

## HELINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 2 August 2017 in the Helington and Brigsteer Village Hall at 7.30 pm**

**Present:** Cllrs A Davies, (Chairman), B Mansbridge, S Carman, M Cheesbrough, R Park, K Ritchie and S Savasi.

Also present were County Cllr J Bland, District Cllr A Rawlinson, Ms J Saunders (Clerk) and 48 members of the public.

#### **P1/17 Apologies**

None.

Cllr M Cheesbrough was introduced and welcomed as a new councillor.

#### **P2/17 Declarations of Interest / Dispensation Requests**

Cllr S Savasi advised that, as she had previously declared in a meeting held last year to discuss the original application in respect of Land to the east of the Village Hall, her daughter had registered an interest in the proposed HCLT affordable housing. However, Cllr Savasi did not feel that she had a prejudicial interest in the matter and therefore intended to participate in the discussion and vote in respect of agenda item 4(iv) re 7/2017/5483.

#### **P3/17 Public Participation**

Several people indicated that they wished to speak regarding 7/2017/5483. Chairman advised that 30 minutes would be allocated for public participation and requested that speakers stated their name and where they lived, and were brief. (Details of those speaking in a personal capacity are not included in these minutes).

- In response to a question about the Community Led Plan survey responses re housing, Cllr S Carman advised that the responses showed a high level of support for small scale, affordable housing development for local occupancy. Developments which had minimal impact on open spaces and which involved conversion of existing buildings were preferred, with much less support for larger scale developments.
- Many speakers expressed support for affordable housing in a suitable location, but not on the site of the proposed development 7/2017/5483.

Concerns raised by members of the public included:

- Road safety - the traffic/speed survey undertaken in 2011 was out-of-date and inaccurate; the road is already hazardous due to the hill, bend, shrubs, lack of lighting, wet/icy conditions, parked cars, volume of farm traffic, cyclists travelling at speed downhill, and pedestrians (no footway); the proposed access road exits onto this road.
- Geology of the site - impermeable rock; potential problems of swelling and shrinkage; the proposed rainwater store would be on land likely to collapse; need for a geotechnical survey; threat posed by destabilisation, collapse and flooding to village generally, and to Village Hall in particular.
- Environmental health concerns (noise and heavy traffic) during construction - impact on village and Village Hall.

- Drainage - depiction of watercourse in Outline Drainage Strategy drawing is inaccurate; reports that this watercourse runs dry in periods of dry weather; potential pollution and environmental health hazards affecting neighbouring properties.
- Loss of trees - errors, inconsistencies and lack of clarity in the application plans and reports; loss of trees including mature oaks which are a valued local amenity; need for tree survey to be updated to preserve as many trees as possible, for environment, amenity and screening purposes.
- Financial cost and risks - lack of fully costed business plan and provision for contingency, risk and long-term responsibility for development; concern about use of public money in risky project.
- Lack of consultation and community engagement - developer's lack of engagement with neighbouring properties and with all those affected by proposed development, including the Village Hall, a significant community amenity.

Chairman noted that members of HCLT were in attendance and invited comments in support of application 7/2017/5483. Matthew Jessop, chair of HCLT, explained that he was a supporter of affordable housing, noted the concerns raised by members of the public and stated he was willing to engage with the community and discuss concerns further. Andy Lloyd, Project Manager for HCLT, advised that the site had been recommended by SLDC. District Cllr A Rawlinson stated that she supported affordable housing, HCLT and SLDC's Plan for affordable housing, and was concerned about localism and the sustainability of local communities. She noted SLDC's support for the site. However, she also wished to support local residents, and conceded that she was not as well informed about the proposal as she should be. County Cllr J Bland advised that he was also a member of LDNPA (but not the Planning Committee), whose policies supported the provision of affordable housing in the LDNP. He acknowledged that there were problems with the site, construction issues and water storage issues but felt that these could be addressed and resolved, as had happened previously during the development of the Village Hall.

Members of the public reiterated that the Community Led Plan reflects the views of the community regarding affordable housing, and that the community does not support development on the proposed site. It was suggested that work should be undertaken to find alternative sites. Some support was expressed for the provision of affordable housing on any available site. Andy Lloyd advised that it was difficult to find sites which the landowner would make available at an affordable price and the local authority would support, and that existing buildings were unlikely to be available at an affordable price. Cllr S Carman queried whether the proposed development would have progressed if the developers had been fully aware of the problems with the site. Cllr A Davies advised that SLDC had not initially allocated the site for housing, and did so only at the request of Helsington Parish Council, which was then dominated by members of HCLT. County Cllr Jim Bland acknowledged the lack of consultation and communication during the process.

#### **P4/17 Planning**

##### **Lake District National Park Authority**

(LDNPA applications, responses and decisions may be viewed online at <http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display>)

**The following planning decisions and updates were received and noted:**

- i. **7/2017/5294** - Four Walls, Brigsteer, Kendal - Construction of a new, replacement 2 storey extension. **Decision - Approve with conditions.**
- ii. **SL/2016/0703** - Land to east of Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall - Change of use from forestry land to residential use, and construction of 8 new houses including 5 affordable houses. **Withdrawn on 12 July 2017.**

**The following planning applications were received and considered:**

- iii. **7/2017/5351** - Plumtree Cottage, Brigsteer - Single storey, open veranda with glass roof on garden side of property.  
**It was resolved that Helsington Parish Council has no comments in respect of the above application.**
- iv. **7/2017/5483** - Land to the east of Helsington and Brigsteer Village Hall - Development of 8 new houses including 5 affordable.  
Support was expressed for the provision of affordable housing in the parish, and for a socially mixed and sustainable community in the future. However, there was concern about the location, scale, timing and sustainability of this proposal. Members noted and agreed with many of the concerns which had been raised by members of the public, with regard to the unsuitability of the site, the size and design of the development, road safety and access arrangements, drainage proposals and the impact on trees. It was felt that the application was unneighbourly, and would be detrimental to local residents and the area. The lack of engagement and consultation with the community was noted and criticised, as was the lack of concern and respect for local residents who would be affected by the development. The Statement of Community Involvement was not recognised as an accurate reflection of community engagement. In view of the strength of feeling about the lack of community engagement and consultation, and the publicly stated desire of the applicant to engage and consult with the community, it was felt that the application should be withdrawn to allow for proper consultation to take place.

**It was resolved to oppose the above planning application for the following reasons:**

- 1. The scale of the development;**
- 2. The design of the development;**
- 3. Access and parking arrangements;**
- 4. Drainage;**
- 5. Impact on trees.**

It was further resolved to enclose with the Council's response a copy of the Community Led Plan and the Survey Summary Report, and a copy of the letter to SLDC regarding the rescission of the Parish Council's resolution to support the inclusion of this site in the Local Plan land allocations, and the replacement representation opposing the land allocation. Authority was delegated to the Clerk to draft the Council's response to the above planning application, which would be circulated to councillors for approval before submission to LDNPA by the deadline of 18 August 2017.

**P5/17 Future meetings**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 6 September 2017. The meeting closed at 20.48 pm.

Signed: .....  
(Chairman)  
Date: 6 September 2017