

**Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council Planning Committee held at 16.00 on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020 via zoom video conferencing after a visit to the development site of Waterworks Spring Farm, Dagwood Lane, Doddinghurst.**

**Present:** Cllrs: D. Dicker (Chairman), M. Capon, A. Oliver and A. Smith (Planning Committee) plus Cllrs G. Smith, and J. Le Plage

- 1. Apologies for absence:** None
- 2. Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda.** None
- 3. Information and 🗳️ Resolved:** Based on the information received to date (including the history of the site) the Planning Committee met to discuss the Planning Application for the development of Waterworks Spring Farm, Dagwood Lane, Doddinghurst ref 20/00704/ful. The purpose to recommend a resolution for submission to the Parish Council Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 in order to respond to Brentwood Borough Council Planning Department by the deadline of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

The following Resolution, agreed by all present, will be recommended to Full Council on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July:

“Given the unfortunate history of Waterworks Spring Farm, the Planning Committee, having visited the site and discussed the current development application, is minded not to oppose it providing that it is viewed as ‘exceptional’ and does not form a precedent for any future planning applications”.

In agreeing the resolution, the following points were noted and discussed:

**Points noted:**

1. The committee visited the site at 14.00 at the invitation of Will Russell. The following were in attendance: Cllrs Dicker, Capon, Oliver, and A. Smith (the Planning Committee) plus Cllr. G Smith and J. Le Plage from Doddinghurst Parish Council plus Cllr Roger McCheyne, and Cllr Keith Parker from Brentwood Borough Council. The Councillors were shown the degree of petrification to the Natural Woodland due to the suffocation of the trees caused by the historic dumping of waste materials; the boundaries and height of the land and footpath, now and proposed; the pond and general condition of the land and outbuildings, and the building that will remain because of the possible presence of bats.
2. The land is within the Green Belt and can only be developed in ‘exceptional’ circumstances.
3. Planning permission has never been granted for any of the buildings on the site and that all planning applications are listed on the Brentwood Borough Council Planning portal under ref 20/00704/ful
4. The Councillors noted the correspondence that has been received from residents of Brook Lane and other emails plus recent feedback on the Doddinghurst Facebook discussion page. Given the lockdown situation it is difficult to hold a face to face meeting as would normally happen. All residents that wish to comment should be advised to also log their comments on the Brentwood Planning Portal as Brentwood are the Planning authority.

5. The Councillors have been involved with the history of the site for many years and are aware of the great efforts that were made over the years to prevent the contamination of the site, enforce the removal of illegal waste and protect the green belt. Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council were involved on many occasions at the request of the Parish Council but were unable to prevent the waste contamination.

6. In its current state the land is unsuitable for any use and therefore would need decontaminating at considerable cost estimated to be upwards of £1.7m. The Council is mindful that if the application is unsuccessful then the developer may sell the site on and the future of the site would be uncertain. It would not like to encourage other developers to think that if they contaminate land they would be successful in applying to develop that land in the future.

7. The cost of the site plus the cost of decontamination would put the site unsuitable for crowd funding and unlikely that this could be practicable should further planning applications be forthcoming in the area.

8. The Council would not wish any development granted to set a precedence for other applications which would permanently change the nature and character of Dagwood Lane. The Council would not want in effect a housing estate to develop piece meal without having the infrastructure needed. Dagwood Lane already has a residential premise, Appletree Farm (formerly the Mushroom Farm) which is quite a large property and that gained planning permission as a result of the establishment of a mushroom farm on the site.

9. Dagwood Lane is very narrow and concern was raised about access to the site, the use of the road particularly at school times. Any development could lead to considerable road use and access could be an issue. Footpaths and Cycle routes would need to be carefully planned to give access to local amenities and where there is a public footpath it should be adopted and not an easement.

10. The Brentwood Local Development Plan is not yet signed off and currently there are no plans to provide more houses in Doddinghurst.

11. The number and size of houses in the planning application is to enable the developer to cover the cost of remediating the land but the social housing obligation needs to be determined and what benefit this would bring to Doddinghurst Village if development was granted.

12. The Village Infrastructure to support this application would have to be considered as Schools and medical facilities are already under pressure.

13. The Parish Council would want to be actively involved in any decisions taken on the site and if planning were granted would want to have control over the Forest and its ongoing upkeep. In addition, it would want a say in any caveats/ provisos that ensure that any Green belt development remains 'exceptional' and gives maximum return to the Village.

**The meeting closed at 17.15**

Signed:



Dated: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020