

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC OPEN SESSION ON THE 27 MARCH 2018 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, WITHYCOMBE at 7pm.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

For future reference Councillors and the Clerk will be referred to in these, and subsequent, reports by their initials:

Emma Wright (Chairman) EW / Chris Thomas (Vice Chairman) CT / Richard Barnham RB / Amanda Gardiner AJG / Susan Gill SMG / David Tilley DT / Brenda Maitland-Walker (West Somerset District Council) BMW / Christine Lawrence (Somerset County Council) CL / Sam Rawle (Clerk) SR/ Eric Beaven EB (Parish Council Independent Advisor)

The meeting was digitally recorded

These notes formulate a record of the Public Open Session held on the 27th March 2018. Two members of the public were in attendance, Mrs Jean Humber (JH) and Mrs Clare Kellett (CK). Cllr Christine Lawrence joined the meeting at 8.00pm.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. She reported that apologies had been received from DT.

She explained that it was an extraordinary meeting concerning developments at Titholes.

During the discussion the following questions and points were raised: -

- CK – Frustrating that this has been going on so long and concerns that the play area and activity area will be squeezed out of the scheme. More children coming into the village. Important there is somewhere for them to meet, chat and play.
- Can Myra's Wood Walk be re-opened? – *No not at the moment, whilst works are in progress.*
- JH – Savills moved in without any discussion or consultation with the Parish Council beforehand. The expected outcomes of the scheme were poles apart from what was happening on site; the Parish Council had no reason to foresee this. Behaviour from Savills showed total disregard and disrespect to the Parish and Community. Interested to know how much help have SALC been and also the District Council.
- EB – Project Manager from Savills placed the scheme contract with no reference to the planning consent whatsoever.
- EB confirmed that West Somerset Council Enforcement Officer had not attended the site.
- In answer to a question SC confirmed that the land was still owned by the Crown Estate. Once the planning obligations are delivered then it becomes part of the Michael Hintz Pension Fund Holdings and they will assume the obligations to which the Crown have agreed to.
- BMW explained that permission was only granted for the houses because of the community benefits to be delivered. The site is in Flood Zone 2, and otherwise, planning consent would not have been allowed but for the community benefits. The S106 keeps in place the commitment to deliver the community benefits. Savills would need to put in an amendment with plans which would need to go to Committee.
- SC – What leverage do the Parish Council have to make this happen into something we would accept. EB – Reliance on district council to enforce the planning and the S106 which prescribes the community benefits. Depends on how district council

enforce that and how many compromises they will accept. The Parish Council will be a major consultee on any variation.

- SC – The near neighbours to the site need to be in agreement to proposals as well as the Parish Council. BMW confirmed that this would need to be taken into account for planning if it can be proven that neighbouring properties are adversely affected.
- BMW – Potentially lots of problems with surface water run off when the private houses are developed. If it runs back into the car park this would become the responsibility of the Parish Council. They would need consent from Highways for it to go into the ordinary watercourse.
- EB – Savills have invested time and resource into the recent engineering exercise which is a positive step. Don't know if the solution they are proposing for car park drainage system will work. Big issue that there is no SUDs system which is a legal requirement for car parks. There will be an issue about the 1 in 5 slope coming up to the corner of the car park. Disabled access is normally 1 in 12. There is no retaining structure at the back of the activity area holding back the hill.
- EB - Savills have hinted in recent correspondence that money could be saved by doing something different with the Activity Field. The Activity Area is a big cost to deliver and the latest drawings from Savills show they will be unable to achieve an area that will be large enough for kicking balls around. The Parish Council need to decide what they want to achieve in this area.
- EW – Need to achieve something viable for the community and may need to compromise otherwise could be too costly to deliver and the community will end up with nothing. It could be a terraced area with seating.
- JH – Have always said we need an area where children can kick a ball about. There is nowhere else in Withycombe to do that.
- BMW confirmed she would find out what action West Somerset Council could take to put it right.
- EB – If project was abandoned would West Somerset Council pursue this? Tri party arrangement working together to make it happen is a better option.
- EB – Recommend that the design gets a warranty from the engineer. That way the engineer is held liable for a number of years. At the moment there is no comeback if the design is defective.

The Public Open Session ended at 8.40pm.

Chairman

_____ Date