

ACTON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of the Special Meeting held on Monday 4th Nov 2019 at 7-00pm in the Parish Rooms.

Present R Holt – Chairman
 T Brocklebank
 C Ballantyne-Roberts
 R Forbes
 D Hall
 D Edwards
 Clr G Edwards CW&C

Apologies H Bayley
 Clr P Williams CW&C

Clr C Fifield had declared an interest (being on the CW&C planning Committee), and did not participate.

There were eighty one members of the public present.

Background

Planning application 19/03689/FUL had been submitted to Chester West and Chester Council to install nine 'Park Homes' at the former Nursery on Station Road.

The Parish Council had invited all residents of the Village (via a 'flyer' delivered to all properties) to discuss the proposals and to hear the views and opinions of residents so that the Parish Council can respond accordingly to the application.

Meeting Notes

To assist residents in the understanding of the planning process the Chairman gave brief descriptions of:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), is the definitive document to all planning in England. Covers building in the Green Belt which includes all Acton Bridge.

Local Plans and Policies Part 1 & 2 – as prepared and applied by CW&C, covers building in the Green Belt.

Neighbourhood Plans (Localism Act) – draw up resident's views for structure in the area. Previous meetings with Senior CW&C Officers had confirmed Green Belt status was the best protection for Acton Bridge as Neighbourhood plans don't carry the same weight.

Planning Procedures and Applications – All applications are made to CW&C who are responsible for and make the decisions. The Parish Council are consulted and send their views to CW&C. Applications may be assigned to a single planning officer or be referred to the Planning Committee. When necessary, applications can be 'called in' by an appropriate CW&C Councillor for decision by the full Planning Committee not just the assigned Planning Officer.

The Parish Council – expresses views based on National Planning Framework and Local Plans and Policies. They may consult further with residents to get their views. However, they have no jurisdiction on whether the application is approved or not.

The Station Road location – Outline of the site and the previous applications for development / use of the Site. The Parish Council had written previously to Cheshire West to try and get the derelict site returned to open land, but to no avail. The site is Green Belt and there has been no change to status.

Application 19/03689/FUL – is for 9 park homes on the site. The Agent had contacted the Chairman and said the site would be similar to the one at Bartington, the park homes might be rented, or brought, but the land would be owned by the current Applicant. He had wanted to attend the Parish Council meeting, but unfortunately, he was on holiday.

Mobile Home Act 2013 covers site set up, site plans and rules and site management

Existing comments on the application on the Planning website – there already some comments, including Network Rail concerning the positions of fences and also comments on the Public footpaths not being supported.

The meeting was opened for views and debate. The following items and topics were raised:

- Visibility of Planning site comments – restrictions on the public's comments in place due to GPDR
- Further clarification on the history of the site and the previous planning application for 17 dwellings
- Refusal of previous applications due to Green Belt status and previous approval specifically for horticulture so as not to destroy Green Belt Status
- Park homes vs mobile homes – is there any difference?
- Current Planning status – no Planning Officer assigned.
- Planning application omission - There is no Ecology or habitat survey, no environmental impact assessment
- What happens to the land if Planning applications are consistently refused?
- Traffic and environmental issues - there are known issues with Traffic on Station Road
- Should the Parish Council instigate a Neighbourhood or Village plan? It could stipulate materials to be used in future applications
- Setting precedents for the future – there is no precedent in Planning? There has to be very special circumstances for development on Green Belt land.
- Considerable amount of building development in and around Northwich and surrounding areas – Green Belt being eroded
- Application only states one accident – factually incorrect (16 serious incidents logged at time of previous application), also errors in comments on planning etc
- Land and paddock adjacent to plot in question, is there likelihood that this will also be developed as per previous applications? Who owns this land?
- Who actually owns the plot in question? Is this a speculative application?
- The existing brick building – is it suggested it will be a shop? Could encourage more traffic
- Mitigating the noise of the Railway (previous application). Mobile/Park homes don't need to meet same building regs as other buildings – how are residents going to be protected from railway noise levels?
- Difference in regulations for new build vs park homes
- Lack of Consultees included in the planning application – who has decided on Consultees/Advisors for this application?
- Rental vs purchase of park homes – Agent said residents may also bring their own park home to the designated pitch.
- How is it going to be possible to restrict to over 50s?
- Affordable housing – should it be part of a neighbourhood plan?
- Would a Neighbourhood plan protect against what seems to be wholesale building on Green Belt land in CW&C?
- Architectural style for main entrance into the village – should be in keeping
- Is it relevant that Councils need to ensure sites for Travellers? – This application is for Park Homes, not a traveller site.
- Commercial viability of management of 9 Park homes - Bartington expansion refused, but can't make site viable for 44 park homes – how can 9 be made viable?
- Concern over honesty of the application due to the number of errors
- Procedural comments on the Planning website, all comments from previous applications have disappeared.

In conclusion, the meeting was asked for a show of hands to indicate for or against the application. There was none in favour and all present (81 residents) were against the proposed development.

Signed(Chairman)

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