

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CIVIC HALL, CIVIC CENTRE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN

MONDAY, 30TH JANUARY 2012 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), T Ingham (Vice-Chairman), J Baker, A J Buckley, N Gale, J Greener, I Hardiman, J A Hart, V Higgs, J Holden, D J McCann, A M Sewell, D R Sheppard, N J Thomas and S J Williams.

Observers

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, D R Godwin, C D Nicholls, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J W Parish, J Phillips, M A Salter, J A Shaw and G C Yarranton.

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and reminded them it was a Council meeting being held in public and not a public meeting. There were a number of members of the public who had registered to speak and no further speakers would be heard.

OS.89 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G W Ballinger.

OS.90 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor N J Thomas was appointed as a substitute for Councillor G W Ballinger.

OS.91 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.92 Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework (LDF): Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Consultation Responses

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services on the level and detail of consultation responses received to the recent consultation on potential gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites, including the identification of alternative sites.

The Planning Policy Manager led Members through the report and outlined the background for the need of pitches within the District. Members were advised that at the time of the consultation on site allocations there had already been 7 pitches granted planning permission at Meadow Park, Stourport-on-Severn reducing the requirement to a net of 23 pitches up to 2013.

It was noted that Officers were in contact with the family of travelling showpeople who currently reside in the District to discuss the allocation of one family plot as the landowner of the site they currently occupied had asked them to vacate.

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The Chairman invited the first registered speaker, Shirley Nunn, to address the Committee.

Mrs Nunn asked the Council why had Stourport Road, Bewdley been taken out when it had received the most support of all the sites identified, and why the sites on Stourport common were been supported as they were in a flood zone. In addition she asked why all the favoured sites were on industrial estates, did travelling children not count? Mrs Nunn added that in Summer 2011, it had cost thousands of pounds to move Irish Travellers off land in Spennells, Kidderminster and they then moved to the Stourport Road site and asked why she had not been given support in moving these people on. Why did the Council not authorise the site so that it could be manned properly?

In response to a Members question regarding consultation with local businesses and the gypsy community in the Sandy Lane area, the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services confirmed that the six week consultation period had been very high profile and there had been ample opportunity for businesses and travellers to have input into it.

A Member had concerns that the Sandy Lane (Stourport) area was becoming overcrowded and businesses were suffering and felt that other areas in Worcestershire should take on the provision for gypsies and travellers.

Members felt that once the process had been finalised and the sites in the Sandy Lane area legalised, there should be no further development of pitches in the area.

The Committee agreed the sites at Stourport Road (Bewdley), Sion Hill (Kidderminster), Lea Castle (Cookley) and Manor Farm (Stourport-on-Severn) be disregarded from any further considerations and the sites at Nunn's Corner Stourport-on-Severn and The Gables Yard, Stourport-on-Severn be carried forward for allocation in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. It was also agreed the Statement of Consultation set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted and agreed for publication.

The Chairman of the Local Development Framework Review Panel, led Members through the recommendations from the Panel meeting held on 16th January 2012. Members were asked to consider the alternative sites identified in two separate groups; ALT 1, 2 and 3 and ALT 25, 4, 20 and 24.

She added that ALT 2 was an existing gypsy site with planning permission, the owners had confirmed, with minor configurations, the site would accommodate a further two pitches, ALT 3 was a vacant site and the land owners had requested the site be endorsed for further consultation.

Members were advised that a condition of the recommendations from the Local Development Framework Review Panel for the sites, Alt 25, 4, 20 and 24, was that Officers would confirm by the date of the Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that the sites were available and deliverable. It had been confirmed that the conditions had not been met, therefore the sites should be disregarded from any future considerations.

The Chairman invited the second registered speaker, Jared Oakley, to address the Committee.

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Mr Oakley spoke in respect of the site at Clows Top, as the site had been added and removed from the list several times and asked for how long it would remain off the list and where did the residents stand? He asked if it would be back on the list in three months time?

The Chairman advised the Committee that the recommendations from the meeting would be presented to the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 31st January, where a final decision would be made.

The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services added that until the final documents were submitted to Council in July 2012 for approval and then submitted to the Secretary of State for public inquiry, land owners were entitled to continue to promote their sites.

The Committee agreed in line with the recommendations from the Local Development Framework Review Panel that the alternative sites for ALT 1, 2 and 3, be taken forward to the next phase of consultation and the sites for ALT 25, 4, 20 and 24 be disregarded from any further considerations as availability of the sites could not be confirmed.

The Planning Policy Manager led Members through the next steps of the process and outlined the need to consider draft wording in relation to a criteria based site provision policy for Travelling Showpeople and for determining planning applications for further gypsy and traveller sites.

Councillor T Onslow left the meeting at this point.

In response to a Members query, the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services referred Members to page 6 (2.6) of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agenda which provided a summary and timeline of the need for pitch provision within the District

The Committee agreed draft policy wording be considered by the Local Development Framework Panel and recognise the desire of the Committee to see no further pitches being developed in the Sandy Lane area of Stourport-on-Severn.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

- 1. The sites at Stourport Rd (Bewdley), Sion Hill (Kidderminster), Lea Castle (Cookley) and Manor Farm (Stourport-on-Severn) be disregarded from any further considerations.**
- 2. The sites at Nunn's Corner Stourport-on-Severn and The Gables Yard, Stourport-on-Severn be carried forward for allocation in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document.**
- 3. The Statement of Consultation set out in Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted and agreed for publication.**
- 4. In line with the recommendations from the Local Development Framework Review Panel, the following alternative sites be taken forward to the next phase of consultation:**

Site Number	Location
ALT.1	Land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate
ALT.2	1A Broach Road, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT.3	28-29 Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn

5. The following sites be disregarded from any further considerations:

Site Number	Location
ALT.25	Hoobrook Trading Estate, Kidderminster
ALT.4	Land off Wilden Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT.20	Ex Yieldingtree Packing Site nr Churchill
ALT.24	Clows Top Garage Site

6. The Local Development Framework Panel to consider draft wording in relation to a criteria based site provision policy for Travelling Showpeople and for the future determination of planning applications for gypsy and traveller sites within the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document, recognising the desire of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to see no further pitches being developed in the Sandy Lane area of Stourport-on-Severn.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.02pm.