

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

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Minutes

Planning Committee Meeting

Monday 23rd September 2024 7:30 p.m.

The School Room Witnesham Baptist Church

- 1. Present:** Jerry Hindle (chair), Chris Collings, Andy Dungey, Tim Burrows, Kim Shaw and David Roots.

In attendance, SCCllr Elaine Bryce and 50 members of the public who were invited to leave their email addresses for future communication.

- 2. Councillors' declarations of interest:**

- re Item 5a, JH is a member of the Fynn Valley Golf Club
- re item 5b, JH is a near neighbour

- 3. Minutes of the meeting of 14th August 2024** were approved and signed by the Chair.

- 4. ESC decisions received since the meeting of 14th August 2024** – None.

- 5. Planning Applications for consideration:**

a - SCC/0092/24SC/SCREEN Land at Westerfield Road, Westerfield EIA Scoping Request for the Extraction and Processing of Sand and Gravel, Recycling of Inert Materials, and Associated Infrastructure. EIA Scoping Request for the Extraction and Processing of Sand and Gravel, Recycling of Inert Materials, and Associated Infrastructure.

The Chair introduced the application, confirming the PC as a consultee to the scoping of an Environment Impact Assessment and that this was not a planning application which was likely to follow. He covered the main elements of the proposal.

The meeting was closed and comments were invited from the public. SCCllr EB confirmed her opposition to the proposed development. She was aware of the strength of feeling against the development and the problems, dust, noise, vibration and traffic. Many people echoed their opposition to the development and the detrimental impact it would have on the three local villages. There was a call for joint action from the Parish Councils and the local communities to oppose the development. Detailed comments were noted by Clerk for future reference.

The meeting was resumed and the Chair read out a draft resolution, adding points made by the public, which was then considered and debated by the Planning Committee.

The Parish Council agreed to send the following response to Suffolk County Council:

**SCC/0092/24SC/SCREEN Land at Westerfield Road, Westerfield EIA Scoping Request ..etc
Consultation response to SCC**

The Parish Council appreciates this SCC consultation is for what should be included in an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed development but from the outset it wishes to express its strong opposition to the principle of the proposed minerals development. This would have a huge detrimental impact on the amenity, health and wellbeing, traffic and local environment of the Witnesham and Swilland, Westerfield and Tuddenham communities and further afield. The introduction of an industrial type quarrying and processing operation is wholly inappropriate in close proximity to the populations of these three communities. For the EIA scoping, the Parish Council asks that the direct and indirect impacts as well as the short-, medium- and longer-term impacts of the proposed development are taken account of for the following matters;

Population

An assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the local population and communities of Witnesham and Swilland, Westerfield and Tuddenham and further afield, including Ashbocking , Henley and Otley. A thorough assessment needs to be made of the potential impacts on these communities as a whole and particularly the residents, occupiers and businesses in close proximity to the site, as a result of noise and vibration disturbance, dust, air quality, and light pollution from the extraction, processing and the infill of materials throughout the lifetime of the development. This should apply particularly for those properties at Fairfields, Fynn Valley Golf Club, Cockfield Hall Lane and Rose Hill, Witnesham, the 1,000 golf club users and the population of the whole of Witnesham and Swilland, taking into consideration the impact of being downwind of the prevailing south west winds.

Human Health and Well being

Consideration needs to be given to the impact that the development would have on the health, both physical and mental of the residents of our community, inter alia the impact of dust, noise and vibration disturbance, air quality, contamination, and general public health and safety. Particular assessment needs to be taken of the impact of noise and dust for residents and golf club users, including the volume and repetition of reversing machinery (The continual ongoing day after day noise of reversing machinery with the development of Wittens Meadow Witnesham, has caused much local anxiety to residents)

Traffic

The submission notes that the development will generate on average an estimated 126 HGV movements (20 tonnes) and 30 light vehicle movements daily meaning 32,760 additional lorries per annum for the course of the 16-year lifespan of the development. A thorough and in-depth Traffic Assessment is required looking at the impact of increased traffic movements that would be generated by this proposal. The B1077 through Witnesham to and beyond the B1078 at Ashbocking and through Westerfield to the A1214, Ipswich will be a main route for vehicle

movements. It is already a busy road with a Level Crossing that causes long tail backs each working day. Consideration needs to be had to the impact on congestion times and air pollution, particularly at key nodal points such as the Westerfield cross-road, Westerfield Level Crossing and Westerfield/ Colchester Road roundabout. This should include an assessment of the increase in carcinogens in particulate matter from the diesel lorries and their brakes. Also, account needs to be taken of the additional weight impact of lorry movements on the working of Westerfield level crossing and on the vulnerable water main down Rose Hill Witnesham. Network Rail, and Anglia Water, respectively, need to be consulted on this. Consideration needs to be given to any impact on the national gas main (Cadet) and underground power lines (Scottish Power) that cross the B1077.

An assessment is required for the impact of increased traffic on other local roads particularly Lower Road, and Church Road Westerfield and Henley Road and Tuddenham Road, Ipswich and going north on the B1078 and the dangerous junctions at Nelson Cross Roads, Gibraltar Road and Otley Bottom

A full assessment is required of the impact of increased lorry movements through Witnesham and Swilland, including High Road Swilland. It should take into account the disturbance and noise and pollution of increased HGV movements on the relatively steep gradients of the four hills on the B1077 through Witnesham.

A full assessment of the immediate and wider impacts of congestion from the additional traffic generated by the proposed development should be undertaken. This needs to be considered in the context of cumulative traffic generated from other developments/activities known or planned to take place over the lifetime of the development, such as that from developments at Ipswich Garden Suburb, and Humber Doucy Lane, and further afield, particularly the potential supply of sand and gravel for Sizewell C.

In addition, the impact on highway safety, including for cyclists and pedestrians in Witnesham needs to be considered, particularly the safety of cyclists and increased lorry movements on the hills through the village and for pedestrian use of the narrow roadside pavements around the two narrow sharp bends by Fynn Bridge and all the way through the village up to the school. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the impact on air quality as a result of the additional traffic movements that would be generated.

Landscape and Heritage Assets

Visual impact on landscape character and quality, particularly the open farmed landscape needs to be assessed as does, the visual loss of amenity to the landscape on the Westerfield village edge and adjacent to Fynn Valley Golf Course to residents and users, including travelers on the B1077

The impact of the development on architectural and archaeological heritage. There are a number of heritage assets, including designated Listed Buildings in proximity of the proposed development site, including Westerfield Hall (and associated buildings) and Swans Nest.

Biodiversity

Consideration needs to be given to the ecological impact of the development, on flora and fauna, including any protected species and habitats that might be present at the site or in its vicinity that could be affected. It is noted that the proposals are likely to affect existing hedgerows for example. It is also important to understand how the development will achieve appropriate biodiversity net gain.

Amenity and Light Pollution

The impact of the development on amenity, including the enjoyment of public and private spaces, including the Fynn Valley Golf Club and Course, and on public rights of way in proximity of the site and along the Fynn valley.

This should include the impact of flood lighting required in working and non-working hours, on residential amenity, landscape character and biodiversity.

Hydrology

What are the implications of the development on drainage and flood risk, and what measures and infrastructure are proposed to mitigate against flood risk. An assessment should also be undertaken of any potential impact on water quality, as a result of surface run-off and contamination, and if necessary what mitigation will be put in place. An assessment is required of the impact on the source, treatment, reuse and drainage of the large volumes of water needed for the sand and gravel processing and possible concrete making. Will extraction affect the hydrology of the local water table?

Associated infrastructure, material storage and processing

The assessment will need to fully demonstrate the impacts of all aspects of the proposal, including any proposed on-site storage and processing of materials, including the processing of inert materials, such as crushing concrete that could be brought to the site. Also, the storage of heavy plant and machinery, and any associated built development, infrastructure, and landscaping that might be temporary in nature, or that will be in situ throughout the lifespan of the development.

Future Use

There needs to be a clear understanding of any environmental impacts that may arise or be ongoing after the cessation of the gravel working and infill operations and how these might be monitored. There should also be an impact assessment of the future restoration and long term after use of the site.

Environmental Impact mitigation, compensation and monitoring

The assessment should provide comprehensive statements as to how the identified impacts are to be mitigated or compensated for. It should also clearly provide how the environmental impacts are to be monitored over the lifetime of the development and for a specified period afterwards, the monitoring of the waste infill.

Economic Impact

The Parish Council recognises that an EIA does not include scoping for economic impacts. This proposed development could have a considerable impact on some local businesses, including Fynn Valley Golf Course. The Parish Council asks SCC to scope an economic impact assessment of the proposed development.

Parish Council also agreed to following actions to;

- 1) Keep local residents as best informed as the PC can through the planning process for the proposal.
- 2) Liaise with Westerfield, Tuddenham and other PCs in opposing the proposal in leading up to any planning application.
- 3) To consider PC funding that might be contributed to joint funding with other PCs and public funding in opposing the proposal
- 4) Request SCCllr Elaine Bryce to;
 - a) keep the PC informed of developments in the proposal;
 - b) to exert as much influence as possible with SCC in opposing the development and
 - c) seek a copy of any SCC Pre Planning Advice that was given to the applicants.
- 5) Seek support from East Suffolk to keep us informed on how ESC is responding to the proposal and to exert as much influence as possible with ESC in opposing the development.
- 6) Seek support from Patrick Spencer MP in opposing the proposal
- 7) In response to TRU7 notice to the PC of 13 September, ask TUR7 to attend a public meeting, Chaired by the Parish Council for Witlesham residents and to be held before a PLanning Application is submitted

b - ESC - DC/24/0266/FUL & DC/24/0267/FUL Demolition of agricultural buildings and erection of 1no. new dwelling (Plot 1)

DC/24/0267/FUL Change of use of agricultural buildings to 2no. new dwellings (Plots 2 and 3)

The Chair introduced the two applications which were taken together which were re-consultations with minor amendments.

There was an input from a member of the public concerned on foul and surface water drainage. The developer for the application stated that it was willing to conform to all planning requirements. Committee consider the application

DC/24/0266/FUL Decision; No objection but the Planning Authority should be fully satisfied that adequate measures are taken with foul and surface water drainage. Concern was expressed that the combination of the farm house, the two existing rented accommodations and the three new dwellings would constitute a "housing cluster" which might allow other added development.

DC/24/0267/FUL Decision; No objection but the Planning Authority should be fully satisfied that adequate measures are taken with foul and surface water drainage. Concern was expressed that the combination of the farm house, the two existing rented accommodations and the three new dwellings would constitute a "housing cluster" which might allow other added development.

6. **Street Farm;** There had been a Committee site visit and application would again be considered an ESC Committee meeting 24th September 2024 – JH to attend and present the PCs objection to the proposed development
7. **Wittens Meadow;** There was a need to clarify off site surface water drainage and the footpath
8. **Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council Planning Committee.**
None.

Meeting closed at 21.10