

MINUTES of the meeting of Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Wednesday 23 September 2009 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor PJ Watts (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)

Councillors: WLS Bowen, ME Cooper, JHR Goodwin, KG Grumbley, B Hunt, RC Hunt, TW Hunt, PJ McCaull, R Mills, PM Morgan, RJ Phillips, A Seldon, RV Stockton and J Stone

In attendance: Councillor JG Jarvis

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors JW Hope MBE, LO Barnett, JP French and TM James.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

44. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 August 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45. ITEM FOR INFORMATION - APPEALS

The Sub-Committee noted the Council's current position in respect of planning appeals in the northern area of Herefordshire.

46. DCNC2009/0748/F - THE PADDOCKS, NORMANS LANE, STOKE PRIOR, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR6 0LQ.

Change of use of land from agriculture to a one family traveller site, including stationing of one mobile home, two touring caravans and day/washroom - part retrospective

In accordance with the criteria for public speaking, Mr Marsden spoke on behalf of Humber, Stoke Prior & Ford Group Parish Council, Mr Hubbard spoke in objection to the application and Mr Baines spoke in support.

Councillor KG Grumbley, the Local Ward Member, was of the view that the development was unauthorised and on a green field site and said that it was also the second retrospective application by the occupants.

In response to a number of questions from the Local Ward Member, The Central Team Leader said that he had no way of confirming how many people lived on the traveller's site. In response to concerns regarding access to the site, he advised that a mobile home could still be regarded as being "mobile" if it was delivered in two parts. In response to Councillor Grumbley's comments on the site's outbuildings, the Central Team Leader agreed that there was definite room to improve the condition of the building and stables.

Councillor Grumbley said that he could not support the development as he felt there was insufficient need for it. He proposed that planning permission be refused as he regarded it as an unnecessary development on green field land which would contravene Herefordshire's Unitary Development Plan E15. He said that a scrutiny review undertaken by the Environment Scrutiny Committee revealed that existing travellers' pitches in Herefordshire were under occupied by some 28%. He said that he was not satisfied that the occupants of the site fulfilled the criteria for travellers.

Councillor WLS Bowen said that he felt it was essential that the applicants should prove beyond doubt that they did satisfy the criteria. He also asked why existing empty pitches were not in full use. The Central Team Leader said that a number of supporting documents had been received with the planning application and that the Planning Authority was satisfied that the applicant had met all the required merits. Regarding the unoccupied pitches, the Central Team Leader confirmed that there was still a shortfall within the county. He added that the application site met the criteria for becoming a travellers' site as it was close enough to relevant amenities.

Councillor R Mills said that a similar application had been submitted in his own ward which the local community opposed. He said that the fears were unfounded and proposed that a time limited permission should be granted for perhaps 1 to 2 years. In response to Councillor Mills' suggestion the Central Team Leader said that if the site was suitable, a time limited planning permission would risk a lost appeal.

Councillor RJ Phillips pointed out the potential cost of a lost appeal when it appeared all the necessary planning matters were resolved. He supported Councillor Mills' call for a temporary planning permission to be granted especially if there were remaining issues regarding the authenticity of the applicant's traveller status.

Members were in agreement that if there were a number of issues of concern relating to the application including the number of people occupying the site, access, sewerage arrangements and overall condition.

Councillor Grumbley again emphasised that he felt the development was not needed especially on such a green field site.

The committee voted in favour of Councillor Grumbley's original proposal that planning permission be refused.

RESOLVED

The Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee is minded to refuse the application subject to the reasons for refusal set out below (and any further reasons for refusal felt to be necessary by the Head of Planning and Transportation) provided that the Head of Planning and Transportation does not refer the application to the Planning Committee.

- **The application is an unnecessary development on green field land**

If the Head of Planning and Transportation does not refer the application to the Planning Committee, officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be instructed to refuse the application subject to such reasons for refusal referred to above.

47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21 October 2009
18 November 2009

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

CHAIRMAN