

BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2016

PRESENT

Councillor Court
Councillor Davies
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor McGuinness
Councillor Nicosia
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Whilding

The meeting was filmed by members of the public

16.16 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
The Mayor – Councillor Salt
Councillor Baddeley
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Rushton

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Interests: Application 0127 Councillor Jones said one of the neighbours objecting was a close personal friend, he would speak but not vote. Application 0371 Councillor Davies knew the applicant and reserved the right to express opinion, but to change his mind at a later date; he would not vote. Councillor Rogers also knew this applicant.

18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2016 were **Approved** and signed as a true record.

Councillor Jones stated that the minutes should reflect the fact that the meetings were filmed by a member of the public. This was agreed.

19 BIDDULPH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

No meeting had been held. Councillor Court reminded members that site allocations had been removed from neighbourhood planning; this would be dealt with by SMDC.

20. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

SMD/2016/0127	Renew Land Developments Ltd & Keyworker Homes Ltd HSS Engineering Ltd Hurst Quarry Hurst Road	Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except HSS access) for the erection of up to 29 dwellings
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Councillor Redfern queried who was the lead organisation on this application; three separate organisations appeared to be involved. Councillor Lawson stated that the County had an involvement with this application because it had previously been a quarry. Councillor Jones said that he was aware that residents are concerned. This is a small hamlet and vehicle movements will increase significantly if a large number of homes are developed. Councillor Nicosia stated that Biddulph Town Council should be clear that only material planning considerations be considered.

Mr Jerry Knights was invited to address the meeting:

"The Poolfold Residents' Group was formed in 2009 and has 47 members. At a meeting on 4 July, and contrary to the Applicant's assertion that local residents support the proposed development, members voted unanimously to object to this planning application. Our objection is not yet finalised, but I'd like to highlight the major concerns.

The Applicant had been asked to provide certain further information. These include a detailed intrusive Geo-Environmental Ground Investigation for any contamination of soil and groundwater. Like you, we need to examine this information before we can finalise our submission.

Additionally, there are many other omissions from the application, such as no topographical detail on levels within the development, and whether infill will be required to mitigate the quarry slopes. There is no detail regarding the size of individual plots, the materials or method of construction, no time frame is given for the development, nor for the relocation of J2K Engineering. There is also no detail regarding how the undeveloped areas of the site will be restored and maintained into the future.

However, our 4 key objections are our concerns with sustainability, with the site's visual impact and openness, with the effect on the Greenbelt and with the issue of vehicle movements.

Sustainability. All housing development is required to be situated in a sustainable location, one that reduces reliance on the private car and travel generally. The Design and Access Statement is fundamentally misleading in claiming that the surrounding area is well served for schools. These are not in close proximity and neither are churches, Community Centres, shops nor public transport. All would incur an unacceptably long walk. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, and our submission will address these in detail.

Regarding the **Visual Impact and Openness**, any development within the Greenbelt must not affect the "openness" of the landscape meaning that housing and its associated appurtenances must not be visible from the road, public footpaths, vantage points or designated Open Access Areas. The Applicant has claimed that the impact will be insignificant, but since no information has been provided on topography it would be very difficult for him to know what will be the effects on the surrounding visual amenity. Additionally, it has been claimed that the proposed development will not be seen from the road. This is untrue. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by Public Footpaths and is overlooked by Troughstones Hill which is an Open Access Area. From here, significant areas of the quarry floor, walls and existing buildings are already clearly visible.

The Applicant claims that the proposed development would enhance the landscape character and would be better than waiting twenty years for the cessation of quarrying. This is inconsistent as quarrying has ceased already, but Staffordshire County Council has concluded that the development would not sterilise an important mineral resource. Thus, it

can be concluded that the cessation of quarrying followed by restoration to agriculture would be the most viable option. The Applicant also claims that the site is presently completely unrestored. This is incorrect as some areas have been restored.

Turning to the **Green Belt**, this site is categorised as 'other rural areas' within the local development plan. This allows only for development that meets an essential local need, and this proposal does not. Indeed, the Applicant's planning statement accepts this. Whilst the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy has allocated housing development to the rural area, for Biddulph the rural area is identified as Biddulph Moor. This site is not remotely part of Biddulph Moor. For housing development to be allowed there have to be very special circumstances and any such development should be sustainable, which we have already proved it is not.

The Core Strategy also confirms that rural areas within the open countryside will provide only for development which supports rural diversification and sustainability, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Applicant's Planning Statement clearly has no policy basis whatsoever and there are no special circumstances that might permit it to do so.

Finally, **Vehicle Movements**. Considering that quarrying has been suspended for some time it can be concluded that the 30 HGV vehicle movements in and 30 movements out currently permitted for mineral extraction are irrelevant and should be factored out of calculations. This makes the increase to 331 vehicle movements per day even more significant and we consider Hurst Road to be unsuitable for such heavy use both in terms of pedestrian safety and pollution.

In conclusion,

- 1 This proposed development is not in a sustainable location.
- 2 It would adversely affect openness and is highly visible from all round the site.
- 3 The site is in a rural area where development is only permitted to meet essential local need, which would not.

Last, there will actually be a significant increase in daily vehicle movements.

Therefore, the Poolfold Residents' Group **OBJECTS** to the planning application for the erection of 29 dwellings at the Hurst Quarry."

Councillor Jones queried the number of residents in Poolfold; there are approximately 30 in the association. Councillor Rogers queried whether the group objected to all development, or just the number of units; the group objects to all development.

Councillor Redfern stated that there had been lots of debate about this area in the past. Quarrying had destroyed the bridleways and none of organisations involved in this project had ever complied with Biddulph Town Council's desire for those bridleways to be reinstated. Councillor Redfern felt that this was a 'sham' and that limited companies go bust and have no responsibility to this town.

Councillor McGuinness stated that he was not happy about this application.

Councillor Jones stated that if this application is passed we are saying 'you can plant estates anywhere you want'. This is a greenbelt site that should be returned to farming etc.

Councillor Whilding moved to **RECOMMEND REFUSAL**, seconded by Councillor McGuinness. A vote was taken with 7 in favour of this recommendation, Councillors Davies and Jones abstained.

Councillor Rogers added that he objected to 29 properties, but felt that a few would improve the area. Councillor Jones stated that this needs to go to committee at Leek; Councillor Davies confirmed that it was.

SMD/2016/0208	Greenfields Farm Crowborough Road Lask Edge	Proposed demolition and replacement of existing farmhouse, demolition of existing outbuildings and agricultural structures and erection of 2 no. agricultural buildings
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Councillor Jones stated that this needs doing as the buildings are falling down. Councillor Redfern believed that work has been well advanced for some months; they have already changed the access and added an area of hard-standing. Permission should be sought before work takes place. Councillor Jones agreed; they should have permission first. Councillor Court confirmed that the application form says work has not started. Councillor Jones felt that it was positive that this was being returned to agricultural use.

Councillor Jones moved **NO ADVERSE COMMENTS**, seconded by Councillor Lawson. All agreed.

Councillor Davies and Councillor Rogers left the room before discussion on the following application and returned afterwards.

SMD/2016/0371	Workshop Hurst Road	Proposed erection of detached dwelling and ground worker's storage building
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This is a brownfield site with asbestos huts. Councillor Jones asked if there were any objections on the website; Councillor Court confirmed that there were not.

Councillor Nicosia moved **NO ADVERSE COMMENTS**, seconded by Councillor Swift. All agreed.

SMD/2016/0357	Park House Farm Common Road	Construction of new dwelling on existing land within Park House Farm
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The land is being split into two as the family are dividing the assets. The applicant wishes to rescue animals and breed horses. Councillor Jones felt that, while he had sympathy for the applicant, a precedent was being set here; this would give the 'green light' for anyone who wants to develop large family sites. Councillor Rogers confirmed that this was a greenbelt site.

Councillor Jones **RECOMMENDED REFUSAL AS GREEN BELT SITE**, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

SMD/2016/0063	Plot 9 Victoria Bus Park	Variation of conditions 8 and 10 (SMD/2013/0865) repositioned access to site
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Councillor Jones felt that this was appropriate, as long as there were no objections from neighbouring businesses. Councillor Rogers queried whether Highways were involved. Councillor Redfern stated that the roads are not adopted by the County Council and queried whether Councillor Lawson could follow this up, as there did not seem to be any reason why this was the case.

Moved **NO ADVERSE COMMENTS** subject to neighbour's valid objections.

21 DECISIONS AND NOTICES RECEIVED FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The following notices were received.

HNT/2016/0019 137 Congleton Road Single storey rear extension

NO ADVERSE COMMENTS
THIS IS PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

REFUSED

The width would be greater than half the width of the original dwellinghouse.
Exterior building materials are not similar in appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse.

SMD/2016/0284 Overton Hall Barns Listed building consent for the installation of a flue pipe.

NO ADVERSE COMMENTS

GRANT OF LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

SMD/2016/0232 3 Wren Close Proposed 2 storey side extension

NO ADVERSE COMMENTS
SUBJECT TO NO NEIGHBOURS VALID PLANNING CONCERNS

FULL PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT

SMD/2016/0257 5 Conway Road Proposed demolition of existing utility and erection of a single storey rear extension and loft conversion.

NO ADVERSE COMMENTS

FULL PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT

22. LAND AT SPRINGFIELD ROAD

The Planning Application will be reported to the SMDC Planning Applications Committee on 14 July 2016 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber.

Received.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Signature

Date