

CPC DRAFT OBJECTIONS

Planning Application for three dwellings on land at the junction of Beckingham Road and Brownlow's Hill, Coddington Application Reference 18/00168/FUL

At an Extra-ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 21 February 2018, the Parish Council unanimously resolved to **OBJECT** to the above application on the following grounds. (Whilst the application refers to 'affordable housing', it is understood from the District Council that it is for 'social housing'. This clearly needs rectifying since the definition of the two types of housing is very different).

Conflict with Newark and Sherwood District Council's Statutory Planning Policy.

The Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management DPD

A. Policy SP3 - Rural Areas

SP3 Bullet Point 2 - Scale

The development is not appropriate to the location as set out below under SP3 - Bullet Points 4 and 5 and Policies SP8, SP9. CP14 and DM9.

SP3 Bullet point 3 - Need

The Parish Council appreciates that the District Council is anxious to provide as much social housing as possible, facilitated by Government funding. However, consideration must be given as to whether any site is suitable in planning terms for such a development.

In its Statement of Housing Need, the District Council places great emphasis on what it considers to be the application's location on a 'brownfield site'. In fact the application site includes open, grassed areas to the east, west, north and south of the garage court to which the brownfield site definition refers, and also a fine stand of trees and further open space to the west. Regrettably the actual proposed built area extends beyond that of the garage court into the open areas on all sides resulting in a diminution of the open area and the loss of five young trees, dismissed as being of the lowest retention category by the applicants.

As the applicants clearly rely heavily on the 'brownfield' designation, then the development proposals should be amended to be confined to this area and not encroach on to surrounding land. However, for reasons set out below the Parish Council does not consider that this classification of the garage court justifies its development as proposed. What the application represents is a purely opportunist proposal to exploit Council owned land, irrespective of the conflict with its own planning policies. Whilst the need for social housing is accepted, this does not override basic planning principles, a fact recognised in the Government's National Planning Policy Guidance.

SP3 Bullet Point 4 - Impact

The proposal would adversely affect the amenities of local people by the loss of accessible and usable recreational space, by severe damage to the quality and character of their environment and by the traffic issues raised. (These matters are dealt with below)

SP3 Bullet Point 5 - Character

The proposal, by its gross visual and physical intrusion into this area of Public Open Space, would have a severely detrimental effect on the setting of this part of the village, on the enjoyment of the public open space both for recreation and its landscape quality, and the role the open space performs in creating the character of the Conservation Area. It would also result in the loss of trees specifically planted to preserve the landscape quality of the area.

Policy SP7 Bullet Point 3 and Bullet Point 6

Bullet Point 3 requires that any development should be appropriate for the highway network in terms of the volume and nature of traffic generated, and ensure that the safety, convenience and free flow of traffic using the highway are not adversely affected. Bullet Point 6 requires that any proposal should ensure that vehicular traffic generation does not create new, or exacerbate existing on-street parking problems, nor materially increase other traffic problems, taking account of any contributions that have been secured for the provision of off-site works. For the reasons amplified at D. below, the application proposals would conflict with both of these Bullet Points' requirements.

Policy SP8

The proposal would severely diminish the enjoyment and use of this valued area designated as Public Open Space. Firstly, the applicants maintain that there are two alternative public open spaces within 600m of the application site and thus villagers would not be disadvantaged by the loss of part of the open space surrounding the garage court. What they fail to address is that both these alternatives lie on the opposite side of the C208 Beckingham Road, which would require any children living near to the application site crossing that road. The provision of a crossing warden to secure the safety of children crossing the C208 to and from the school speaks volumes as to the danger this busy road presents.

To the north and east of the garage court is a well-used recreational space used by local children. The development proposal would encroach into and severely restrict the enjoyment of what is left of the open recreation area which would abut the dwellings on two sides. Problems of noise, disturbance and loss of privacy to future residents are obvious. The diminution of openness could lead to issues of security for children playing on the remaining area. At present all of the open space can be viewed from the road side. There is also a very odd intrusion into the open grassed area on the eastern side of the development, necessitated by the over intensive proposals for the site. Two car parking spaces are indicated running back from the road frontage and projecting into the open area to the east. No fencing or screening is proposed. Damage to vehicles and danger to children are two potential results of this element of this ill-considered design.

Policy SP9 - Point 5 and Point 8

Point 5 requires that any proposal should not have an adverse impact on the special character of the area. The application proposals have a severely adverse impact arising from the visual intrusion into the open space with a two-storey block of housing, by the loss of views into and out of this part of the village and upon the setting of this part of the

Conservation Area. Contrary to SP8 which requires no loss of locally important open space, the application proposals do lead to the loss of part of a locally important open space and to a diminution in the capacity for the enjoyment of what remains.

Policy CP 14 - Bullet Points 1 and 2

Rather than preserving and enhancing the character, appearance and setting of the Conservation Area the proposal would do demonstrable harm to all of these elements of the Conservation Area. (See Conservation Area at C below).

B. Allocations and Development Management DPD - Paragraph 2

The application lies within an area defined as Public Open Space on Map 1 - Newark North Proposals. For the reasons already set out above, the application proposal, whilst acknowledging this designation, diminishes the quality of the remaining open area in terms of its role in the character of the area and as an attractive, safe area for informal recreation.

Policy DM9

This policy requires that development proposals should take account of the distinctive character and setting of individual conservation areas, including open spaces and natural features, and reflect this in their layout, design, form, scale, mass, use of materials and detailing. The application fails to meet any of these requirements. The proposed development, because of its positioning on the road frontage, intrudes into views in and out of this part of the village and is therefore very harmful to the setting of the Conservation Area within which it lies. The application proposals do not recognise this role but presumably as a nodding reference to the Conservation Area, pastiche “cottages” are proposed. This does nothing to overcome the basic objection to development on this site and the harm it would do to the open setting of the Conservation Area. It is an off-the-peg, 'desk-top' solution lacking any design merit, sited in the most expedient location with a total disregard for the surroundings. It also shows complete contempt for the District Council's own planning policies and the aspirations of the Parish Council to protect the environment of its parishioners.

C. The Conservation Area.

The proposal conflicts with all the above policies. The proposed development occupies a part of the larger open area which is presently occupied by a row of garages with a surfaced forecourt and a part of the grassed area to the north and east. It could, and may well be argued that, the presence of the existing development justifies the application proposals. This would be to ignore the fact that the garages are set at right angles to the road frontage, against a backcloth of large trees. Consequently when approaching from the west turning from Beckingham Road into Brownlow's Hill, the garages cannot be seen. The view is of an uninterrupted open, grassed area leading up into the village. Approaching from the east, the low profile of the garages and the backdrop of trees results in the open grassed area predominating in the view. Whilst cars parked on the forecourt can be seen, their low profile means that once again the green area is prominent. There are also attractive views across the open area looking north of trees and hedgerows on both sides of the C208. These are the features of this area which have led to its definition as Public Open Space and its inclusion in the Conservation Area. It is critical in the setting of the older part

of the village when approaching from the west and on Brownlow's Hill itself, and also contributes significantly to this part of the Conservation Area.

The Application proposals would destroy the views referred to since the buildings would be sited on the road frontage to Brownlow's Hill. They would therefore intrude into the setting of the village from the west and would severely diminish the immediate character of the area. Any development in a Conservation Area is required to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of that area. This application clearly does not meet these requirements and does, in the words of the Act, cause demonstrable harm to the character, appearance and setting of the Conservation Area.

D. Traffic issues

Due to the presence of a school directly opposite the application site, there is currently a major problem with on-street parking leading to congestion and potential danger to children on Brownlow's Hill. The forecourt to the garages is presently used for school parking. The loss of this facility will exacerbate the already acute problems on Brownlow's Hill. Further on-street parking will be lost on the northern side of Brownlow's Hill because of the need not to obstruct the vehicular accesses to the proposed dwellings. The occupants of those dwellings would experience disturbance and possible obstruction from the car parking and traffic movements generated by the school. The use of the double stacked parking for the proposed dwellings would inevitably lead to increased danger to both motorists and pedestrians seeking to access the school. Attempts have been made by the Highway Authority to ameliorate these problems by restrictions on on-street parking and a proposed advisory 20 miles per hour speed limit at certain times. However, congestion and potential danger to drivers, pedestrians and particularly children remain severe. The application would only exacerbate this situation.

E. Loss of trees

The Application also results in the loss of two young oak trees on the Brownlow's Hill frontage. These trees were planted by the Parish Council and demonstrate its wish to enhance the village and particularly the Conservation Area. Whilst their loss may carry little weight in the District Council's considerations, it does rather exemplify the somewhat cavalier attitude of the applicants to District Council policy especially in relation to the public open space and the Conservation Area, and its aims of protecting the environment. Also lost are three young pine trees to the rear of the garages. These were planted by the Nottinghamshire County Council to ensure the continuation of the historic stand of trees to the west of the proposed development. No proposal for the replacement of these trees is made in the application, again demonstrating what verges on contempt for the environment and the village.

F. Conditions

If despite these extensive objections based upon the application's conflict with the District Council's own policies, the Council is minded to allow its application, the following conditions, plus any others considered appropriate by the District Council, should be applied:

- a) A fence and hawthorn hedge to be provided along the northern, eastern and western boundaries of the development, including the car parking spaces projecting outwards on the eastern side.
- b) Semi-mature trees to be planted alongside the northern, eastern and western boundaries of the proposed development, such trees to be native species such as oak, chestnut and scots pine.
- c) The trees and their roots to the west of the development area to be protected during construction.
- d) Any damage done to the remaining open grassed area during construction to be rectified.
- e) All construction work to take place within the hours 9.15am-2.45pm during school term time.
- f) All construction material to be stored outside the 'open space designated area'.

G. Conclusions

- a) The application conflicts with statutory planning policy, particularly in relation to designated Public Open Space and to the Conservation Area.
- b) The application does demonstrable harm to the enjoyment of the open space and to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- c) The application would exacerbate an existing traffic problem by the loss of car parking for the school to the detriment of school users and other residents of the village.
- d) The application is purely opportunist and has shown a cavalier disregard of the District Council's own planning policies.
- e) It is regrettable that the District and Parish Councils could not have worked together on what could have been an exciting and rewarding project. Instead the Parish is faced with a dictatorial approach and the welfare of residents, particularly children, is ignored.
- f) The application should be **refused**.