

Lanchester Parish Council

**Minutes of the Special Meeting held in the Conference Room in Park House,
Lanchester on Tuesday 29 October 2012 at 7.15pm**

Present Mr O Johnson (Chair)

Mr K Harrison, Mr C Burton, Mr D Lindsay, Mr A Nairn
Mr S Walker, Mr K Leary, Mr A Myers, Mr M Wardle
Mr M Clarke, Mr B Glass

Apologies Apologies for absence were received as follows:

Mrs M Gray - away
Mr B Gray - work commitments
Mrs A Cook - sick

The above apologies were received and accepted

263/12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

264/12 Public Participation

The public participation policy was distributed for the benefit of the press and public present.

265/12 Proposed Housing Site – Cadger Bank

Councillor O Johnson withdrew as Chair and Councillor M Wardle took over as Chair.

Members discussed the proposed housing site at Cadger Bank as identified in the draft County Durham Plan.

In addition a number of residents spoke about the proposed site.

Following a comprehensive discussion the following response was agreed by a majority decision. Councillor O Johnson did not take part in the vote.

Resolved – that Members object to the proposed housing site and would request that the proposed housing site at Cadger Bank be removed from the County Plan.

Members raise this objection for a number of reasons detailed below.

Members are aware that a planning application was submitted in 1988 for proposed housing on the same site, which resulted in a refusal for planning. The planning report noted the following summarised reasons for refusal:

- the development would extend the physical limits of the village unacceptably into surrounding attractive countryside
- the access would be dangerous, being on to a steep hill
- a precedent would be created for other similar proposals
- the site has suspected archaeological value as a result of its nearness to the Roman Fort
- any damage to the setting of the Roman Fort may prejudice its future development as a tourist attraction and reduce its value as an archaeological site

Members feel that these reasons for refusal by the planning authority in 1988 are still valid and appropriate.

In addition to the objections outlined above Members also identify the following areas of concern:

- The Cadger Bank site needs to be thoroughly assessed and investigated before any decision can be made on its future
- Parking congestion is a problem in the village already, which will be compounded further by additional housing
- The village has a history of flooding. There is concern that additional housing development may create additional flood risk to other properties and the village centre.
- Members feel that many aspects of Lanchester infrastructure are already at capacity including sewage, drainage, roads, schools, parking etc.
- Members have been informed that there is a 41 inch water main which runs through the site
- The Cadger Bank site is not an infill site and will extend the village right up the hillside
- The Cadger Bank site has a history of mining and is an unsettled site with apparently few records remaining
- Members are informed that the two primary schools in the village are at capacity already
- The proposed housing at Cadger Bank would be unsuitable for older people due to its location on a steep hill
- The access to the village along a steep narrow footpath is likely to pose problems for families and older people
- The draft plan has moved the Cadger Bank site from long term to short term timescale for development. Members are concerned that the site and timescale is being pulled forward because a developer is keen to develop. Members therefore question that this does not appear to be a strategic approach
- The development would increase traffic on Cadger Bank and through the village

- The site close to Longovicium, is likely to contain archaeological remains and have archaeological importance. Members would request that a full geophysical survey is carried out

Members feel that this site does not represent sustainable development for all the reasons listed above.

Members would wish to protect the Lanchester village development limit.

Members would wish to point out that recent proposed housing sites at Lynwood House, Maiden Law hospital, Lanchester Arms and Kings Head will already introduce over 90 new residential dwellings to the village.

266/12 County Durham Plan Preferred Options Document- consultation

Members discussed the above document.

Resolved – that the following response be sent to the County Council:

- Members welcome the broad aims of the document and its strategic intent to plan for the next 20 years.
- The plan will only be viable if substantial work is carried out on all infrastructure and that the current infrastructure will be unable to cope with the proposed levels of development
- Members expressed particular concerns about infrastructure including; highways, drainage, sewage, education, health, parking etc.
- Members recognised that there was a case for encouraging some inward migration to the Parish but thought that this needed fuller consideration as part of neighbourhood planning.
- Members were especially concerned to voice the need for full fibre-optic Broadband links for the Parish and wider County as a whole. This was seen as a potentially valuable contribution to encouraging home-working thereby reducing some of the pressures on the road system.
- Flooding is a major concern in Lanchester and across the County. Infrastructure should be improved to address some of the flooding issues. In particular there is concern that any development in Delves Lane and on the fringes of the Parish will increase the levels of water which will feed through to Lanchester via the existing waterways.
- It is important that the Northern relief road is built. However there is concern that this is scheduled for 2030 and would like this

timescale brought forward. Although welcoming the proposed northern relief road, there is a concern that this will not alleviate the congestion of traffic through Lanchester. Members suggested that a more substantial relief road could be built.

- Members expressed concern that the proposals would result in a substantial loss of green belt with only a narrow green belt remaining at Sniperley. Members were of the opinion that the bypass should be held as the boundary between the green belt and further development.
- Proposed housing sites will increase congestion on roads. In particular the extensive proposed housing to the West and North of Lanchester will greatly increase the level of traffic on the A691 and other roads around the Parish
- Members raised objections to the proposed housing site at Cadger bank (housing allocation HA/17 Cadger Bank, Lanchester 1/LA/07). Comments on this have been sent in a separate submission.

Meeting ended at 8.15pm