

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, St Richards House, Victoria Square, Droitwich Spa, on Monday 7 July 2014 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R E Murphy (Chairman)
Councillor T J Noyes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor G R Brookes (Ex-officio)
Councillor Mrs P E Davey
Councillor E Harwood
Councillor K J Jennings
Councillor R G Seabourne

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors R G Beale, Mrs G Noyes, P Pinfield, A M Sinton, P Stevens and Mrs E A Taft.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Mrs M A Lawley and R J Morris (committee members) also Councillor M C J Barratt.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

58 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT – STATEMENT: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF YEW TREE HILL - APPEALS DECISIONS:

BARBERRY DROITWICH LIMITED, SITE AT LAND AT PULLEY LANE, NEWLAND ROAD AND PRIMSLAND WAY, APPLICATION REF: W/11/01073/OU; APPEAL BY PERSIMMON HOMES LIMITED AND PROWTING PROJECTS LIMITED, SITE AT LAND NORTH OF PULLEY LANE AND NEWLAND LANE, NEWLAND, APPLICATION REF: W/12/02336/OU

Following the decision, on appeal, for the granting of planning permissions for the above, the Chairman circulated the following statement:

“Droitwich Town Council Planning Committee expresses its deep regret at the decision of the Secretary of State to allow the two planning appeals from Persimmon and Barberrry and permit development of Yew Tree Hill.

We maintain that the reasons given for refusing the original planning applications were entirely valid.

The proposals were premature given the advanced state of preparation of the South Worcestershire Development Plan.

Wychavon District Council had and still has a full five year housing land supply.

The environmental damage which will be caused by the development of this important local site will far outweigh any possible benefits.

The Town Council maintains that developing an additional satellite village at Yew Tree Hill with a further 765 houses, will do little for the economy of the town, place additional burdens on local schools and other public services and create additional traffic problems for area.

The Town Council Planning Committee supports the proposals contained in the South Worcestershire Development Plan which identifies land at Copcut Lane for the construction of 740 new homes. This will meet the needs of the Town for new housing in the period to 2030. Development of Yew Tree Hill is completely unnecessary.

We thank Wychavon District Council for their support during the planning appeal. We thank our MP, Sir Peter Luff for his unwavering support for the people of Droitwich throughout the planning process. In particular we thank the many members of SOGOS who have given their time and energy to fight these planning applications with such vigour.

Regrettably we must now acknowledge that we have lost the fight to save Yew Tree Hill and we must now turn our attention to trying to make the best out of a bad situation for Droitwich Spa.”

We will continue to act in the best interests of our Town.”

59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

60 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 JUNE 2014

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

61 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED That the comments of the Planning Committee upon the planning applications received from Wychavon District Council, appended as a schedule to these Minutes, be approved.

62 AMENDED PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED That the comments of the Planning Committee upon the amended planning applications received from Wychavon District Council, appended as a schedule to these Minutes, be approved.

63 DECISIONS OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

It was noted that Wychavon District Council, the Local Planning Authority, had issued five approval notices, all of which accorded with the recommendations of the Town Council. No refusal notices had been issued.

64 VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS (VASs) – OPERATIONS

The Committee considered the very full report upon operational considerations relating to Vehicle Activated Signs, and in particular cost implications to the Council from the various options of battery-operated, solar-powered and mains powered signage.

Currently the Town Council had one VAS provided by Councillor Mrs P E Davey from her County Local Ward Member budget and another on order.

During the debate the following was noted and considered:

- the high level of activations for the VAS in Primsland Way;
- for permanent signage, maintenance and power for the installation was most cost effective via street lighting columns;
- it was possible to monitor activation in specific time zones;
- the second VAS was due to be deployed in the only suitable location on Lyttelton Road;
- Worcestershire County Council approved the location(s) for each VAS but no longer dealt with the location and maintenance of new signs;
- County Councillors Mrs L Duffy had requested Town Council assistance in the location of one at Farmers Way and County Councillor A P Miller had offered a solar-powered one to the Town Council;
- although the Lengthsman’s Scheme was used for the servicing of the VASs, the Committee queried whether this was the best use of the limited budget.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

1. That the permanent siting of the VAS at Primsland Way with power from the street lighting column be approved.
2. That initially the second VAS be deployed on Lyttelton Road at the one location only that has been approved by Worcestershire County Council and that this remains powered by rechargeable batteries to enable flexibility so that it can be moved to sites throughout the Town Council’s areas as and when required.
3. That County Councillor Mrs L Duffy be advised that her request for the Town Council to locate a VAS at Farmers Way be accepted provided that it can be deployed permanently and powered from a street lighting column in the location.
4. That the offer for a solar-powered VAS from County Councillor A P Miller be regrettably refused.

The Committee thanked Mr Mark Keld, Assistant Town Clerk, for the work that he had put into producing such a detailed report and for overseeing the VAS system.

65 HANBURY ROAD DEVELOPMENTS – CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee considered the letter received on 6 June 2014 from Mr Tim Lightfoot, Construction Director, McCarthy & Stone. The letter set out a brief timeline for the Section 278 process since September 2012.

Councillor Mrs P E Davey advised upon the situation from Worcestershire County Council's perspective and the difficulties connected with the conditions of the planning approval granted by Wychavon District Council.

Reference was made to recent correspondence received by residents which intimated that progress was imminent.

RESOLVED That Mr Lightfoot, Construction Director, McCarthy & Stone be thanked for his response and advised that the Town Council also wishes to see the three-month notice period between the receipt of the finalised Section 278 Agreement and commencement of the works waived. Should this not be forthcoming then Mr Lightfoot is advised to contact Councillor Mrs P E Davey, County Councillor and Chairman of Worcestershire County Council in order to expedite the process.

66 TOTAL GARAGE WORCESTER ROAD – CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence from Mr Dean Clegg, Property Director at Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited dated 25 June 2014 was noted.

RESOLVED That Councillor G R Brookes, Mayor and Local Ward Member, meets with representatives of Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited to advise of residents' concerns.

67 RAVEN HOTEL DEVELOPMENT – PUBLIC MEETING

The Committee noted that a public meeting, with representatives of the Developer's Design Team, was due to take place on Thursday 10 July at 6pm in the Council Chamber. Representatives from Wychavon District Council would be in attendance, namely Mr Simon Rees the Planning Officer, District Councillor Mrs Linda Robinson Chairman of Planning Committee and District Councillor Mrs Judy Pearce Portfolio holder for Planning, Infrastructure and Housing. The meeting was to be chaired by Councillor G R Brookes, Mayor, and he requested support from Members.

In response to questions, concerns as to the amount and design of the housing proposed, the lack of vehicle parking spaces, etc for this historic site were noted. It was further understood that Wetherspoons (J D Wetherspoon) were no longer interested in the restaurant/bar part of the development and Patrick Davis (Food Festival Organiser) had provided the developers with a list of potential contacts but this had not been acted upon. These matters would be addressed, inter alia, at the meeting.

This matter had been deferred from the last meeting owing to time constraints. Councillor Jennings advised that matters had not progressed and made special reference to the future of the old Bullocks Cafe, drainage issues and the ‘Droitwich Package’ – Worcestershire County Council’s enhancement scheme for the Town Centre.

Councillor Mrs P E Davey advised that Officers from Worcestershire County Council hoped to be in a position to bring forward the ‘Droitwich Package’ scheme for consultation, probably at the Salt Fest event. Drainage would need to be addressed as part of the scheme and it was hoped that District Councillor Mrs Emma Stokes, Portfolio holder for Economy, Regeneration and Flooding would be able to take over from the previous Portfolio holder, the late District Councillor Tom McDonald.

It was noted that an illustrated talk upon the Bullocks Café building by one of the new owners, Steve Weaver, and architect Paul Jones on its architectural past, current work, and future plans had taken place on 10 June. The talk had been arranged by the Dodderhill Parish Survey Project Group.

RESOLVED

1. That the Town Clerk writes to the owners of Bullocks Café building requesting details of when the building is to be converted and brought back into use again, and to invite them to speak to the Town Council at a future meeting.
2. That to enable the drainage issues to be resolved that District Councillor Mrs Emma Stokes, Portfolio holder for Economy, Regeneration and Flooding be advised of the Town Council’s concerns for the regeneration of High Street and be requested to liaise with Severn Trent Water to rectify the issues.
3. That Worcestershire County Council be requested to update the Town Council as to progress with the ‘Droitwich Package’ (the Town Centre Enhancement Scheme) and to make a presentation to the Town Council thereon at a future meeting.

The Committee noted that Worcestershire County Council as the County Planning Authority (CPA) was responsible for processing Planning Applications relating to:

- The treating, storing, processing or disposing of waste materials
- The winning and working of minerals, and
- Any development to be undertaken by the County Council itself such as new libraries, schools, roads, bridges and railway stations.

All other applications are dealt with by the relevant District, City or Borough Council.

The purpose of the above-mentioned document was to provide applicants and their agents with guidance on the information required by the County Council to support proposals for development when submitting a planning application.

The Committee made no comment upon the document.

70 WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Similarly as with Minute No 68 above, Worcestershire County Council's Statement of Community Involvement set out how the local community, businesses and interest groups would be involved in the preparation of Development Plan Documents and planning applications that might affect them. All Development Plan Documents prepared and planning applications determined by the County Council had to comply with the consultation arrangements set out in this document. The Statement of Community Involvement was first produced and adopted in 2006. Since then the Government has introduced substantial changes to the planning system and the updated document sought to take account of these changes and eventually would replace the former document.

The Committee made no comment upon the document.

71 WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – PUBLIC PATH ORDER – PRE-ORDER CONSULTATION – PROPOSED EXTINGUISHMENT OF PART OF THE WIDTH OF FOOTPATH DW-569 (PART), FORMERLY FOOTPATH 31, IN THE PARISH OF DROITWICH

The Committee considered the plan regarding the above public right of way. The reason given for the proposal made by Wychavon District Council was to facilitate the replacement of a retaining wall which was currently in a dangerous condition. No comments were made, it being difficult to identify the area on the plan.

[Subsequent to the meeting, the area in question was identified as the footpath being the continuation of Westlands Walk (rear of 11 - 19 East Park Drive). The Extinguishment Order was to enable the replacement of a retaining wall currently in a dangerous condition and referred only to part of the width of the footpath DW-569 (formerly Footpath No 31.)]

The meeting ended at 7.36pm.

Chairman of Committee _____
4 August 2014

Chairman of Council _____
29 September 2014