

**Minutes of Little Bealings Parish Council meeting held at Bealings Village Hall at 7.15pm  
on Wednesday 31 January 2018**

**Present:** Mrs M Wilson (Chairman), Mrs T Cornish, Dr C Hopkins, Mr I Ransome and Mr B Rufford

**Also present:** The owners and agents in respect of land at Grove Farm buildings and six residents

**In attendance:** Mrs C Ramsden, Clerk to the Council

## **1 Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests**

Apologies were received from Mr D Hunter, who was away and from Ms D Head. It was **RESOLVED:**

- To accept the apologies for absence.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

## **2 Public Participation Session**

### **2.1 Proposed Development of Farm Buildings at Grove Farm, The Street**

One of the owners of the site explained that the site was family owned and had had previous permission for B1 [office and light industrial] use. The site was not in any use at present and was derelict, but they were not simply out to 'make money' by suggesting, say, 300 houses. They were proposing nine houses, in a well laid out development.

The agents for the application presented two boards showing concept designs for residential development of the site and explained:

- That they were aware of the history of the site and some of the issues which had arisen previously, and had prepared a presentation which showed the crux of a proposed planning application for residential development.
- The nine houses had been positioned where the existing farm buildings, hard standing and concrete track are, and kept to the same core area of the site. However, they had pulled the houses back to retain views into the valley. They would be screened from the side by existing trees. The design tried to reflect the topography of the site. The current built footprint was some 2,500 square metres. The houses would cover some 800 square metres, which was a significant decrease.
- The layout would use the existing site access from The Street, meaning traffic movements would be the same as now, along the central track.
- The site was not without restrictions, including a flood risk issue.
- They had tried to find an alternative use for the disused site. Commercial use [B1] had not been attractive to anyone, which left the alternatives of agricultural use or residential development. Agricultural use would probably be limited to livestock, but the site

was challenging for this. Residential development was the logical use.

- The building materials would be a 'local' style, eg in the choice of roofing and bricks. The layout would not be homogenous or create a street scape. They did not intend to build an estate, rather provide bespoke houses of quality.
- The development would remove the derelict buildings and would contribute new use to sustain village facilities - for example the School.
- The site already had services - water, drainage and electric - although it was not a brownfield site. It was also not a greenfield site. The proposals were a scoping of the concept and they would seek an outline consent before deciding other aspects.

Residents and Councillors commented as below, to which the agents responded:

Comment: When B1 use was approved, the buildings were to be further into the site and away from Grove Farm House. This development positioned one house closer to the property than before. Any view along the valley was actually further away and not from the front of the site.

Response: The proximity of the houses and any overlooking would be taken on board. The houses could be turned around, on narrower footprints and/or moved away. Screening could also be provided, with an eight to ten metre planted buffer zone.

Comment: The proposal for housing some 15 years ago had been for four or five houses. These were slightly smaller houses, but more of them. Therefore there will be increased use of the access track.

Response: They are currently working with highways engineers, including over refuse vehicle access. It was tricky to propose a commercially viable development. They were trying to find a balance between the site continuing to have no use and being unattractive, and finding a developer to take it on. Clearing the site would be costly and the number of houses to be built needed to be high enough to make the site attractive to a developer. They had included a mix of sizes of houses:

Three x 2/3 bedrooms (80 square metres)  
 Three x 3/4 bedrooms (140 - 150 square metres)  
 Three x 4+ bedrooms (200 square metres)

They did not know if any Affordable Housing would be included. There was the option to provide two or three or to pay a commuted sum to SCDC for them to be provided elsewhere. There was also the option that some houses could be 'self - build', and/or the site could be built in stages.

Comment: What are the services currently on the site? The electricity supply is attached to an existing property.

Response: There is a water and electric supply. Surface water disposal would need to be sustainable and not piped. Surfaces would be provided which allowed slow release of rain water to avoid flooding. Foul water and sewerage disposal would be by means of a new private sewer plant

installation. The existing electric supply would not be used and a new supply would be laid.

Comment: The access was very narrow and at times the farm machinery had problems using it; had they considered accessing the site another way? How would existing access to garages be accommodated and responsibility for maintenance established?

Response: This was a matter for a highway consultant, but there was no other access to the site at present. Private rights of way would not be affected and would continue by farm traffic and residents. They were aware the access was narrow and the central track had to be retained to allow farm vehicle access. A new surfaced road would be provided, which would need to be robust enough to accommodate existing and proposed private vehicular use and farm vehicles. They did not know if it would be adopted as highway by SCC, but it would be built to adoptable standard. Private maintenance would be resolved if it was not adopted. Parking would be at the houses and not on the central road.

Comment: It was previously considered commercially viable to convert just the first building into the site into houses, why is that not the case now?

Response: The basis of previous viability was not known, but the cost of clearing the whole site meant that it was not an economic option now. They wanted to move forward and were in discussion on planning, landscaping, access, services, viability and overlooking issues. They would deal with these issues as they proceeded and design accordingly.

They would make contact and speak directly with site near neighbours, separately to Council meetings, before making an application to SCDC.

Comment: How would demolition be carried out to control noise and disturbance, and especially as there was thought to be asbestos on site?

Response: There would be a site survey and any asbestos would be dealt with by a registered contractor.

Comment: The water table was very high, would they get permission to discharge into the Fynn?

Response: There would be no discharge other than as allowed by the water authority. An attenuation pond was included in the layout to take the calculated outflow of surface water.

### 3 Planning

#### 3.1 Update on Applications

**SCC\0235\17: Variation of condition 1 of planning permission SCC\0215\16c – Extension of time until 19 December 2019 to permit removal of stockpiles and restoration of land to former levels: Kesgrave Quarry, Sinks Pit, Kesgrave Road. Kesgrave**

It was confirmed that the draft minute of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 should state:

- That there was no objection to the extension of time, but it was requested that a condition should require that no work was undertaken between May and September each year, to avoid noise

disturbance to nearby properties.

### **3.2 Development of Grove Farm Buildings at Grove Farm, The Street**

It was noted that:

- the site was outside the village envelope in which development was permitted, and that previously the Council had resolved to retain this envelope boundary
- there was no identified need for new housing; there were no employers in the village
- the access to the site was of concern, given that there was no visibility to the left when exiting
- an additional nine houses would generate movements by 18 cars and, if each house was filled with a family, would effect a 10% increase in the village population. The School was already full.
- there were no pavements in The Street and more road walking would result.
- the fact that the site was in an attractive location was not a reason to develop it as proposed.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- that development of the site would be considered strategically by the Council before any view was formed on the current proposals, given that the Village Review in 2013 had not identified any need for housing and the site was outside the physical limits boundary of the village
- that any need for housing and the proposed development of the site would be flagged as a key issue to be considered by residents at the Village Review arranged for 5 March 2018
- that, if asbestos is present on the site, this was a separate issue and did not justify any development.

## **4 Date of Next Meeting**

The next Parish Council meeting would be held on 12 March, with the Annual Parish Meeting, including a Village Review, taking place on 5 March.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 8.15 pm.