

BARTESTREE WITH LUGWARDINE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY
8 APRIL 2014 AT 7:00 PM IN BARTESTREE VILLAGE HALL**

Present:

Councillors: Cllr W Soilleux (Chair); G Davies (Vice-Chair); M Wilson; Mrs J Karayiannis; P Wargent; N Shore; M Postians; Mrs L Hoppé and R Williams

In Attendance:

Mrs E Wilson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 33

1. To Accept Apologies for Absence

Cllrs D Greenow; J Colley;

2. To Receive Declarations of Interests and Applications for Dispensations

Resolved: None Received

The Councillors considering Item 3 declared that they came to this Meeting with an open mind on this matter

3. To consider the following Planning Application

140757/O Land East of Church House and West of A438, Bartestree, Hereford
Residential development of up to 51 new dwellings of which 18 will be
affordable homes

Comments: Prior to the Parish Council considering the planning application, the 33 members of the public in attendance were invited to make constructive comments. Thereafter a detailed discussion took place among the members of the Parish Council.

Resolved: The Parish Council did not support the application with 7 of the 9 Councillors present voting against and 2 abstentions. They wished to submit the following comments:

A considerable number of the residents of Bartestree and Lugwardine are of the opinion that the villages would lose their current rural feel if further large developments were to take place beyond the considerable number that have taken place in the previous two plan periods. The group parish currently holds the position of third largest village in Herefordshire.

They are also incensed that Herefordshire Council has failed to protect them from the present/imminent development by not being able to demonstrate the five-year housing supply required by the National Planning Policy Framework and thus rendering the saved Unitary Development Plan policies H1 and H4 ineffective.

Location

The site is not in a sustainable location and is outside the main settlement boundary identified in the UDP. The SHLAA 2009 concluded that the lower part of the site had no potential during the Plan period and was rejected on the basis that it was "Remnant orchard in open countryside, too far removed from the settlement". This part of the site is designated as a 'Traditional Orchard' in spite of the fact that the fruit trees have been removed during the last few years.

Highway Safety/Access

The proposed site is on a difficult stretch of the A438. There is bend, which restricts visibility and the speed limit of 40 mph is often exceeded. Indeed one parishioner advised that he had lost both his grandfather and grandmother on that road 8 years ago.

It is already acknowledged that residents of Frome Park find it difficult to walk along the A438 towards the village of Bartestree. Should this development go ahead, pedestrian and cyclist access is going to be very poor and very dangerous. There is no footway into the village and the possibility of arranging for one is remote. Therefore, the only safe way into and out of the proposed development would be by car and therefore does not conform to preferred sustainability requirements.

The public right of way (PROW) BJ1 from west to east terminates at the A438 on a grass verge, which is extremely narrow and dangerous should pedestrians try to use it. Despite the application stating the contrary, the line of PROW BJ1 has been diverted to the south by about 20m, which means that it no longer ends opposite the start of PROW BJ2. This means crossing the A438 diagonally or walking along a very narrow grass verge to reach BJ2.

There are also concerns regarding the proposed pedestrian access at the west of the site. This is a long, unclassified narrow road with banks and hedges and no lighting. It is considered by residents that this would be entirely unsuitable for pedestrian access to the site.

Traffic

Residents are already concerned about the volume of traffic using the A438 in both directions between 7:30am and 9:30am on weekdays. This varies from 900 to 1200 vehicles daily in that period and any increase in that number as a result of a building development would be of further concern. Residents who live in properties along the A438 already experience delays when attempting to exit their driveways on to the main road. With a potential extra 100 vehicles this would add to the problems.

Sewage and Water

There are concerns that the current infrastructure would not support the development in terms of water supply, sewerage and surface water disposal. Correspondence with Welsh Water in relation to other proposed housing developments in the Group Parish indicates that those responsible for giving the go-ahead for these schemes are not fully cognizant of the many difficulties faced by residents in terms of low water pressure, sewage blockages and overflows.

Both Lugwardine and Bartestree suffer from raw sewage leakage in bad weather. There are residents in Bartestree who have had to pay to have their drains cleared on a regular basis due to the incapacity of the existing system.

Surface Water

The surface water from the proposed development will not be drained by the main sewer. It is proposed that surface water will be taken to a retention pond (SUDS) and then piped under the A438 to a watercourse.

Surface water from a modern housing estate of over 50 dwellings is not going to be clean, unpolluted water. Chemicals used for path cleaning, weed killing, car washing etc will be washed down with it, as well as effluent from vehicles and dog soiling and urine. This is bound to have an impact on the environment and will contaminate the Frome Brook into which the surface water will ultimately be directed.

Impact on Village

The Group Parish is at risk of becoming one long ribbon development, which is not in keeping and also out of character with the area. This is one of 4 applications for major development in the area. Bartestree will lose its village character and if the application were granted would open the floodgates for other developments, thereby damaging beyond repair the character of the village setting.

There was an ancient orchard on the plot until about 2 years ago. Trees have been taken down and hedges grubbed out – not to assist with farming activities but presumably to

make it useless for farming and in readiness for development. The public and the Parish Council feel that the orchard and hedges should be replanted. The Council was aware of the grubbing out activity at the time it took place.

Capacity

Given the number of proposed dwellings, there will be a large number of children of varying educational ages who will need to travel to school. There is little or no provision for the range of education that will be required, which will result in there being a greater volume of traffic ferrying them to and from alternative schools.

There is no recreation area for children within the site – save a pond, which could be dangerous.

Consultation

The developers have given no consideration to the views of the local people. No pre-application consultation was arranged with either the Parish Council or local residents and no information was distributed door-to-door.

Cumulative Effect

The Parish Council suggests that the cumulative impact of this application should be considered in light of the fact that a refused application for 50 houses is to be taken to appeal, with a likely further appeal relating to 30 houses. There are also 3 live applications and in a very short period of time Bartestree and Lugwardine could face the prospect of a potential increase of 192 dwellings, which would be increasing the number of properties by something approaching 25%. This would effectively destroy the villages of the Group Parish, as we know them.

4. To consider purchasing a Pay as You Go mobile Wi-Fi device for PC use

Resolved: It was agreed that a suitable device should be purchased to include a running cost of up to £150 per annum

5. To approve the final version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaire

Resolved: Pursuant to Standing Order 32 the Parish Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders for this Item on the Agenda. Contrary to Order 11(a) we rescind the decision taken at the Meeting on the 11 March 2014 Item Number 9.2. The NDP Questionnaire will return to the Steering Group for further consideration

6. To approve the final version of the completed Parish Plan

Comments: This matter was resolved at the Meeting on 11 March 2014

Resolved: Withdrawn from the Agenda

7. To agree payment of Parish Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks for 2014 £87.00 plus Joining Fee £8.

Resolved: Agreed

Meeting concluded at 8:15pm

.....
Signature of Chair

Date: 13 May 2014