

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 3 August 2015 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R E Murphy (Chairman)
Councillor R G Beale (Ex-officio)
Councillor Ms J H Bolton (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A Hawkins
Councillor A Humphries
Councillor Mrs M A Lawley
Councillor T J Noyes

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors S Best, Mrs C A Bowden, L Evans, A H Laird and A Roberts.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors G R Brookes and R J Morris (committee members) and Councillors Mrs S Harris, Mrs C Powell and A M Sinton.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS – appended.

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81 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T J Noyes declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 4(a) – Planning Applications – W/15/01304/PN – Proposed Affordable Residential Dwelling to Land Adjacent No 56 Vines Lane – Fortis Living; inasmuch as he was a representative on Fortis Living.

82 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 JULY 2015

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

83 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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.

84 AMENDED PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none.

85 DECISIONS OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

Wychavon District Council, the Local Planning Authority, had issued three approval notices, all of which accorded with the recommendations of the Town Council. No refusal notices had been issued.

The meeting ended at 6.47pm.

Chairman of Committee
14 September 2015

Chairman of Council
28 September 2015

Droitwich Spa Town Council

Planning Committee meeting 3 August 2015 - Public Questions

Peter Kennedy, 10 Sandles Close

Pulley Lane is to be the main access route for all construction traffic associated with the developments on Yew Tree Hill. There is no estimation of construction period but it is not unreasonable to assume a build-time of at least 8 – 10 years. This is going to impact severely on the lives of people that live on or back onto Pulley Lane. It has been estimated that the developments will generate 40 HGV, 40 LGV and 310 car movements per day, a total of 390 vehicles per day. These movements will invariably occur during the working day (7am – 7pm). At present, 2 way traffic figures along Pulley Lane between the times of 7am and 7pm are given as 389 vehicles most of which are cars. The additional 390 construction generated vehicles is an increase of 100% in this 12 hour period all of which MUST approach and leave the developments along Pulley Lane to and from the A38. The widening and re-alignment of Pulley Lane will necessitate the removal and/ or narrowing of verges and some ancient hedgerows. Roadside verges probably constitute the largest extent of grassland in most counties. They provide important corridors for the movement of species and sometimes support plant and animal communities which are important in their own right. To narrow and remove the verges on Pulley Lane further diminishes these habitats at a time when extensive road improvements are occurring locally and nationally, and intensive farming methods in the area have reduced wildlife habitats. Has Worcestershire Highways been asked to account for its conclusion that Pulley Lane is a suitable highway to service this amount of traffic movement on what is a narrow country lane?

Mrs Boo Thorp, Oakwood Lodge, Pulley Lane, Copcut (presented by Mr Kennedy)

What do they intend to do about the sharp S bend at the top of Pulley lane - Do they propose to straighten the bend/make it less dangerous? What do the developers intend to do about the A38/Pulley lane junction? We know they are installing traffic lights but do they intend to install two lanes at the junction for traffic filtering out of Pulley lane? i.e. one turning left to Worcester and another turning right to Droitwich? If yes, how are they going to achieve this?

Mr Hardwick, 26 Laurelwood Road

What steps can the Town Council take to ensure that the low cost social housing is spread evenly throughout the whole REDROW site, and not as proposed in a very confined cluster immediately backing onto the boundaries of Laurelwood Road.

In addition, can the Town Council support the need for a green buffer zone where the new REDROW houses back onto the existing boundaries of Laurelwood Road and Gorse Close. Similar buffer zones have been incorporated elsewhere on the site.

Mr Michael Thornton, 19 Wharfedale Crescent

Firstly I would like to know how the new salwarpe development and this one was not thought of together when it came to road access. There should have been a roundabout at the bottom of Pulley Lane and not on the a38 bypass. That still could happen as the bypass roundabout hasn't been built yet. I guess its too late now but very annoyed this wasn't thought of or insisted upon. Also Pulley Lane should have been connected to Showell Road when it was built and terminated from the A38 access. This would have given access to the large roundabout junction on the A38 Bypass. Going forward I would still restrict A38 access on Pulley Lane and instead build up Newland Road, this should connect to Primsland Way either directly or via Yew Tree Hill.

Mr & Mrs H Brennan, 22 Laurelwood Road

I wish to raise two points of objection to the building proposal.

1. The developer Redrow is proposing to locate all the affordable/social housing in one location directly behind houses in Laurelwood Road & Gorse Close rather than spread them evenly throughout the site, unlike other recent developments in our town.
2. The proposed properties run right up to our gardens borders without any greenery boundary to separate the development from the existing houses. This in my opinion is bad practice, do the Council members agree ? If so will they take appropriate action?

Thank you

Alan Dale, The Cottage, Newland Lane

I would like a question to be raised this evening which I raised at the Inquiry but to which I never received an answer.

“Why is it considered acceptable for Pulley Lane / Newland Lane to be 5.5 metre minimum width with no pavements, no lighting, hair pin bends and a 40mph limit whilst the roads from the new estates feeding these lanes will be straight, 6 metre wide, with lighting and pavements and a speed limit of 30mph.”

This is illogical and unsustainable but which in the case of Worcester CC Highways Department is not a barrier to proceeding as witnessed by the Martin Hussingtree junction fiasco or the mayhem at Whittington and Ketch Islands

John Brass, 16 Isaacs Way, Droitwich.

The outline planning applications to build 765 houses and a 200 bed care home on Yew Tree Hill were allowed on appeal following the Public Inquiry last year, against substantial opposition from the people of Droitwich. Reserved matters planning applications have now been made by two separate developers, Persimmon and Redrow, with the Redrow application being for phase 1 with further phases to follow. At the same time the new development of 740 houses at Copcut has already been started.

I am framing this question on behalf of the local community group SOGOS.

1. Will the Town Council use its influence to ensure that the resulting developments on Yew tree Hill are as safe and sustainable as possible, and to ensure that the enlarged infrastructures required for an additional 1700 dwellings on the south side of Droitwich are created in advance of these developments being completed? These infrastructures must include highways, utilities, drainage, schools, doctors, dentists and broadband. If they are not improved before this large increase in housing numbers is completed then overload will result and the existing residents of Droitwich, as well as the new residents, will suffer from poor service and loss of service.
2. Will the Town Council support the recent amendment requested by Redrow to leave Newland Road as it is now, a pedestrian and cycle route only, and to cancel the creation of a bus route on this narrow tree lined county lane, subject to the provision of a sustainable alternative for public transport being presented by the developers?
3. Will the Town Council do its best to ensure that County Highways are fully engaged in the planning for these developments at the junction of Pulley Lane and Copcut Lane with the A38, at the Martin Hussingtree traffic lights, at the connection of the new Copcut

development onto Roman Way, and most importantly that they are fully engaged in the safety planning for the increased traffic flow on Pulley Lane?

SOGOS intends to remain engaged with our local Councillors to help with achieving these goals.

Margaret Harle, 7 Laurelwood Close

A growing number of older people in the town would like to downsize from large family homes to smaller 2 bedroom houses or bungalows. Will any of these be included in the development? We do not want to be in starter homes surrounded by young families nor do we want to be in apartment blocks with only our own age group. We still want to be independent in a mixed community, just in smaller, high quality, easily maintained properties. Building these properties would mean that our family homes would be available on the market. We would still like to have a small garden to sit in with a cup of tea or hang out the washing, we need downstairs toilets and walk in showers! It would also be helpful to be on a bus route.

The above Questions were circulated at the meeting and presented by individuals.

Parish Councillor Mrs Barbara Meddings, Vice-Chairman of Hindlip, Martin Hussingtree & Salwarpe Parish Council was also in attendance and advised of the views of her Parish Council upon the applications.

The Chairman confirmed that as Wychavon District Council was the Local Planning Authority then all representations needed to be submitted as part of the planning consultation process. The role of the Town Council was that of statutory consultee. Eight members of the Town Council were also District Councillors of which three served on Wychavon District Council's Planning Committee. The Planning Officers would continue to liaise with the developers to bring forward the best scheme possible although it should be noted that the relevant planning approvals were granted on appeal to the Secretary of State.

Mr Drury referred to correspondence from SOGOS (Save Our Green Open Spaces) that Wychavon District Council Officers had not placed on the relevant part of the Planning Portal. The Town Clerk advised upon using the automated system and Councillor T J Noyes requested that these be sent to him and advised that he was on Wychavon's Planning Committee. Mr Drury reported that he had also requested specific comments from Karen Hanchett, the Development Management Manager with the Transport Planning Unit, Business, Environment and Community, Worcestershire County Council and received no response either.

During the Question Session it was agreed that the issues of the 'green buffer zones', road width, speeding and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horses etc as well as vehicular traffic should be taken into account.

The Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and invited them to remain for the meeting when consideration of the relevant planning applications would take place.