

Notes of the Extraordinary Berwick St James Parish Meeting

20th January 2011 No. 34 35

11th April

35 present plus Chair Richard Brasher and Jacqueline Webb, Clerk. 8 apologies for absence.

Reason for Meeting

Meeting called because several Berwick residents wished to discuss the proposed Article 4 Direction due to be considered by the Southern Area Planning Office for the Stonehenge Campsite and Summerfields House.

Article 4 Directions – Explanation by Stephen Bush

Article 4 Directions are issued by the Council to control development, primarily where the character of an area of acknowledged importance would be threatened by development. They are commonly applied to conservation areas. Wiltshire Planning have acknowledged the damaging visual impact of caravans on the site. The effect of the Direction is to remove Permitted Development rights necessitating a planning application for any work or activity which would otherwise have been treated as permitted development.

Article 4 Direction – The Developer's Point of view

William Grant, the owner of the site, confirmed that the Direction applies to the activities and developments on the camping and caravan fields and the proposed house. He confirmed that contrary to what he feels is common sense the whole site is now being treated by the planning authorities as one planning unit. He commented on the unfairness of the Directions, complaining that the restrictions had not been imposed on other camping sites such as the Guide Centre. He also stated the Direction would make trading impossible. Currently 3 caravans and a variable number of tents are allowed on the site 28 days a year. Should the Direction be imposed he would have to reapply for this consent. Planning permission would take about eight weeks to process. He already has bookings for the Summer Solstice weekend which would have to be cancelled should the Direction be enforced because of a lack of time to reinstate the permission. This would result in him losing income for the best weekend of the year for his business.

Questions and Comments

The majority of the comments from the floor demonstrated the strong feelings of antipathy to the development. Some people said that the caravan site spoiled the beauty and tranquillity of the countryside. However, others mention that the work done to screen the caravan site was acceptable to them.

Vote

The chair, Richard Brasher, suggested that the meeting should take a vote, the result of which would be sent to the Wiltshire Council southern Area Planning Office who will inform the Southern Area Planning Committee which meets Thursday 14 April 2011. He emphasised that only those on the Berwick St James electoral role were allowed to vote. The result was:

Those in support of the Article 4 Direction	21 plus 7 letters in support
Those against the Article 4 Direction	3
Those who wish to abstain	2