

## **Development Control Committee 23rd September 2020**

### **Update Sheet**

#### **Item 5. Application LCC/2019/0028 Parbold Hill Quarry**

##### **Representations**

Since the report was finalised a further 134 representations have been received objecting to the application. The grounds for objection are summarised as follows:-

- Loss of visual amenity and would despoil an existing beauty spot and view point that is a famous Lancashire landmark. The raised landform would obscure the existing views.
- The proposal would deter people from visiting the restaurant
- Impact of HGVs – the existing A5209 has been identified in the West Lancashire Route Management Strategy Stage 2 report as a route that is unsuitable for the current level of HGV's so why add additional vehicles to this road.
- Use of the access would result in road safety issues.
- The Committee should visit the site before considering the proposal – not all of the Members know the site or are aware of the issues. Why is due process not being followed?
- Such a significant proposal should not be considered at the current time when committees can only meet remotely– it should be deferred until representation from all parties can be made in a suitable forum.
- The report contains significant factual errors and misrepresents the detrimental impacts on the area. It goes against the views of the district council, five parish councils and 1000 local residents.
- There is a risk of additional flooding.
- There does not appear to be any form of monitoring for the waste being tipped.
- The Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan already makes adequate provision for tipping of inert materials – there is no need to create another site.
- The proposal would only give rise to a 25% improvement in drainage which is not a reason to over ride green belt policy. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the development in the Green Belt.
- The proposal would stop the area being used by local people which is important at a time of Covid 19 restrictions.
- The proposed tipping volume is far more than required to address the drainage issues.
- The proposal would result in dust issues and noise pollution and unpleasant odours.
- There is no evidence to demonstrate that there are problems with the surface of the site – this is admitted by the Council officer.
- The surveys of ecology are inadequate. The site is used by a wide range of bird species.

- Why is there no provision for objectors to provide their views at the meeting – is there underhandedness between the applicant and the council. The application should not be decided in secret.
- There is no timescale on restoration – there will still be pressure for the holiday lodges that were originally part of this application.
- Consideration of the application should be deferred to allow the Environment Agency permitting process to be carried out.
- The proposal is contrary to all planning policies and should be refused.
- Tipping additional inert waste would prevent proper decomposition of the existing waste material lengthening the cost of monitoring and clean up.

One representation supporting the application has been received. The resident considers that the proposal will restore the hill to its original profile which will look much better and will provide short term pain for long term gain.

The applicant has also made a submission which is summarised as follows:-

- The proposal is for the minimum amount of work required to remediate the existing site.
- The site is not under any specific habitat protection and is private land. Any ecological value of the site is a matter of happenstance and any weight to be offered to such accidental interest is limited and ought to be tempered.
- The works do not conflict with green belt policy.
- The proposed works will not have a long term impact on the viewpoint – the existing layby and viewing area will be retained.
- The site has an uneven surface and poor surface water drainage leading to increased volumes of rainwater percolating into the waste and increased leachate generation and risk of water pollution. The proposed importation of additional soil materials will remediate the areas of significant settlement.

## Advice

The majority of representations that have been received raise the same issues that have previously been made and are summarised and addressed in the report.

The main additional issue concerns the process by which the application is being determined through the virtual committee and the absence of a formal site visit to view the site and its surroundings.

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 provide for English local authorities to hold public meetings virtually or by video link during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The county council's practices are in line with these regulations. Moreover, the operation of our virtual committee is similar to most other local planning authorities in England. The county council's policy of allowing up to 30 statements to be read out during the meeting is more generous than most planning authorities. It is acknowledged that there has been no site visit by members. However, you have been provided with some video showing the site in addition to the photographs within the

powerpoint to allow you to appreciate the site and its setting and again this is similar to the practices that are being adopted by most other planning authorities at the current time.