

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RUSHTON PARISH COUNCIL
held Via Zoom on Wednesday 7th April 2021 at 7.30pm**

**To Discuss Planning app
21/00650/FUL**

Present: Cllrs. Neil Thompson, Mike Wilson, Suzanne Hinchliffe, Graham Sime, Ed Shaw and Emma Leslie

In Attendance: Lindsey Worrall (Clerk), Jeff Markham (Applicant), Ian Pleasant (Architect), David Wood, Julie O'Shea, Mike Scott, Olga Vertija

21.04.01a Apologies for Absence and Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Resolved: None

21.04.02a Public Speaking Time

All members of the public present at the meeting were asked individually whether they wanted to raise comments or concerns, the below are the views of the public present.

- This is an important application for the village, the planning officer should assist with decision making and policies that apply and aspects of the Local Plan that are relevant.
- There were concerns by the reaction of some residents that this application had just appeared overnight. The Parish Council minutes show that the architect has been to previous meetings, but there are clear concerns of the residents and communications need to be improved.
- Residents wanted to understand how the school have been involved in the process, whether they want the land and sports facilities.
- Concern was raised about the access for the overflow carpark on Winterford Lane, it would be difficult getting onto or off the carpark as Winterford Lane is narrow and leads to a bend, meaning visibility may be poor.
- Would like to ensure there is community engagement with numerous different formats, not everyone in the village is able to gain access to a digital platform, access to information via the newsletter, and plans on the noticeboard is required.
- Concern was also raised as to why the MP had been involved with the planning application.
- A query was raised asking who receives notification of planning applications, the architect confirmed that letters are sent to direct neighbours, and statutory consultees.

21.04.03a Planning Matters

1- To note planning decisions.

None

2- To consider response to planning applications received

21/00650/FUL

Location -Land adjacent to Spinney Cottage, Lower Lane and Eaton Primary School.

Proposal – Construction of residential development of five dwellings and the extension of Eaton Primary School outdoor facilities including the provision of new sports pitch and playground.

All councillors then discussed the application. The comments raised are below;

School Traffic

- There is a traffic issue within the village, this application could ease the traffic pressures.
- The school traffic is a major problem, but it is not clear within the application how the overflow carpark will work, will it be turned into a carpark to be used regularly or for occasional use?
- Many people avoid this part of the village at school time.
- Walking to school can be dangerous.
- There is a concern that the traffic is just being moved to Winterford Lane.

Clarity about the overflow carpark is required.

Benefits to School

What are the benefits to the school?, the response that the academy have given the Parish Council is that 'whilst they found proposal interesting and contains possible advantages for the school, it could only support it if facility was funded wholly by the developer, being handed to the trust in a completed state'.

The school academy are not in a position to fund or part fund and in the correspondence with the Parish Council the Academy said there had been no discussion of the overflow carpark or exit onto Winterford Lane.

The school and trust need to articulate the benefits to them, a lot of funding will be needed to enable the school facilities to be built and maintained. Concerns raised that the housing development may go ahead but no developer may want the responsibility of the school facilities.

Some in the village see the gift of land to the school as inappropriate.

It was raised that the school currently manage the drop off really well, if additional entrances are incorporated would the staff become overstretched.

- There are two elements to this application, firstly the housing development and secondly the gifting of land for school facilities. Any development that occurs this close to a school needs to take the school into consideration.

Many members of the village are contacting councillors with concerns that this could set a precedent to open up other planning applications on open countryside.

Needs community consultation to occur to ensure the members of the village aware of the planning application.

Highways Concerns

Cheshire Police have responded, saying the development will not lead to any increase in accidents.

- Speed and volume of traffic in the village are a concern.
- Highways Dept may hold a different view as the entrance to the housing development is on a narrow road at the bend (Highways haven't responded yet).
- It is currently dangerous to walk from Whalley Drive, the new entrance to the housing development will add to the risks on the narrow road.
- Should the existing entrance to Spinney Cottage serve both the existing cottage and the new development?.

- When the Drays coffee shop was developed, a lot of hedge and roadside had to be removed to create a splay.

Housing Development

Type of property to be built, there is no visual of the build within the application, no strength of build design. The village of Eaton has a wide range of property types, but it is very difficult to focus on what the type of build is from the application submitted.

This potential development would extend the village boundary, it is a development on open countryside. Trees will be removed from the site, the Tree Officer has yet to make comments. Concerns regarding conservation, wildlife and loss of open countryside. Should Eaton be preserved as it stands.

Architect Update

- There will be a drop off/pick up facility within the new housing development with a walk through into the school. This is the second school entrance.
- The school is classed as not having enough external play facilities. The liaison with the school academy is a long-term thing.
- The play facilities could be used by the community outside of school hours.
- The overflow carpark and playground would be used a lot in winter where the current playing field is not suitable due to weather related issues.
- The football pitch is designed to FA standards.
- Architect to determine the net increase in play facilities, some area of the current playing field will be lost in the conversion to overflow carpark/play area, so net increase of facility would be useful.

The new access to the housing development is on the outside of a bend and therefore visibility is good for both in and out of the village.

Councillors Conclusions

It is not felt that there is enough information at this present time to make a decision.

- Need clarify of benefits to the school, do they want the land.
- Building on open countryside, there is insufficient information supplied to decide the benefit verses the loss of it.
- The benefit to the village, the benefit must exceed the harm.
- Very little information regarding the build design of the properties within the application submitted.
- Can conditions be incorporated that states the houses couldn't be built if the school facilities were not undertaken.
- A meeting needs to be held between the architect, School trust, and include the parish council to determine the school's level of interest in the development.
- Community engagement needs to be undertaken, dissemination of information to the public needs to be in numerous formats, newsletter, plans on noticeboards and potentially a zoom meeting with public.

Actions

- 1- Joint statement with school and architect – meeting with school, academy, architect and parish council representatives to clarify the school's position.
- 2- Community mechanism with the public, look at ways to disseminate information to the parish.
- 3- Extension needed for Parish Council to submit comments, architect and applicant happy us to work together on the above and to discuss extension of comment deadline with the planning officer.

A further meeting will be held to discuss this application prior to the Parish Council forming a decision.

Members of the public can join the planning meeting by e-mailing the clerk at rushtonclerk@aol.com and joining instructions will be sent out.

21.04.4a **Next Meeting**

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 20th April 2021 at 7:30pm via Zoom.

21.04.5a **Any Other Business**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:30pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____