

Martley Parish Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 28th May 2012 in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr. D. Goodyear (Chairman), Cllr S Cumella, Cllr T Gale, Cllr M Gardner, Cllr. R. McHugh, Cllr T Studer, Cllr M Walker and Mrs J Dale (Clerk)

There were 44 members of the public present.

Democratic Period/ Public Question Time:

Councillors listened to numerous comments from parishioners objecting to the application. The applicant also attended to present his case.

21.12 Apologies – Apologies were received from Cllr Nott due to work load.

22.12 Declarations of Interest: There were none.

23.12 Planning:

12/00472/FUL – Proposed gravity sports track and race control office/store, Berrow Farm. Councillors expressed concern about:

- Volume of traffic
- Safety
- Noise
- Discrepancies between application and what the applicant actually states
- Ancient monument at the top of Berrow Hill

A site visit had taken place with all councillors and the planning officers present plus District Councillor Williams. The applicant was also in attendance.

Individual councillors gave their response to the planning application and Council voted to propose refusal of the application by 7 votes to 1. Detailed response to MHDC attached as appendix 1.

24.12 Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council discussed the preparation of a neighbourhood plan and it was proposed by Cllr Studer and seconded by Cllr Cumella to resolve :

1. To confirm to MHDC that Martley Parish Council intends to proceed with the completion of a neighbourhood development plan for the Parish of Martley.
2. To confirm that it is the local representative body for the whole Parish area and through its policies of its process of consultation for the parish plan and proposed neighbourhood development plan to cover the whole Parish and there is no reason to exclude any part from the Parish area.
3. To adopt the whole of Martley Parish area (as defined in the attached map) as the area covered by the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4. To confirm that, being a Parish Council, it is a relevant body as defined by Schedule 9, para 2 of the Localism Act 2011 and that it is competent to produce the Neighbourhood Plan.

The motion was carried unanimously by Council.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

J C Dale
Clerk
5th June 2012

Signed

Date

29th May 2012

Malvern Hills District Council
Planning Services
The Council House
Avenue Road
Malvern
Worcs

Re: 12/00472/FUL – Proposed Gravity Sports Track

As you are aware Parish Council have met twice to discuss the above application plus had a site visit with planning officers. The first meeting attracted 126 members of the public and the meeting last night attracted 44 members of the public. Councillors listened to parishioners comments as well as those of the applicant who was present at both meetings.

One Councillor has detailed his personal objections and I show this below.

“We need to judge application as its stands. Verbal assurances by the proposer would not be binding in any way if the application were approved. If the proposer seriously intended to restrict access (as they have assured us), then they would have been included in the application. Without any such restrictions, the proposal would enable use of the proposed track from 8am to dusk on 365 days/year. We should therefore assume this is what is intended. This is a realistic assumption, given the stated ambition of the proposer to expand the sport in the UK and develop the site as an international venue and training facility.

Much of the information in the application is inaccurate or insufficient:

1. The width of the track is not stated. Web images of downhill longboarding show track of about 3 to 4 metres width. This is much wider than the artist’s impression in the application. A track of this width would require the removal of some trees and gates. It will be ugly and intrusive.
2. The application states that the track would be built over an existing stone track. This is not the case for much of the route, as seen at the PC inspection. A smooth tarmac finish would require groundwork of over a kilometre in length.
3. Details of the return route from the foot of the track to the start are not made clear. However, it is possible that, if approved, work would cover a wider area than stated in the application.
4. The proposal includes no restriction on the number of people or vehicles on the site. The existing small car park and narrow access road would be inadequate for more than 20 or so people/day (and is probably inadequate for current residents). There are no proposals in the application for litter control and disposal, or toilet facilities.
5. There are no stated restrictions in the application on related usage of the site, including camping, PA systems, music, food and alcohol consumption. Even with none of these, the noise of spectators would worsen the quality of life of local residents.
6. The track begins within the area of an ancient monument, which is probably at least 2500 years old and is of great national importance. Development at this site would require Secretary of State approval.
7. The application claims that the proposal will not have any biological impact. This is not the case. It crosses and is next to ancient woodland, designated wildlife sites and SSSIs.

Finally, this proposal would clearly have a major negative impact on the lives of all of us who living on or near Berrow Hill, or who appreciate the beauty and quietness of this part of Worcestershire. It would cause great harm to an outstanding part of our local landscape. We have a duty to protect it, and hand it on to our children. “

Some councillors made similar points to those above plus additional comments:

- How would the 41 acres of agricultural land by the river be serviced – it would need another roadway installed.
- Currently in winter it is not possible to access the hill by Land Rover – how would access be made then.
- How much damage would be incurred actually getting the tarmac up the hill and what would be the cost of such an operation.
- No-one is allowed access to Berrow Hill which is spectacular and is a wonderful place and the people of Martley should have access to it. However I have taken into account the strong objections from the parish. It is a site of outstanding beauty and a historic monument and therefore I consider it the wrong site.
- The scheme is a good scheme but a lot of questions still need to be answered.
- The start of the track is within the ancient monument and is not using existing tracks. The application does not match the supporting arguments.
- As Parish Councillors it is our role to represent Martley and what is best for the parish and the public response points us to believe the residents do not wish for this.

General consensus is that the track is being planned in the wrong place – the hill is considered a local beauty spot along with the ancient monument and these should not be disturbed.

Voting took place – 7 councillors voted against with 1 in favour and 1 abstention therefore Martley Parish Council is recommending REFUSAL of the application.

Janet Dale
Clerk & RFO

Martley

Scale 1:25,000
Date 29 April 2010
Time 09:42



