

Chairman's Response to anonymous 'Save Court Meadow' Leaflet

Despite overwhelming support for the new Community and Health Centre project there are still people in our parish determined to try to stop it. The Memorandum of Agreement between Wealden District Council and Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council has been signed on 2nd February 2021, enabling the project to proceed. The leaflet which has been circulated "Save Court Meadow" contains a number of incorrect statements:

1. The aerial photograph is incorrect – the anticipated area (up to 2 acres) is shown on the community website <https://mayfieldfiveashes.org.uk>. This picture is misleading and shows land that is not going to be being used.
2. Council Tax has been raised to cover the cost of the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) loan to fund the Community Hall.
3. Wealden District Council are providing funding via their Community Infrastructure Funding programme (details of this can be found on their website) and is not a loan to be repaid. They will take the rent from the Health Centre to recover their costs on the build which they are funding. After year 25 the Parish will receive 25% of this income each year which is anticipated to be approaching almost £20,000 of additional revenue for the residents of Mayfield and Five Ashes.
4. As a result of a contribution of 50% from Wealden District Council towards the total build cost of the Community and Health Centre the Parish will have saved in the region of £500,000 on the PWLB Loan. Repayment of this loan will therefore be earlier than anticipated.
5. The health centre will occupy an area of 350 sqm which has been supported by the business plan prepared by Woodhill Surgery to the CCG, quantifying current patient numbers with an anticipated year on increase. Currently Five Ashes Parish sits between Woodhill Surgery and Heathfield Surgery which provides options for residents to be at either practice.
6. The enhanced Community Centre will support the economy of the village and provide increased business for local shops. The current Memorial Hall is approximately 520sqm. The new Community Centre will be 700sqm and combined with the health centre, the floorspace will be 1,050 sqm. However, the final footprint may well be less, dependent on the architect's final design.
7. It will provide a home for MAYFACS which has been an integral part of the support for residents during the pandemic as one example.
8. There will be a Community Hub within the Community Centre available for local charity groups to use and a meeting place for our elderly and vulnerable.

I hope that the above facts reassure our residents that we continue to represent their wishes as endorsed by the ballot in January 2020 which recorded 76% of respondents in support of developing the new Community and Health Centre for the benefit of residents of Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish.

Councillor Gill Weavers
Chairman of Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council