

HYDE PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from the extra-ordinary virtual (ZOOM) meeting held on 3rd February 2021

Present: Cllrs Burden, Dolphin, McKenzie, Mulcahy, Sevier (Chair), Tully and Woodley; Clerk (M Coatham); and 47 members of public

1. Apologies: CCllr Heron and DCllr Lane

2. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Sevier will not contribute/comment on the planning applications as a member of the NFNPA and NFDC Planning Committees. Cllr Burden declared an interest as a neighbour to the site and would not take part in the discussions or vote but would read a written statement during the public session.

PUBLIC SESSION

The Chair gave an introduction to the meeting, explaining that the parish council as a consultee to this outline application as a neighbouring parish. Fordingbridge Town Council are the lead parish and it was noted that it is essential that any comments should be submitted to both the town council and New Forest District Council. The District Council have a development plan which was considered by a Planning Inspector and this site was not identified as part of the local development plan. Residents were invited to speak first, with an opportunity for non-residents to speak after this.

Cllr Burden read a written statement about their concerns about the planning application: as a neighbouring farm they had been advised not to plough the adjacent land as they would always flood (they were told the land was used to extract gravel and was back-filled with rubble) – in the winter the ground is saturated. Concerns about the run-off water from the development causing additional flooding to the area; visual impact adjacent to the National Park; environmental impact (additional cars and damage to the site); traffic issues – through Fordingbridge and into the forest – none of the roads were built for the increase in traffic and are in poor condition; local plan had excluded the site as unsuitable and other sites are being developed and some would argue these are/will already put pressure on the local services ie doctors, fire, police, parking etc so to add another large development would just add to these pressures unnecessarily; finally concern about precedent for any other ‘unsuitable’ land bordering or in the national park for development. As residents of these beautiful areas its our duty to look after and nurture them not destroy them with developments which are unnecessary and out of character.

Residents then added their concerns – these have been summarized as there was agreement on many issues:

- 3 planning applications already granted in Fordingbridge with a potential of 2878 more residents (a 48% increase in population), impacting on traffic, local amenities and infrastructure
- This site is not included in the NFDC Development Plan – the design of the proposed site to include playground, village hall, and affordable housing seems to be aimed at ticking planning boxes to secure the site
- Impact on the village roads which are inadequate for the proposed amount of traffic and are prone to flooding/ impassable during the winter – the increased dangers for walkers, cyclists; the issue for large lorries delivering to the local nursery and the increase in cycle rallies which use this route
- Concern about another village hall – there is a good provision in the area and they are not cheap to maintain
- Concern that the landowners have not attempted to maintain their property or become involved with the local population
- Note that drainage issues have already caused concern on another local site (Augustus Park)
- Risk of flooding is a major concern – a lot of money was spent on flood defenses in Fordingbridge – protecting the garage
- Concern that the traffic to the forest will be directed through the new “village” – concern for children using these routes to get to school

- Concern about the increase in traffic estimated in the traffic plans accompanying the application – currently 1400 vehicle movements to increase by 800 which they consider “negligible” (50%+ increase)
- Concern that the recent electoral boundary review did not take into consideration the increase in population generated by this housing
- Adverse impact on the landscape
- Could there be a positive use for this land?
- No work locally for this population – the development is not sustainable
- Question about the “Green Halo” around the forest – this is exactly the type of development which should be covered by the Green Halo – have the NPA been consulted?
- Concern raised about the contaminated land – there appears to be nothing mentioned in the application documents
- Concern about the traffic infrastructure and use of CIL/S106 funds to address this

3. Planning

a. Applications (OUTLINE PLANNING ONLY):

19/10881 (NFDC) 20 no. retirement homes; 78no. dwellings; village hall; playground; new access arrangements and associated development (all matters reserved except access) | LAND AT ST JOHNS FARM, STUCKTON ROAD, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1AR

It was agreed that the proposals are not compliant with the Local Plan, the development would cause harm to agricultural land and the adjacent N P. Conservation area and is not compliant with:

- Policy DM2 Nature conservation biodiversity and geodiversity (2.12)

Development proposals within or outside SSSI likely to adversely affect the site will not be permitted unless the benefits outweigh the adverse impacts on the site and any on the wider network of SSSIs

- STR2 Protection of the Countryside

Development should not have an unacceptable impact on the special qualities and purposes of Cranborne Chase AONB or on the adjoining New Forest National Park and their settings. Great weight will be given to ensuring the character, quality and scenic beauty of Cranborne Chase AONB and the adjoining New Forest National Park are protected and enhanced. Proposals for development within or affecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or the New Forest National Park will need to demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. Proposals for development outside the AONB and the National Park that is sufficiently prominent (in terms of its siting or scale) to have an impact on the area’s special qualities must also demonstrate that it would not adversely affect their setting.

- STR3 Locating New Development

The strategy is to locate and direct new development to accessible locations that help to sustain the vitality and viability of the towns and villages of the plan area as the focal points of commercial activity and community life, and as safe, attractive and accessible locations to use and visit. Beyond locations where site-specific policies apply and the built-up area boundary of settlements, the primary objectives are to conserve and enhance the countryside and natural environment. Development will generally be restricted unless the development proposed is appropriate in a rural setting.

The primary objectives are to conserve and enhance the countryside - *this development would not meet this requirement.*

- ENV1 Mitigating the impacts of development on International Nature Conservation Sites (was DM3)

Summary: development will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that any necessary mitigation, management or monitoring measures are secured in perpetuity as part of the proposal and will be implemented in a timely manner, such that, in combination with other plans and development proposals, there will not be adverse effects on the integrity of any of the following International Nature Conservation sites: The New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and the New Forest Ramsar site and The River Avon SAC, Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site;

Stantec report with the application lists mitigation measures that are claimed to be neutral or give gain but do not seem adequate – we doubt that any mitigation could balance out the harm.

Development would be outside the settlement area

HOU5 Rural housing exception sites: residential development will only be permitted on suitable sites outside the defined settlement boundaries where it is to meet an identified need of local people for affordable housing to meet local needs which cannot be provided in any other way. Suitable sites will be located within or adjoining a settlement which either provides a range of local services and facilities, or is (or can be made) safely accessible to a larger settlement nearby which provides a wider range of services and facilities. The District Council will work with local communities to identify suitable sites, which may also be identified through Neighbourhood Plans.

Policy DM20/DM 21: Residential Development in the Countryside will only be permitted where it is (c) affordable housing to meet identified local need or (d) agricultural or forestry workers dwellings.

This development does not meet either of these requirements and has absolutely no grounds to be an exception to policy, it is a commercial project.

Policy CS6 Flood Risk: Flood risk will be taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at current or future risk from flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk in accordance with the sequential test. Development should not worsen flood risk elsewhere.

Members do not consider that the application report has sufficient detail to alleviate concerns over the flood risk in this location; NW corner /Stuckton Road frequently floods (it is noted as Zone 2/3); the rest of the site as zone 1, but zones do not take heavy rain, blocked ditches and culverts into account and the huge area of concrete planned will add to the existing flooding making this site unsuitable for development without adverse impact to flood risk in the area.

Access

The site entrance/exit on the A338 slip road would be extremely dangerous, traffic comes around the right corner from the B3078 to travel south at speed and accelerates up the slip road to join at main road.

Contamination

Local people report that the site is contaminated by buried rubble and gravel, members consider that this should be investigated before any works are considered.

Members comments:

- The applicant has ticked boxes on mitigation. The EIA statement suggests that the land is “fallow farmland” made up with superficial river deposits – no mention of rubble. It is unlikely that funding would be made available on unsuitable land. The traffic plan for the site is inadequate and needs redesigning (members recognise that if the proposal goes to a full application then Highways will be assessing the scheme fully). Under planning law the local plan must be up to date and there must have been full consultation – both of these have happened and so cannot be challenged by this application. It is up to NFDC to determine where the housing needs can be met and these have been identified – plus any windfall sites: this site is not a windfall site – the need has been met and to provide more housing is therefore unnecessary. Routes into town are dangerous for pedestrians, the site will not help local businesses. We should expect NFDC to stick to their plan and refuse this application – it is likely it will go to a Public Enquiry.
- Nothing in this application is viable – the ES shows significant adverse impact on the National Park on every level, it is out of character with the area and must be nipped in the bud.
- No economic benefit demonstrated by the site – there is local plan and this should be followed. It would be useful to make a positive suggestion for alternative uses for the site, which complies with Green Halo.

- The increase in traffic has a potential to impact on the number of animal accidents. The development is contrary to all policies and even looking at the site with a glass half full, the site has no positive points.

It was agreed to summarise the points raised in this meeting and report to Stephen Belli, the planning officer at NFDC. We agree with the majority of the issues raised at the meeting - the site is completely inappropriate, non-compliant and outside the settlement boundary and would adversely affect the National Park. People from the surrounding areas are concerned about the ecological impact of this development, not just the local residents.

Thanks were given to everyone who attended and residents were reminded to submit their comments directly to the Town Clerk (Paul Goddard, paul.goddard@fordingbridge.gov.uk) and NFDC (Stephen Belli, stephen.belli@nfdc.gov.uk), not just on social media.

4. Correspondence (to note) - none

The meeting closed at 20.44

It is likely that the February meeting will also be a virtual (Zoom) meeting. This will take place on Wednesday 10th February 2021 – further details will be available online nearer to the time.

DRAFT