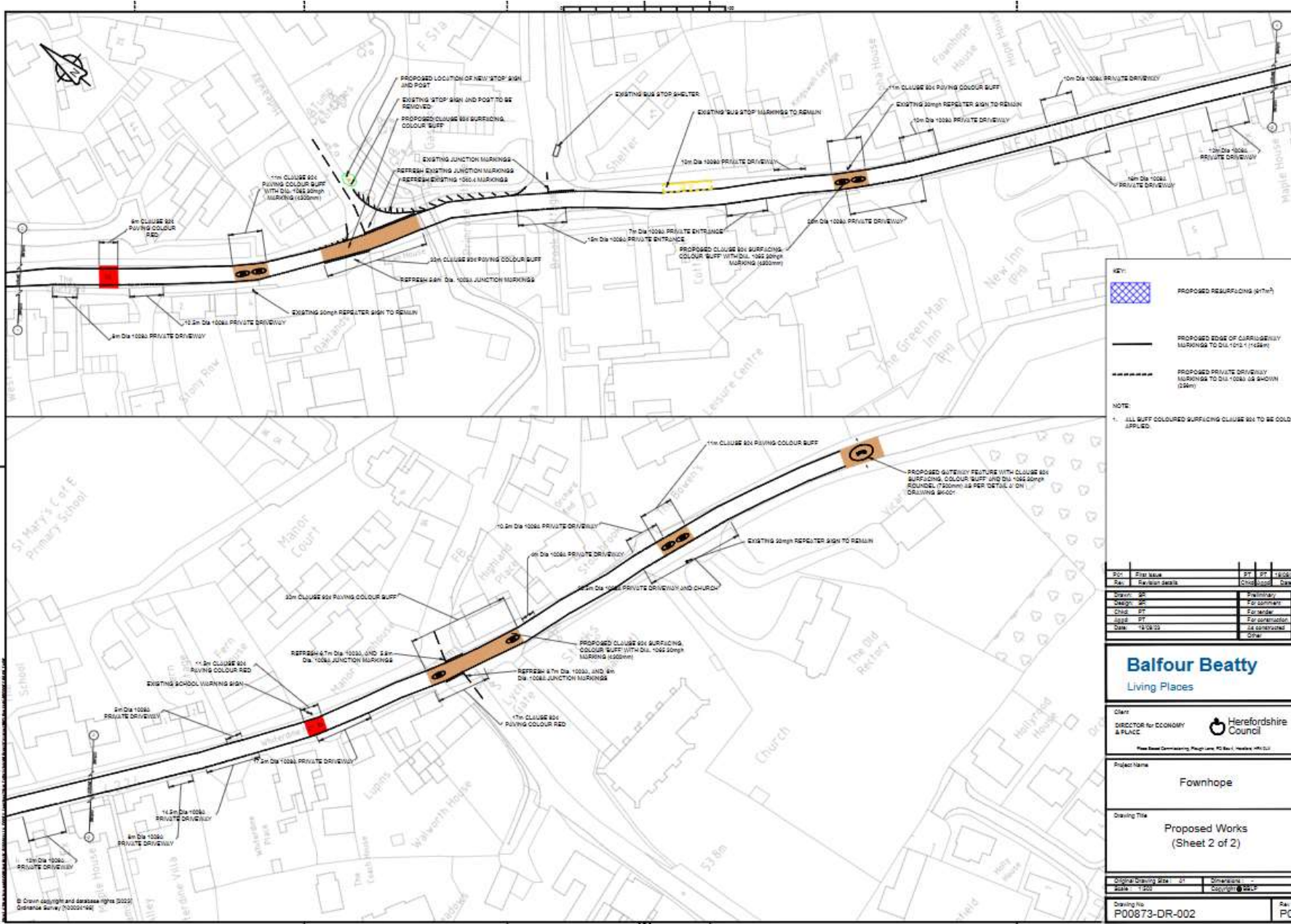
Phase: Road Community Regeneration PC&A1, Hatched 476.521

Project Name: **Fownhope**

Drawing Title: **Proposed Works (Sheet 1 of 2)**

Original Drawing No:	Scale:	Drawn by:	Checked by:
P00873-DR-001	1:500	PT	PT

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KEY:

-  PROPOSED RESURFACING (WHITE)
-  PROPOSED EDGE OF CURB/ROADWAY MARKINGS TO D11-012 (1450mm)
-  PROPOSED PRIVATE DRIVEWAY MARKINGS TO D11-1000 & SHOWN (24m)

NOTE:

1. ALL BUFF COLOURED SURFACING CLAUSE 804 TO BE GOLD APPLIED.

POI	Prop Issue	PT	PT	19/03/23
Rev	Revision Detail	Discussed	Done	
Author	PC	Prepared		
Design	PC	PC Comment		
Check	PT	For Issue		
Drawn	PT	For Construction		
Date	12/08/23	As Constructed		
		Other		

Balfour Beatty
Living Places

Client: DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY & PLACE

Herefordshire Council

Place Based Commissioning, Project Lead: PC Box 1, Hereford, HR1 2JL

Project Name: **Fownhope**

Drawing Title: **Proposed Works (Sheet 2 of 2)**

Original Drawing Size	A1	Orientation	-
Scale	1:200	Copyright	© B&B
Drawing No:	P00873-DR-002	Rev:	P01

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Appendix E: Clerk Report

REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 6th December 2023

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 13: Clerk Report

BBLP Parish Liaison:

Sadly, Molly Walters is leaving BBLP on the 9th January. She has been an excellent parish liaison and her position has not been filled. I understand BBLP are hoping to recruit internally but there will undoubtedly be some upheaval for a while.

Parish Council vacancies and gender ratio in Herefordshire in summer 2023:

I have received an email from HWEG (Herefordshire Women's Equality Group) about research carried out just after the local elections this year to try and find out the overall numbers, which are not currently recorded in the County by Herefordshire Council or by HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils). The link to the research is here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O921bmZuSMwl8AKi7oIQBEqhsAKh1ei1/view>

Weekly Playground Check Lists:

The playground checklist has been received from RoSPA, printed and given to the volunteer playground inspector. The checklist for the skate ramp has also now been received.

HALC AGM:

The HALC AGM has been postponed until the Spring (date still to be confirmed). I understand the intention is still to present the Local Council Quality Gold Award.

Annual Leave:

I have requested some time off over Christmas, w/c 18th December to w/c 8th January. All communications slow down over the Christmas period but I shall periodically check anyway.

Defib:

The defib at the West End Stores is currently out of order – showing a maintenance problem. Dorothy is working with Cardiac Science to get it back up and running ASAP. She has put a sign directing users to the defib at the Pavilion. I have ordered replacement pads as the current pads expire at the end of December.