

GREAT CASTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from a Public Meeting held on Wednesday 1st. March 2023 held in the Church Hall at 7.00pm

Attending: The Parish Council, County Councillors David Wilby and Rick Wilson and 25 residents.

Stancliffe Homes Planning application – College Close ref. 2022-1476-FULL.

The Chairman welcomed all present, and expressed his thanks to so many parishioners for attending. He explained that a revised application has been lodged, which includes minor plan amendments and a detailed letter from the developers' consultants responding to many of the objections submitted in response to the original application. He detailed the main points raised in this letter, which seeks to highlight that the main reason why the development application should succeed is that Rutland has no local plan and that the housing plans that it has are not acceptable in planning law. This is the so-called Tilted Balance. They quote legal judgements and reasons to back up their case, but conveniently omit to quote the Appeal decisions which overthrew these judgements. They also insist that this is a sustainable development, which it clearly is not, there being a lack of facilities – there are no shops nor medical provision, and although there are schools, they are full.

County Councillor Rick Wilson (a member of the RCC Planning committee) said that he was flabbergasted by this application, and highlighted the logistical problems that the developers would encounter – access via College Close was very restricted, and via Pickworth Road was limited, and would cross protected grass verges. With the Mallard Pass and Quarry Farm developments, likely to take place in the same time frame, much of the construction traffic will necessarily come through Great Casterton.

County Councillor David Wilby said that he had written to the Chairman of the Planning Committee, copied to the County Council Chairman and to our MP, highlighting the various large planning applications within our ward which were causing much unrest among constituents. This letter will be made available on the website. He suggested that it was important in responding to this particular application to highlight the lack of facilities within Great Casterton, which clearly make an application of this size unsustainable. As education was part of his County Council remit, he emphasised that some 75% of pupils within the schools in Great Casterton came from out of the County, and there was little scope, and a lack of money, to allow further expansion of the schools, which are currently fully subscribed.

The meeting was opened for comments and questions, and there was lengthy, lively debate on the various issues of concern to residents. The main details being:

School Car Parks – it was felt that it ought to be possible to make provision within the schools to allow drop-off and pick-up in the school car parks. Alasdair Ryder

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suggested that it would take little investment to come up with a solution – a circular flow of traffic within the car parks should be possible,

Yellow Lines in College Close – A resident asked whether it would be possible to have yellow lines in College Close. The Chairman said that this possibility had already been investigated, and was a non-starter because of the difficulty in administering the system..

“Tilt of Balance” – Alasdair Ryder questioned what responsibility there was on RCC in respect of this – what was the effect on this application? David Wilby said that although there was currently no Local Plan in place, the provisions of the previous plan had not expired, and the College Close land did not form part of the development lands within that plan and he explained that in spite of initial fears, the RCC requirement for housing within the county over the next five years had already been exceeded, with pressure on the County alleviated. It was important that the Parish Council responded to the application emphasising that the ‘Tilt of Balance’ factors did not apply to this application.

Cumulative effect of local developments – David Wilby said that it is important to stress the effect all the local proposals (St. Georges, Quarry Farm, North Stamford) will have on local infrastructure – access to all of these are along narrow roads, creating excess pressure on already congested roads. It is still not clear whether the “trade-off” arrangements between SKDC and RCC were still in place.

Archaeological considerations – The archaeological excavations had take place over a four-day period, and it was questioned by those who had observed them whether these had been adequate.

Traffic considerations – Stancliffe Homes’ traffic survey still relied on old survey figures, as the recent survey results were not yet available. It was felt that the recent survey would provide more accurate figures. Their suggestion that the development would generate a further 27 cars per day was risible.

The meeting finished at 7.55pm