

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF HEPTONSTALL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD AT CROSS HILL, SMITHWELL LANE, HEPTONSTALL, 20 JULY 2015

Present : Councillors J Scarborough (Chairman) J Crowther M V Edwards
K Roberts & S Slater

(Also planning applicant Mr S Holt, Calderdale MBC Ward Councillor J Battye + approximately 30 members of the public)

58/15 APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors A Baldwin, Dr J R Dunford, N James & B Stott.

Approval of absences was neither sought nor granted.

59/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No Disclosable Interests were declared.

60/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman invited the developer to address the attendees and walk the public and Council members around the site. He then invited comment from members of the public, with a main spokesperson being nominated to comment.

Mr Holt was open to questions and answered with clarity.

There was a strong feeling against this application proceeding, concern particularly concentrating on :

- Adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt
- No 'Special Circumstances' to warrant development in the Green Belt
- Agricultural reduction of the landscape
- Inappropriate and unsustainable development
- Access to site : not permitted through Heptonstall Village, single track road via Lee Wood, traffic lights, unstable road, corner turn at Slack Bottom. Also many parked vehicles on the access route.
- Impact on the character of the village and the Conservation Area
- Strong opposition from Calderdale MBC Highways Dept.

61/15 PLANNING

The following **Planning Applications** were considered :

- **PA 15/00844/FUL : Change of use agricultural land to touring caravan site (30 pitches) including facilities building – land off Smithwell Lane at Cross Hill, Heptonstall**

It was resolved to object to this proposed development.

PREPARATION OF THE SITE

In an attempt to minimise the visual impact of this site (in Green Belt and is a Special Landscape Area) the developer explained the preparations which would be undertaken. This would mean heightening the stone walls and reshaping the fields by lowering the ground surface by many feet. This would require the removal of several thousand tons of spoil for the whole area.

Members expressed great concern at this aspect of the proposal. Vehicles to carry out this work would not be able (or allowed) to traverse the village street to gain access and egress of the site. The route via Lee Wood Road is unstable, has a weight restriction and is single track in parts. The volume of journeys to carry out the work is likely to seriously damage this access road.

THE APPLICATION

(a) The fields lie within Green Belt and it would be necessary to demonstrate 'very special circumstances' for development to be permitted. Members agreed this was not proven as it fails to preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

The remodelling (scalping) of the fields would seriously have a detrimental visual impact on this iconic site.

(b) As a touring caravan site vehicles and trailers would need to access the site via Lee Wood Road and then turning left to the site at Slack Bottom. The size and width of the vans would make such access difficult, as described in the 'Preparation of the Site' above. Additionally, the approach to the village by this route would pass many vehicles parked on this road as a result of insufficient parking in the immediate locality.

(c) The development would be harmful to the character and appearance of a Special Landscape Area and the Heptonstall Village Conservation Area.

(d) Foul water drainage for the village is already an issue of concern. This would be exacerbated by the additions caused by the proposed development.

(e) Finally, if the Planning Authority is mindful to approve the Parish Council requests that this item is 'called in' for committee decision and requests that a site visit would be undertaken.

- **PA 15/00832/HSE : New porch to front elevation – 3 Townfield, Heptonstall**

No objection arose.

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(Chairman)

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(Date)