

Pen Selwood Parish Council

Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee at the Village Hall 7.30pm on Thursday 26th February 2015

Present Cllr Jenkins , Cllrs Appleton ,FitzGerald ,Ashman, Heal.

Chairman began meeting by advising that each member of the public gallery would be free to ask questions after the applicant had spoken and after each member of the Parish Council had spoken about the application.

1 Apologies for absence Cllr Young and Steadman- 10 members of the public were present.

2 Notice of interest - Belinda Heal

3 Planning Applications 15/00520/CPO Penhouse Farm PenSelwood, BA9 8LL

Agricultural improvement operation to stabilise existing areas of landslip using imported sub-soil and construction and demolition waste.

Bill Hopkins began by outlining the extent of the landslip at Penhouse over the last year. It was now not possible to graze animals on the area which had become a quagmire with pools of surface water. Mr and Mrs Hopkins gave details of lambs dying after falling into the holes 5-6 feet deep that had appeared and of a horse becoming stuck in very deep mud. Bill then gave details of the plan to stabilise the land that had been put together by Red Rock. The plan was to restore the land to its former agricultural use.

Cllr Jenkins gave details of the site visit he and other members of the Parish Council had made to Penhouse Farm that week. Andrew had seen the extent of the landslip and had been surprised at the poor condition of the land which is now unusable. In his view something needed to be done to restore the land to its former use and his preference was that entrance site "A"(on map provided) should be used for vehicular access as this would minimise disruption to the village.

Jane Ashman asked why the stabilisation would take three years and that she thought that the proposed solution was disproportionate to the scale of the problem. Jane also asked if the recent lorry activity had made the situation worse.

Tony Appleton had been surprised at the vast scale of the landslip and thought that something needed to be done to rectify the problem. Tony thought that there would be little disruption to residents and that access to the site was the main issue. Tony favoured site "A" for access.

Peter FitzGerald was concerned that the tipping site may stray into other areas not currently effected by landslip and would like reassurance that this would not occur. Peter read out a letter from Mr and Mrs

Wilson of Crossways who listed their concerns and objected to the application on landscape, environment and highways grounds

Bill advised that the recent lorry activity had been the Red Rock contractor's vehicles which had been on the site to make bore holes, trial pits and take survey details. In addition to this there had been a lot of vehicles working at Encie Farm where improvement work was taking place. Bill also advised that planting trees would not be sufficient to improve the situation and that the land was difficult to survey accurately as it was situated on the Mere Fault line.

Members of the public asked what the source of the infill would be and Bill confirmed that there would be demolition rubble at the base to provide strength and sub soil on the top. It was hoped the majority of the infill would be sub soil and that the exact source of the material was not known at present. It was hoped that it would be found locally and Bill thought the improvements in the housing market would assist this. Bill also advised that the land would not be left for nature to take its course as it was currently an eye sore and it currently formed a large part of the view from his home. In addition to this the situation could get worse with more landslip eating away at the hillside moving towards Long Lane.

Members of the public also raised concerns that the infill would not be controlled and that anything could end up being put into the space. Jane Ashman thought that once the project was underway the Environment Agency (EA) would be powerless to monitor this. Bill advised that the EA were very strict on these matters and that every vehicle load had to be issued with a ticket giving details of the contents which EA staff monitor.

Disruption to footpaths was raised as a concern and Bill advised that if footpaths were closed they would be restored and reopened at the conclusion of the work. There were also concerns raised over the duration of the work. Although three years was the stated length of the project there were no guarantees that work would be completed in this time as this depended on the availability of infill. Bill said that this was true but that the project could also be completed earlier if plenty of infill was available.

Members of the public were concerned at the speed at which the project was happening and Bill advised that there was urgency attached to this project in order to avert more landslips.

The Parish Council members then voted on the application. Belinda Heal abstained.

The vote was cast by secret ballot and the Clerk counted three in favour of the application with the stipulation that the access point be site "A" on the planning map.

One vote was recorded against the application.

Meeting ended 8.20pm

Chairman..... Date.....