



WOORE PARISH COUNCIL

17 BLAIZEFIELD CLOSE
WOORE
SHROPSHIRE
CW3 9SU

22nd October 2026

OPEN LETTER TO SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AND ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Dear Councillors and Officers,

Re: Representation of Shropshire Council at the Planning Appeal Hearing 6th / 7th October (Appeal Ref. 26/03487/REF).

We are writing to express Woore Parish Council's serious concern regarding Shropshire Council's representation at the planning appeal hearing held in Shrewsbury on 6th and 7th October 2026 relating to appeal 26/03487/REF, arising from the refusal of outline planning application 25/03245/OUT for the development of 65 dwellings, including means of access, on land south of Audlem Road, Woore.

Residents of Woore who attended the hearing, including the Chair of the Parish Council, left with significant concerns regarding the Council's ability to effectively defend its own planning decision and adequately represent the interests and circumstances of the community affected by the proposal.

Of particular concern was that numerous matters discussed during the appeal hearing related directly to considerations that formed part of the Council's own decision-making process when refusing the application. Residents reasonably expected these matters to be supported by clear evidence, robust professional input and a detailed understanding of local circumstances.

Among the concerns arising from the hearing were:

- The apparent absence of supporting evidence or witness input from the Council's Highways Department;
- Difficulties in explaining key aspects of the local context, including the geography of the parish and the provisions and objectives of the Woore Neighbourhood Plan;
- Limited recognition of the absence of public transport serving the village and surrounding area;
- Insufficient evidence regarding the pressures affecting local primary and secondary education provision; and

W: www.wooreparishcouncil.gov.uk
E: clerk@wooreparishcouncil.gov.uk
T: 07469 255 520

- A lack of understanding of the challenges faced by residents in accessing healthcare services, particularly as a result of Woore's position on the border of Cheshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire.

These were not peripheral matters. They were material planning considerations and issues that had informed the Council's own decision to refuse the application.

The absence of detailed evidence and local knowledge on these points was therefore particularly concerning to those residents who attended the appeal and who expected the authority to be fully prepared to defend its position before the Planning Inspector.

In the interests of transparency and public confidence, Woore Parish Council would welcome a formal explanation of:

- Why no highways witness or supporting highways evidence was presented at the hearing;
- How the Council prepared for the appeal and what engagement took place with relevant service areas;
- Whether the Council considers the representation provided was sufficient to support and defend the reasons for refusal; and
- What lessons have been identified and what improvements will be made to the preparation and conduct of future planning appeals.

Woore Parish Council recognises the significant pressures facing local authorities. However, residents are entitled to expect that planning decisions reached through the democratic process will be defended at appeal with appropriate preparation, evidence and local understanding.

We therefore request a formal written response to the concerns raised in this letter, together with details of any actions or procedural improvements that will be implemented as a result. We would be grateful to receive such a response within 28 days so that residents may be assured that these matters have been properly considered.

In keeping with the Parish Council's commitment to transparency, this letter will be published on the Parish Council website and we would welcome a response suitable for publication alongside it.

This open letter records the Parish Council's serious concerns regarding the standard of representation provided at the appeal and seeks a transparent response on behalf of the community.

Yours faithfully,



Cllr. Rachel Goodman
Chair, Woore Parish Council
On behalf of Woore Parish Council and concerned residents

W: www.wooreparishcouncil.gov.uk
E: clerk@wooreparishcouncil.gov.uk
T: 07469 255 520

COPIES TO:

Tanya Miles - Chief Executive, Shropshire Council

Cllr. Heather Kidd - Leader, Shropshire Council

Cllr. Alex Wagner - Deputy Leader, Shropshire Council

Cllr. David Walker - Portfolio Holder for Planning, Shropshire Council

Cllr. Tom Dainty - Ward Councillor for Market Drayton East & Rural

Helen Martin - Corporate Director, Growth & Connected Communities, Shropshire Council.

Richard Phillips - Service Director, Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer, Shropshire Council

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