

10 Swallow Fold
Simmondley
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK136QG

Mr Kerr Brown
Planning Inspectorate
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

29/5/2024

Submitted by email. Returned 17 June &
advised to submit to Inquiry.

Dear Sir,

**Appeal Reference: APP/H1033/W/24/3339815
HPK/2022/0456 Land at Adderley Fields, Dinting.**

I received a letter from High Peak Council this morning, informing me that the Inquiry into the above appeal is to be held at the Village Hotel in Hyde. Quite why the Council would select a venue that is nowhere near the site, and indeed isn't even in the Borough I'm not sure, other than possibly to deter residents from attending. Unfortunately, whilst I could have left work for a few hours to speak at the event if it had been heard locally, I cannot afford to lose a day's pay to travel to Hyde. I would therefore be grateful if you would put this letter in front of the Inspector, which sets out what I was intending to say. My wife made comments twice on the application and I would be grateful if you would also take these into account in your decision.

Affordable Housing

The land is identified in the local plan as being suitable for housing and so I accept that some form of development is going to happen. But I urge you not to let the developer get away with providing the miserly amount of affordable housing put forward. We are greatly in need of affordable housing in Glossop. Twenty years ago the town was an affordable place to live but in recent years prices have shot up. A little 2 bed terrace is now beyond the financial reach of anyone on an average wage to buy. The site was included in the Plan on the basis that it would help provide homes for local people who can't afford the open market. The Inspector for the Local Plan took account of the cost of providing the access and other public services when he included affordable housing as a requirement for the development of the site. Please don't let this requirement be set aside.

The developer is getting at least 20% profit from the scheme. There's nothing in planning guidance that says 20% profit is a requirement for a developer - they themselves state in the Devvia Viability Appraisal that guidance specifies a range. Also, the viability appraisal includes a long list of "abnormal costs". I'll leave you to decide whether these costs are reasonable but it seems to me to have been concocted to overplay development costs for the site. It includes things like foul and surface water drainage, public open space provision, biodiversity mitigation and habitat assessment, chimneys, roof tiles and stone facings, and other costs which seem to relate to complying with building regulations. Aren't these things

just normal requirements for development ? How can they be "abnormal" ? The developer is clearly trying to get away with providing as little affordable housing as possible by overplaying costs.

Wildlife

I'm also really concerned about how this developer has treated the matter of local wildlife. Gamesley Woods are surprisingly rich in wildlife, although the actual site area is just grazing land so if it has been assessed on its own, without taking account of the adjoining woods, the biodiversity value of the site will have been underplayed. This is bound to be impacted by the introduction of housing in close proximity to the woods. The scheme is meant to include a mitigation scheme but this includes works in Chinley. Chinley is miles away ! How can mitigation provided in Chinley compensate for harm that occurs in Dinting ? It's a cobbled together appraisal which downplays the true impacts of the scheme.

Traffic

You will see when you visit the site that the existing access is via an old cobbled lane which runs parallel to the A57 from Simmondley Lane. It is used to access properties on Dinting Vale, as well as a couple of new houses which lie on the lane. It's also used to access the Scout Hut. Simmondley Lane has almost no visibility, sits on a steep rise close to the A57 roundabout with parked cars adjacent to the access.. The access scheme for the site assumes that all traffic will use the A57. On paper this seems logical but during peak periods traffic is queued back along the main A57, especially in the morning, or during school drop off and pick up times and using the cobbled access to nip out into Simmondley and up over the hill to go onward will be much quicker. The increased traffic using this access will be a nightmare. It'll lead to blocked traffic on Simmondley Lane and will increase the likelihood of an accident. Along with downplaying the amount of traffic the development is likely to generate the developer has tried to imply that no-one will want to use the Simmondley Lane access but any local person who knows what the traffic is like will tell you which access will be quicker and likely to be preferred by local residents. I urge you to take a look yourself. Please do so in the morning rush hour so you can get a feel for what local people are worried about.

Impact on Residents to the South of the Site

At the moment the trees are in full leaf so the site looks well screened. This is not the case in winter when the trees are bare. You will see yourself that the houses to the south are separated from the site by a stream which has steeply sloping land either side. During the course of the application I asked the Council to request cross-sections from the developer which shows the relative levels of the scheme and adjoining land. These were never provided - you will see that the levels information for the south of the site falls short of the site boundary. This is a concern because I have no idea from the plans how far the developer intends to excavate or build up at the south end of the site and what impact this may have in terms of privacy within adjoining gardens. I'd be grateful if you could review this, as it is clear the Council haven't even considered it.

Pedestrian, Cycle and Equestrian Link to the North.

The scheme includes a link to a footpath that leaves the site to the south. This is not an adopted footpath and although i use it myself for the few months in the summer when it is passable, you should bear in mind that the land it exits onto is not owned by the developer

and there is no plan to link it to the "trans-pennine trail" which lies around a quarter of a mile further to the south.

Whilst I can see that it's a nice, albeit unachievable idea in theory for pedestrians or cycling, what is more perplexing is the idea that it will be used by horses. Where are these horses going to go ? onto the A57 to canter in the traffic ? Or perhaps for a trot around the new estate ? It's bonkers. Please make sure that if the scheme does go ahead there's no requirement for an equestrian link.

Conduct of the Council

I am disappointed to see that the Council are not going to defend many of their own reasons for refusal at the Inquiry. High Peak have been chronically understaffed in recent years to the extent that the few planning staff they have are shared with Staffordshire Moorlands. The planning officer who dealt with this case doesn't even work there, he was employed as a consultant. I think as a result the Planning Department just haven't got the staff to defend this appeal. They are clearly scared of the developer and the appeal, despite the reasons for refusal being based on sound planning grounds. So, although i'm very annoyed at the Council for how they have conducted themselves throughout this whole saga, they have my sympathy. Please don't let a big developer, who will no doubt turn up mob-handed, try to imply that a lack of a fight from the Council means that this development is acceptable.

So in summary, thank you for allowing me to put my view to you. Although the Council appear to have prematurely washed their hands of this scheme, I take some comfort in the fact that the proposal will now be properly scrutinised by an independent Inspector. I hope that once you have scrutinised the many volumes the developer has submitted, you too will conclude that it is a poorly put together scheme that downplays its impacts on highway safety and wildlife and over-eggs development costs to avoid providing the required affordable housing. I hope you'll conclude that local people deserve better.

With thanks

Rob Davies

