

ETWALL PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of a meeting held on Monday 20th April 2015 to discuss the Outline Application (all matters reserved) for a development consisting of 52 dwellings, a residential care home, community hub and formation of access road, provision of open space and associated works on land at SK 2732 1638 Main Street, Etwall

Present: Cllr R Warburton (Chair)
Cllr D Neal
Cllr D Muller
Cllr I Bennett
Cllr J Patten
Cllr M Adcock

Caroline Chave (Chave Planning)
Hannah Ellis (Gainsborough Properties)

District Cllr L Brown and approx. 24 members of the public

Apologies: None

Cllr Warburton welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the proposed format.

Caroline Chave briefly explained the development and said that there had been a lot of interest. It was intended that Gainsborough Properties would retain a stake in the development of the site. The current application was in outline only but more detail would be available should outline planning permission be granted.

(a) The Site

Cllr Warburton began with some issues that had already been raised that the site was outside the village boundary and that it had not been identified as a site for development in the Local Plan. There was also the possibility that it may set a precedent for building on land on the opposite side of the road.

Caroline Chave was asked why they were not asking for the land to be included in Part 2 of the Local Plan. She replied that they submitted the site for inclusion in Part 1 but SDDC preferred to have one site which would hold the required number of houses allocated to the area. As it was thought that SDDC would now be required to allocate more houses in the area it was hoped that this application would be looked at on its merits and be approved as there was no Local Plan in place at the moment.

To clarify, Gainsborough Properties has asked for the land to be included in Part 2 of the Local Plan and continues to engage with the Local Plan making process.

The view was expressed that although this proposal had merits, this development may open the door to development on the other side of the road which may not be as suitable to local needs, therefore the Local Plan should be supported.

(b) Mix of Housing Types

The question was asked whether there was a disproportionate amount of self-build houses on the site and were 3 storey houses being considered. It was explained that approximately half of the houses would be self-build (27 out of 52) although this could be changed if there was more interest in over 55's housing than in family homes. The consultation event showed that there was a lot of interest in the over 55's housing. The self-build homes proposed were 4-5 bed roomed detached properties with 2 storeys. The design and materials would be controlled to ensure a unified appearance.

The proposed self-build homes are indicated to be a mix of 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties.

It was explained that the self-build land would not be sold to a commercial venture. There would be restrictions such as plans having to be submitted by a certain date and building to be completed by a certain time.

There was no intention to have affordable housing on the site but the developers would have to make a contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere. At this stage they did not know what the District Council were looking for.

Following a question Hannah Ellis explained that they had not done this format of development before but they saw a need for this type of housing for the over 55's with self-build plots. They had done the various components at other sites but were now bringing it together on one site. It was felt that families may be keen to purchase a self-build property with their parents purchasing a bungalow on the same site.

(c) Schools

There was concern that more family homes would put further pressure on the local schools. The developers had consulted with the Local Education Authority and been informed of a sum of money that would be required to enhance facilities to cope with the extra demand.

Cllr Patten explained that although the new school proposed for South Derbyshire would not affect John Port, it may be that the catchment area would be reviewed.

(d) Build Time

It was confirmed that self-build would take a little longer than development by one builder, probably 5 years as opposed to 2-3 years by one developer. If planning permission were received the developers would begin with the over 55's housing and some of the self-build. The phasing of the development had not yet been considered as the planning application was still only in outline.

(e) Access

There was only one access point and there was concern about elderly resident entering and exiting via the same route as construction vehicles for a number of years. It was explained that there would be a footpath leading into the village from the bungalows. There was also potential for a temporary construction access should this be necessary.

(f) Infrastructure

Caroline Chave was asked if it was the intention to put in the whole of the infrastructure at the beginning of the development or piecemeal. She replied that the majority would have to be put in place at the beginning because there was a pumping station and a gas line that had to be worked around and the infrastructure was required to market the self-build properties. The roads would initially be put in to base-core level and then all topped off at the same time. The gas pipeline cut through the site near to the pond. They had consulted with the National Grid and a slab would be required over the pipeline before the road crossed over it.

No decision had been made over whether the roads would be adopted but all roads would be to the specification required for adopted roads. It was suggested that if the roads were not adopted this may have an effect on the bin collection. No decision had been made on whether the community would be gated.

(g) Over 55's Development

A member of the public asked what controls would be put in place to stop a young single person buying a bungalow. It was explained that there would be planning conditions to prevent this.

(h) Transport

From experience, it was expected that people from this development would still use their cars to get to the school and the shops and it was felt that the bus times had been exaggerated as the X50 no longer operated, three of the buses mentioned were school buses only and there was only an hourly bus to get to the pharmacy and to the doctor's surgery at Hilton. It was felt that some of the bungalows would be taken by people that already had properties in the village and wished to downsize, therefore freeing up family properties for those who currently drive into the village. Although there were shops within walking distance the pharmacy was a little further away and may require a bus.

(i) Care Home

The idea behind the care home was that the development would provide different levels of care depending on need and that if a person became unable to live independently they could move to the care home on site. It was confirmed that the developers had not had a discussion as yet with the County Council concerning care home provision but had spoken to a possible care home provider.

There was a query as to whether there was sufficient parking for the care home. It was confirmed that there was a possibility that additional parking could be provided.

As there were already three care homes in the village, a question was asked about what level of support this one would provide. It was felt that it would provide more care than the over 55's development and the aim was to provide a menu of care on site. Until a provider had been agreed it was difficult to answer this type of question in detail.

It was confirmed that the care home would be hold 60 beds plus 12 apartments.

The 12 apartments are part of the over-55s component of the proposals.

There was concern about noise from the A516 and its effects on the care home. It was confirmed that a noise survey had been undertaken and that double glazing would solve the problem inside the

care home. The development had been designed so that the care home building itself would buffer some of the noise ensuring that levels in the garden were satisfactory.

(j) GP's Surgery

The developers had consulted with various medical departments and had not been given a clear answer. The care home would have a heavy impact on healthcare provision and they were waiting to hear what they would need to do to address this problem. It was felt that the GP Surgery at Hilton was at capacity but there was space at Willington. Although there was an hourly bus service to the Hilton surgery there was no bus service to Willington. The developers had looked at various possibilities including the possibility of providing a consulting room on site but no firm decisions had been made by the health authority.

Members felt that it was not sufficient for developers to provide money to increase facilities as often the problem was with the recruitment of medical staff.

(k) Freehold/Leasehold

The freehold of the properties would be retained by Gainsborough Properties. It was explained that the idea behind the leasehold properties was to ensure that they were kept for the over 55's. It had not been generally understood from the consultation that properties would be leasehold and it was felt that leasehold properties would be less popular with possible problems in re-selling. Hannah Ellis confirmed that the leasehold would be for 99 years allowing the properties to be sold at market value but that Gainsborough would buy back properties should that be necessary. Cllr Brown mentioned that if 50% of the leaseholders wished to buy the lease they would be forced to sell. Hannah Ellis thought that this may only apply to blocks of flats.

Gainsborough Properties were asked if they would consider selling the bungalows freehold rather than leasehold as it was felt that this would make them more popular. It was understood that the apartments in the care home would need to be leasehold.

Please see additional comments provided by email, in answer to questions from the Parish Council. The self-build would be freehold and potentially some of the over 55's bungalows. The apartments and nursing home would be leasehold.

(l) 106 Contribution

As with all developments, there was a requirement to contribute to the improvement of local facilities and Gainsborough Properties were happy with the contribution requested although the open space and affordable housing contribution required clarification.

To confirm the position, s106 requirements need to be confirmed by the District Council and will be subject to further discussion, however the Supporting Planning Statement accompanying the application gives a 'snapshot' of where these discussions are at.

(m) Bowling Green

The provision of a bowling green was queried in view of the fact that there was already a bowling green in the village. It was explained that the developers were trying to create a small community and this could be a community open space. They also planned to put in a gatehouse from where the

management of the site would be operated and a community area where residents could meet, hold birthday parties etc in order to create a sense of community.

The decision on whether the Bowling Green was flat or crown green was open for discussion.

It was suggested that it would be nice to have a space for children to play when they came to visit grandparents.

(n) Management Fee

The developers were asked what thought had been given to the up-keep of the bowling green. It was explained that the site would be subject to management charges for the maintenance of the sewerage pump, open space, roads (if unadopted), lighting around the site, etc. They had operated successful management companies at other sites at a reasonable cost.

The developers were asked whether there was a reduction in the rateable value if facilities such as roads, lighting etc were paid to the management company.

It was envisaged that the pond and community facilities would be open to the community but a comment was made that if residents were paying a management fee for the upkeep of the communal areas they may not want them being open to the wider community.

(o) Flooding/Pond

The question of flooding was raised. Caroline Chave explained that it was in Flood Zone 1. They had to ensure that the development of the site did not increase water run-off. The provision of the pond would allow for the storage of water following a severe storm with it being gradually returned to the watercourse. All Environment Agency requirements were being met.

There was concern about flooding further downstream following possible developments at Mickleover and elsewhere and it was felt that this was something that should have been addressed in the Local Plan.

A circular path was planned around the pond with a boardwalk to make it an attractive area.

Conclusion

Cllr Warburton thanked Caroline Chave and Hannah Ellis for attending the meeting and confirmed that any comments on this planning application should be made to South Derbyshire District Council by the end of April.

A meeting of the Parish Council's Planning Environment and Highways Committee was to be held on Monday 27th April when they would decide on their response.