**Dodleston & District Parish Council**

**Extra Ordinary Parish Council Meeting**

**Tuesday 12 November 2013 - 7.30pm Dodleston Village Hall**

### MINUTES

**Chairman** Mike Maughan

**Vice Chairman** Paul Buchanan

**Councillors** Mike Dix,Karen Tilston, Richard Ward, John Blythin, Chris Ward, Sarah Parker

**Clerk** Kate Lloyd

# Consultant Rawdon Gascoigne (Director)

# Emery Planning Partnership

# 

# Also present: Members of the Public

**1 Apo1ogies for absence:**

Councillor Fiona Lewis

**2 Procedural matters**

1. Declaration of interest – None

**3. Public Speaking Time**

**Background**

The Consultant provided general background information on the proposed development site as detailed.

For the past two and a half / three years there have been plans for the redevelopment of the site although there have been no fixed ideas. The Main considerations were under the National Policy Framework (NPF) planning proposals. With a Greenbelt site these are detailed than the NPF but with the same ethos

In the last twelve months there has been a change in policy which allows redevelopment of any Brownfield site in a greenbelt area. . This includes farm Buildings / recreational facilities. A Brownfield site is now considered before Greenfield site.

All cases are assessed for any adverse affect on openness. A supporting statement with the application includes the nature of location and whether or not the whole site is Brownfield. A subjective assessment is undertaken to determine if the redevelopment has a greater impact than the previous building.

With a change in Government Policy a Brownfield may:

* be marketed for similar purpose
* Where there is no alternative use which is viable
* Indicative layout
* Relevant and appropriate in terms of sale of site

This is a Basic application for residential development of the site. Nine months ago specific reports were undertaken:

Highways (Sustainability) including Bus Provision, noise and air assessments. There were no issues

Ground condition / Ecology report have been undertaken. Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC) viewed the land as appropriate for development and considered the Brownfield site as it lessens the need for Greenfield sites. As part of the Five Year Housing supply, CWAC cannot demonstrate / deliver sufficient number of houses.

There has been no saw mill processing at the site for the past fifteen years. There is only the buying/ selling of timber and 90% of trade has been lost.

**Flooding and Drainage Issues**

i. Mr Ankers raised concerns with flooding issues / drainage system (Rough Hill) and asked whether the water would enter Balderton Brook. The Consultant advised a Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken by the Environment Agency and no objections are anticipated. Flood Risk at the front of the site from formal records and modelled as a risk. To mitigate this, the level will be raised and a Sustainable Flood System will be in place to collect and release water at a steady rate. There should be no significant issues with surface runoff if the system is in place.

ii**.** Alison Houghton asked how it would affect Station Cottage. The Consultant stated there would be a Self contained system with drains. There are no exact details at present as the location of housing may change. Mr Doer suggested it was a soak away system and asked how the flooding of the fields will be overcome. The Consultant stated with would be prevented by tanks which can accommodate and hold many months of water. There will be none on site apart from at the front. The water will be managed and released. The Environment Agency (EA) has been consulted. The site is not in a flood risk area.

iii. Mrs Blythin commented that surrounding fields have flooded and on one occasion forty sheep drowned. The Consultant advised the site is not a Greenfield site and there is no sewerage disposal. Sewerage will empty into the existing systems. To address any issues the number of houses may be reduced.

**Number of Housing and Affordable Housing**

iv. Alison Houghton commented that it was difficult to make a decision when something could change. The initial plan could be very different once permission had been granted.

10 Houses – Good access

40 Houses

The consultant stated the site access could accommodate the development. The National Railway and Highways Department have stated no more than 35 houses on the outline application and the consultant agreed it would not be above this. If working to the lowest standard density a workable scheme would be 50 / 75 house per hectare. This is no the most efficient use of site.

v. Councillor Tilston stated the application had already been submitted for 10 – 35 houses on the outlined application.

The Consultant confirmed that should the outlined application be approved, a detailed scheme would be drawn up. This would be subject to consultation but there could not be any objections. However, comments can be submitted on drainage / materials.

vi. Councillor Parker asked what other options had been considered over the past two to three years.

Options considered were lease / sale. Councillor Parker also asked if any provision had been made for low cost housing.

The Consultant advised 30 % affordable housing had been applied to the 35 houses

vii. Graham Povey asked whether the development was on the premise of affordable housing. Councillor Maughan commented that the Parish Council would want to make sure affordable housing is safeguarded for local people.

The Consultant advised this could not be guaranteed with a change in Government Policy. With the control of Affordable Housing, in the first instance, it would be for people in the Parish. This being dependant on what the local need for housing is.

viii. A question was raised about families and whether the school could cope with an increase in pupil numbers.

The Consultant advised that smaller units, a third would be considered for school age children. There is currently spare capacity on the school roll.

ix. Alison Houghton suggested the Council Housing shortfall issue would be resolved by the 500 housing development on the Business Park. The Consultant stated the Five Year Plan, accounting for the site for 1300 per annum, there is a shortfall of 2,500 homes. The Housing Development is an extension on Meadow Farms.

With the Five Year Plan, CWAC consider the Borough as a whole, assess where housing is required / desired and the level and ensure a mix of housing.

x. Councillor Blythin asked what the cost of the houses would be (Both small and large houses). The Consultant advised this was not known as yet and would depend on the build.

xi Councillor Chris Ward asked whether CWAC agreed with the shortfall and 35% of Affordable Housing. He also asked that if there were less than 33 houses would the % of affordable house change. The Consultant advised with <15 houses threshold there would be no affordable houses. The % level could fall. The Consultant believed 30% was reasonable. There had been no engagement with the Council and 30% had been offered. The % could be changed by the House Builder.

The Consultant advised that most Councils cannot source land and there is a supply issue. The figures provided by the Consultant had been accepted on appeal. Inspectors concluded CWAC’s Five Year Plan supply is undeliverable and actually only a 3 year supply. It may take ten years to deliver.

He also stated that 20 units per annum by three builders are not realistic and there are only a finite number of buyers at any one time.

**Concerns with** **Traffic**

**Visibility with Access**

xii The Consultant advised that the site line is adequate, as confirmed by CWAC. Maintaining of sites across the Country has shown that not everyone on site accesses it at the same time. The peak period for modelling school crossings is 6.45 - 9 am.

xiii John Curtis asked what the process is now.

The Consultant advised there was a thirteen week determining period, a vetting day with the Planning Officer and open for Public Consultation. Comments could be submitted and would be taken into account. There would be discussions with the Parish Council (it is considered a large development in the context of the Parish). In January / February 2014 the application will be considered by the Planning Committee. There will be a report and formal consultation with any changes

**Noise Assessment (None)**

xiv There is the potential for the rail line to be developed and this has been modelled in. There could be an increase in noise from the track. Network Rail cannot confirm this as yet.

(Close Boarder Fencing to be in place)

xv Councillor Maughan advised that all document relating to the Housing Development are available on line and can be reviewed under reference: 1304534 OUT. Comments can be sent directly to CWAC or via the Parish Council.

xvi John Curtis asked how the Parish Council decided on a comment. Councillor Maughan advised that the Parish Council has no power or authority and that the immediate neighbours are consulted. The Parish Council take into account the views of residents when making comment.

xvii Alison Houghton stated there are 40 / 50 foot conifers on the boundary on the railway line at Station Cottage and asked whether or not these would be cut down. The Consultant advised there would be Acoustic Fencing and there is no plan to cut the conifers.

xviii The Consultant advised that with formal planning, (modelling) there is a count of traffic movement. There is no formal monitoring on site, and takes into it is a speed control area and other assumptions. CWAC Highways have completed a traffic assessment which will be assessed by Independent Consultants. This is a specialist company who gather the data and do not practice in doctoring of data. The company do not take on schemes which are not suitable.

xix Councillor Buchanan asked for the Consultant’s professional opinion on the Development. The Consultant said his opinion had changed since 2012 when the National Policy changed for Brownfield sites. He stated the 35 housing on the Brownfield site is a windfall and important.

xx Alison Houghton stated there is no path or lighting on the road for 3 cottages and asked whether there would be any improvements. The Consultant advised there is the potential for improvement or though there had been no engagement with CWAC.

xxi Councillor Buchanan asked if the development is refused planning permission there would be an appeal and whether it could be refused on the basis of too many houses. The Consultant advised there would be an appeal as it is compliant with policy and would that it would be possible to reduce the number of houses. The Consultant also confirmed that the three immediate houses should have been issued with notice of the Development.

xxii Councillor Tilston stated that all residents of Balderton should have been consulted. It was confirmed that the following were notified; Parish Council - Statutory Consultee, The most immediate houses (residents) and general resident by site notices

**Part II - Exclusion of Press and Public**

*Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in item 4 the public and the press is excluded.*

**4. Housing Development at Balderton Saw Mills**

Councillors acknowledged the development is an outlined proposal and not full application and already agreed in principle. Transport, bus and paths have been considered. Councillors expressed that in making comment it should take into account the views of residents and that no response from the Parish Council was inappropriate.

Councillors expressed concerns over control of affordable housing, access and lack of detail on drainage. In making a comment the Parish Council would be able to address these issues.

The development was taken to the vote:

One abstention (Councillor Tilston)

One Opposed (Councillor Blythin)

Five in Favour (Councillor Maughan, Councillor Buchanan, Councillor Parker, Councillor Chris Ward, Councillor Richard Ward)

The Parish Council voted in support of the application with the following comment:

**“Dodleston and District Parish Council is in support of this application, on the basis that this site appears to be the most obvious piece of land within our Parish to be released for housing, and we would far prefer this site to be utilised for housing rather than for a commercial use or other use.**

**Following consultation with our community, we do have concerns regarding several aspects of this application include affordable housing for local people, drainage, sewerage systems, traffic and footpaths, but would like to address these matters when(if this application is permitted) full planning permission is sought”**