

STOCKSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation & Environment Committee of the Town Council, held in the Council Chamber, Stocksbridge Town Hall, The ARC, on Tuesday, 5th February 2019

PRESENT:- Cllr. C Ward (Chair), Cllrs. J Staniforth, R Crowther, A Law, J Grocutt and M Milton

1. Chairman's Remarks and Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. K Davis.
2. Exclusion of Press and Public
There were no items for Exclusion of Press and Public.
3. Declarations of Interest
Cllr A Law declared an interest in item 6 – Planning and took no part in the discussion.
4. Cycleways Around the Area
Cllr J Grocutt informed of proposals for a scoping exercise for improving travel links around the area, received from Sustrans. It was noted that tentative talks had taken place with Cllr Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Transport and Development, who offered his support for the proposals and noted that whilst funding was not available at the present time scoping reports were always a useful tool to have should funding streams become available.
Proposed by Cllr. Law, seconded by Cllr. Crowther and
RECOMMENDED:- That the Town Council fund the scoping exercise as tabled by Sustrans at a cost of £4,700 plus VAT.
5. 3 Parishes Events - Woodland Project
Cllr J Grocutt provided information on a project linking the three Town/Parish Councils as part of the SLLP project. It was noted that these events are proposed for September 2019 with a workshop being held to finalise details of the themes of the events. It had been suggested that each Town/Parish Council and the SLLP contribute a sum of £500 for the proposals. Cllr Law suggested that the Peak District National Park Authority be involved as they cover a large part of the areas concerned.
Proposed by Cllr. Milton, seconded by Cllr. Crowther and
RECOMMENDED:- That the Town Council approve the expenditure of £500 towards the 3 Parishes event.
6. Hollin Busk Lane Planning Application 17/04673/OUT
It had been noted that new documents have been added to the planning portal for the planning application for 93 new homes on the Hollin Busk site. Cllr Grocutt informed of an objection she had submitted recently and of talks with the Friends of Hollin Busk group. It was understood that the application will be presented to the Planning Board in either February or March. There was a need to promote to the community the new information, highlighting the need for comments to be lodged with SCC as soon as possible.
Proposed by Cllr. Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. Staniforth and
RESOLVED:- That the following objection with respect to planning application 17/04673/OUT Hollin Busk Lane be submitted to the Planning department:-

The Stocksbridge Town Council are objecting to this development for a number of reasons which we shall set out below.

From this planning application first having been received, we have been contacted by numerous local residents objecting to this development. No one has been in contact to support the application. We have never received information directly from the developers wishing to engage with us.

Background

Hollin Busk is an area at the top of Carr Road that historically was mined and then laid to agriculture. It is regularly used by people who enjoy the great outdoors the North of Sheffield has to offer. It has wonderful vistas from its elevated position. It is a significant piece of land in the local community in that it separates Deepcar and Stocksbridge allowing each Town its own identity. Because of this since 1998, the Hollin Busk Fields have been designated as open space/open countryside not in the green belt. This came about because it was accidentally left out of the Green Belt, but, it was recognised that the land should be protected. This land is now only one of four sites in Sheffield that to be so designated.

Regulations

In March 2009, Core Strategy 72 (CS 72) - protecting countryside not in the green belt was adopted. This regulation is still in place, it is as valid now as it was when adopted, and as such Hollin Busk must remain as it is, to comply with this regulation.

The Town Council and residents have no objection to house building in the area, providing it is in the right place. We have extensive developments underway at Deepcar (Bloor Homes), Fox Valley (Stonebridge Homes) and just outside our boundary at the Oughtibridge Valley site. Hollin Busk is not the right place to build, a point that is supported by Government Policy CS72.

Transport

We take issue with the developers statements regarding public transport. The 23 & 23A buses can be caught to Penistone to link with the Railway Station. This service has only three buses a day the first one at 09.52. Trains from Penistone run only hourly and only to Sheffield and Huddersfield. There is one bus a day to Barnsley, the 57 to Sheffield is hourly, and the bus stop is quite a walk from this site. The SL1A does not start until after peak times meaning the SL1 would have to be caught extending the journey time to Sheffield. The bus stop for this bus is some 600m away, that is 50% more than the recommended walk to a bus stop and would be a significant uphill walk when returning home.

All of this indicates that the reality is commuters will chose to drive themselves rather than use the limited public transport. We are already realising the significance of disruption to road traffic from the Houses being built by Bloor Homes on Manchester Road Deepcar. A second set of traffic lights is to be added to allow access on/off of this development. These will be approximately 100m from the junction of Manchester Road, Carr Road, Vaughton Hill. Currently this junction is gridlocked at peak times of the day. Additional vehicles travelling down Carr Road to get to Sheffield, the M1 motorway or the Stocksbridge by-pass will add to the congested area. There is a Nursery and Infant School on Carr Road opposite this proposed site. Due to the hill that it is built on, parents drive their young children to school rather than walking. This causes congestion at the top of Carr Road, with vehicles parked for the school where the entrance to the development is planned. There is no footpath on the development side of Carr Road. We are concerned about the road safety implications, with an additional junction, parked vehicles and additional vehicles from this development.

Access to Local Amenities

While Stocksbridge and Deepcar are fortunate to have local shops, a Library, GP surgeries, public houses, none are realistically in walking distance. Especially not on the journey home up a steep hill. We would invite anyone to try walking it, it would then be apparent that in reality car journeys will be used, due to the gradient and lack of nearby public transport.

Environment

Water has to go somewhere, often run off from the surrounding fields floods down Carr Road and also along Hollin Busk into the fields of this site. With the additional foundations cutting off natural routes we are concerned about the excess water, and the local drainage system being able to cope with it.

Fox Glen is a local wood that the local schools enjoy as part of the Forest Schools initiative. It has much wildlife that over recent years local groups have encouraged to return and seek to protect. We are concerned that local conservation projects will fail with housing built on this site.

In summary, Hollin Busk plays an important role in the areas Outdoor City Initiative. The Outdoor City is something we are keen to promote and encourage in the area. A housing estate in this location will detract significantly from that. It would also contravene Government Policy CS72.

We would ask that the Planning Authority reject this proposal.

7. Poor State of Buses

The Clerk reported a call from a local resident noting that a number of bus journeys recently, both service 57 and the Supertram link buses, had no heating working on them. The resident had been so uncomfortable on one occasion that she had to get off the bus and could not continue her journey to Sheffield. Cllr Grocutt undertook to report the matter to the bus companies, she herself had experienced journeys on buses which had been very cold.

8. Dog Fouling

Cllr Grocutt read a letter from a local school child regarding dog fouling she was experiencing on her route to school. The Clerk undertook to contact SCC requesting assistance in the area with dog fouling issues.

There being no further business the meeting closed.