

# **TEMPLE SOWERBY PARISH COUNCIL**

An extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council was held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in the Victory Hall at 7pm.

## **Apologies**

Kevin Overs, Chairman of the Parish Council  
Martyn Cannon, Vice Chairman of Parish Council  
Caroline Fennell, Clerk to the Council

Present were Angela Mathers (AM), Jonathan Richardson (JR), Caryl Varty (CV), Henry Sawrey-Cookson (HSC), Rosemary Connolly and Joseph Connolly (applicants), 15 parishioners

## **Request for Dispensations**

None

## **Declarations of Interest**

None

## **Adjournment of Meeting**

AM introduced the meeting stating that the reason for calling the meeting was to ascertain parishioners views before the Parish Council responded to the recent Planning Application 17/0334 – Erection of Dwellings on Land to SE of Templars Court. She stated that only residents of the village had been sent invitations to the meeting. AM noted that the Agent for the Landowner had also attended, but that the meeting was indeed open to the public. AM further reminded residents they were entitled to submit their own comments to EDC by 23/06/2017. AM then opened the meeting to the floor, inviting comments from parishioners.

A resident of Templars Court emotionally stated that they bought their home as a “dream come true” away from any buildings. It overlooked a field and research had shown the field had been turned down for development, which is why they bought their home. Also she was concerned that if this development goes ahead, it could extend further. They could see no other reason for putting a road into the plan, other than it opening the field up for further development.

It was stated that the development would directly impact houses on the opposite side of the former A66, in that it would impact their right to light and block out all sunlight from over Cross Fell.

It was feared that the development, once started would increase, first being 6 houses, and then extending to 12, and then an estate.

The question was raised as to whether there was a need for any housing, particularly given other recent applications such as that on land at Linden Park and the suggested conversion of Temple Sowerby House Hotel.

Residents were concerned that there was a constant problem of overflowing sewerage at the bottom of the field, and that the water table was very high, since water regularly rose into the cellars of properties alongside the former A66. Questions were posed as to what would happen to the water table if there was building in the field. Furthermore, it was stated that the Moss was a natural flood plain with rare flora & fauna and the field not suitable for building.

A resident of Templars Court was very concerned about the loss of light, since plot 1 was only 6 metres away. Another resident stated that the distance from his house wall to the wall of the adjacent proposed property would be only 11m, including the garden and access road.

Concerns were raised that the former A66 had become a “rat run” for traffic between the bypass and Culgaith and that 2 cars per house in the new development would add to the problem. Furthermore, since there was no longer a bus service, the development would bring a further 6 properties which would have to use cars into the village.

AM clarified that the categorisation of Temple Sowerby had changed in the soon to be adopted Local Plan, into a “village/hamlet”. HSC confirmed that because the new Local Plan was shortly to be adopted a lot of weight would be put on it.

Questions were raised about the tree on the old A66 adjacent to the proposed development. There was concern about the tree roots and that it might be damaged by the development, and also concern that the tree would block the line of sight into the road from plots 1 and 2 to the left, causing a road safety issue.

Discussion turned to drainage. It was noted that the plans stated that residents would be responsible for keeping the drainage system clean, but there was doubt expressed as to whether this would happen, and the consequences for the field and Moss if drainage was not properly attended to. There was also concern that the proposed pond was close to the school and footpath and as such might be a safety hazard.

A resident asked the council to explain the environmental issues. It was explained that the Moss is an SSSI and is less than 200m from the development. The council was concerned about the environmental impact, such as surface water draining into the Moss. It was stated that surface water draining from Eden Meadows had already had a deleterious impact on the Moss and this development was likely to exacerbate that.

Joseph Connelly explained that they had designed a 2-stage treatment for surface water and that the pond was designed to contain and slowly release water, so that there would be a reduction in run-off.

A question was raised about planning permission and why, despite this application being in a conservation area, outline-only permission had been given. It was explained that this was granted at the discretion of the planning officer and that the parish council had queried the decision, not least because an outline plan lacked the requisite detail regarding distances, design, and materials and that it could be changed at full planning permission stage.

Clarification was sought about development in a conservation area and it was explained that development was not precluded from a conservation area but that that development should be sympathetic.

The need for further development in the village was queried. It was stated that there are properties for sale, which are not selling or taking a long time to sell, and that there are lots of second homes. Furthermore, there were no affordable houses for the young people of the village.

Joseph Connelly explained that because it is outline planning permission, there was no detail about affordability and that that would be dealt with at the full planning stage.

Questions were raised about the purpose of the access road. It was stated that it was to keep the parking at the back, away from the main road, in keeping with some other traditional properties in the village. However, there was deep anxiety that its real purpose was to facilitate unlimited development.

In answer to a question about the tree, Mr Connelly stated that it actually met highways requirements. Furthermore, he said that it didn't have a Tree Preservation Order, but was protected because it was in the conservation area. He stressed that it had been tested as providing acceptable visibility for a 30mph road. This gave rise to the contention that although nominally a 30mph road, traffic in fact travelled much faster and reversing out into the road could become a road safety issue.

A new concern was raised about the underlying subsidence of the site. A geological survey had apparently shown that that the land could be prone to subsidence, which would make it unsuitable for building.

Parishioners were concerned about the disruption which would be caused by building work for months and where the site access would be. It was explained that these details, including permitted times for construction, would be contained in the paperwork at full planning stage.

A question was raised about the unique scientific composition of the Moss, whether it was a "bubble" resting on the surface of the land, and what was the explanation for the French drain.

Mr Connelly said it would be like a ditch. He said that natural water in the Moss wouldn't drain into it. JR & AM confirmed that the Environmental Agency and Natural England would be consulted and that if there was a potentially detrimental issue, they would put it in writing to the planner.

4 letters had been received by the council from parishioners and these were summarised. The issue of mains drains and sewerage was raised again. There was concern that there was insufficient capacity for any new properties. Mr Connelly stated that there were 2 solutions – either that United Utilities would connect the properties to the mains drain or that septic tanks would be used and would be included in the maintenance contract of the properties. He said he was currently in talks with UU as to whether they would adopt the drains.

CV asked Mr and Mrs Connelly what their real intentions were in respect of further development. Mrs Connelly said that the land was owned by her mother and she did not know what her plans were, but that whatever happened was her decision.

Concern was voiced about the school which was already stated to be at capacity and had no room for further students.

There was some discussion about the boundary wall and the old toll bar, which was stated to be of archaeological interest. Furthermore, for those residents who overlooked the field, the threat of development in front of their properties was highly emotional and it would totally change the setting of their properties, at least one of which was listed. There was a great deal of concern about open space being taken away and the creation of a claustrophobic environment.

Parishioners were reminded that the application was likely to go before the planning committee on 20 July.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed ..... Date .....