

DRAKELOW PARK LIAISON GROUP

NINTH MEETING

12th September 2012

Action By:

Target Date:

Attendees

Mrs Jean Blackman (Chair)
 Cllr Alan Lees – Coton in the Elms Parish Council
 Cllr Lacey – Derbyshire County Council
 Cllr Timms – Walton Parish Council
 Sheila Jackson – Castle Gresley Parish Council
 Cllr Louise Ross – Rosliston Parish Council
 Richard Wain – Burton Civic Trust
 Dr Timothy Elson – Walton Parish Council
 Cllr Alison Legg – Ward Councillor ESBC
 Adrian Farnsworth & Pauline Whirrity – Local residents
 Val & Wes Taylor – Local Residents
 John Powell – Linton Parish Council
 Chris Chatfield – Drakelow Developments Ltd
 Simon Tucker – DTA Transport
 Victoria Walker – Beattie Communications

Apologies

Cllr Wheeler – Leader South Derbyshire District Council
 Cllr Grosvenor – Leader East Staffordshire Borough Council
 Roger Bell – Barton under Needwood Parish Council
 Cllr Bambrick – Derbyshire County Council

Introductions and Welcome

Approval of minutes

VW to amend:
 P1 – Patricia Hancock Stapenhill Parish Council
 P1 - Coton in the Elms
 P2 – Philip Somerfield, not Somerville
 P5 - third para – Police raised the concerns (not Staffordshire)

Planning/Walton Bypass Update

CC reminded attendees that in terms of Drakelow Park development things hadn't changed since the last meeting and the team were still hopeful of a 2013 start date.

However, the main issues with Drakelow Park are still viability.

Since the last meeting DDL has spoken with a number of housebuilders and funding partners. Things have worsened as land values have continued to decrease. For example, all of DDL landholdings had a revaluation undertaken and in 18 months the value has reduced by £3m.

This has a large impact on Drakelow Park as now is clearly not the time to be in the market selling land.

Phase one of Walton Bypass has been completed and it's encouraging to see that the flood compensation work undertaken has been completely successful.

This is positive as even though an embankment will go onto the flood plain, there will still be an improvement on the original situation.

In addition, the CPO has still to be fully finalised with Staffordshire and this would remove the weather window regarding a start date. Despite this, it is still looking very unlikely (unless funding issues change) that Walton Bypass will restart next year.

Although the Government is looking at mechanisms to kick-start development, this is a long slow process. DDL has been engaging with SDDC to see if there are any solutions in terms of the viability of Drakelow Park, but without any solutions, starting work is not a possibility right now as this would be financially unviable.

In terms of reserve matters applications on Drakelow Park, DDL will progress these once a funding partner or housebuilder is secured, which will commit to buying land.

CC was keen to put everyone in the picture as unfortunately things haven't improved over the last year in terms of the housing market, they have actually worsened.

Sheila Jackson raised a question – *Barratt, David Wilson and Ward Homes are seeking to build a big development on the edge of Lichfield, will this detract from the Drakelow development?*

CC confirmed: We need to separate schemes being suggested against those which are committed, such as Drakelow. For example Lawns Farm, Branston South, these are all just suggestions at this stage and they too will be impacted by the current housing market issues.

The timescales are very lengthy, we started work on the Drakelow Park planning application in 2006, consulted in 2007, and the application was submitted in 2008 yet it took until 2012 to obtain a planning permission.

Viability wasn't an issue when we started this process and it now is. But the housing market goes in cycles – usually of around seven years; so by 2014

<p>things should start to improve. DDL remains committed to the project, but in terms of starting the development; this is dependent on funding/house builders.</p> <p>Val Taylor raised a question: <i>if the road is delayed is it worth going ahead with the CPO process?</i></p> <p>CC responded: The CPO is essentially complete; there is just one final legal step in terms of putting the landholding into the final title. Even if the CPO completes over the next month, which we hope it will, we have missed the window in terms of the summer period for finalising this road. However, we still need a funding partner or a housebuilder committed to continue, as we cannot commit to that level of risk – and the huge cost of Walton Bypass until that is secured. DDL has already invested £4million of the £10million total cost of Walton Bypass. DDL remains committed but we cannot confirm the restart date at this time.</p> <p>However, CC highlighted that some level of development will start on Drakelow Park in 2013, but on a very small scale at this stage, reflective of the market situation.</p> <p>The challenge is that the total S106 package simply makes the scheme unviable in the current market place. At the moment it's not that people do not want to buy houses or that there isn't a need, as there clearly is. The key issue is access to bank funding.</p> <p>A question was raised by Cllr Timms: <i>The land which is owned near the start of the Bypass is in a state, with rubbish is blowing around. Is it possible to get the farmer to cut this down?</i> It was explained that this is just over the concrete bridge the land in front to the left, on the right hand side towards Barton – it is very high with thistles.</p> <p>CC explained that John Greaves has a farm tenancy on this land still. CC agreed to take this up with him.</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	<p>CC</p>
<p>Recent Press Coverage</p> <p>Stapenhill Parish Council (SPC) has recently generated some press coverage and CC explained that we are confused by the comments in which Stapenhill said there had been no consultation regarding Drakelow Park/Walton Bypass. We have met with SPC this year and they are also invited to this group. In addition we undertook extensive pre application consultation and SDDC consulted SPC as a statutory consultee on the application as well.</p> <p>CC asked if Cllr Legg could provide feedback from SPC as we are confused and disturbed as the information in the article was factually incorrect.</p> <p>Cllr Lacey added that the press interpret the stories differently – he is dealing with three different people at the Burton Mail and each time there is very different reporting, often distorting the story. This has caused a lot of problems.</p> <p>Val Taylor said that living by the Bailey Bridge even 100 houses would mean potentially 200 cars before the Bypass is opened. ST responded to say that</p>		

<p>each household generates 0.6 car movements in the peak hours of the day. The modelling showed a third going south, a third towards Burton and a third north. Therefore the level of traffic is far lower. The current consent requires the bridge to be in prior to the occupation of the 100th house. This is fixed and would not change as this is what the consent says and has to be delivered.</p> <p>If anything changes there would have to be an assessment to decide what any impact would be which would go through due process.</p> <p>Val Taylor <i>asked if there are any plans for a new traffic count?</i> ST responded that counts were undertaken in 2008 for Drakelow and they are on the verge of being old as we usually say 3 -5 years, but due to the recession traffic figures haven't gone up as much as you'd expect during this period. Any technical assessments would have to be agreed with the Council.</p> <p>Val Taylor added that the original surveys showed that 70% of traffic coming from Drakelow uses the Bailey Bridge. ST highlighted that yes the modelling showed that this route was being used as an alternative route to Burton so the only change regarding the Bypass in terms of existing traffic was likely to be HGVs being able to then use this route.</p> <p>Val Taylor <i>queried if the first 100 houses are likely to be the expensive ones?</i> CC said that it would be stock market housing rather than affordable housing. Yes there is an affordable housing 'holiday' rather than 'expensive' homes.</p>		
<p>Any other Business</p> <p>A question was raised as to whether DDL make representations regarding proposed developments at Lawns Farm and Branston? CC said: No, these are not consented schemes and there would be no point in making reps to discourage developments as these are likely to be many years before fruition if they did actually get consent. In addition we don't want any issues with other developers in the area. Some of these schemes are likely to have opposition anyway.</p> <p>ESBC was asked if they wanted some of Drakelow Park's housing numbers to reduce the number needed to deliver and they said no.</p> <p>Will the river pedestrian crossing be more likely to happen if these developments go ahead? CC the application sits on both Authorities' riverbanks. ES Police objected as they felt it offered criminals an opportunity to use this crossing as an 'escape route'.</p> <p>It is something we still want to do in terms of connectivity. Branston Golf Club is for it, as are we and we think the mood in ES has probably changed so it could benefit all of these developments. In terms of viability, the landowners of Lawns Farm/Branston are unlikely to commit funds as it isn't perceived to necessarily benefit these two schemes.</p> <p>Val Taylor queried if this would just be pedestrian? CC confirmed: Yes it would just be pedestrian. Station Lane would be downgraded as well to</p>		

<p>pedestrian. There are no plans for a pedestrian path on the new Walton Bypass.</p> <p>It was queried if there could be a joined up strategy for all proposed development consortiums across Trent Valley. CC agreed there should be some joined up thinking but there isn't very close working across the two Authorities. In addition, most of these developments are not consented and may never be consented. Walton Parish Council confirmed they were not invited to the presentation from developers in Fradley. Drakelow Park is easily a 20 year scheme and many of these, if they ever do get consented are many, many years hence.</p> <p>Cllr Lacey asked regarding the Flintmills crossroads. Cllr Lacey has been pushing County to improve this crossroads and it has been resurfaced. There has also been an email from Officers confirming that it will be staggered within the next 12 months and this work will be undertaken by the County Council. The Chair also asked if a request could be made to keep down the level of the weeds and overgrowth as this is the key cause of issues at this junction at the moment, it needs cutting once a month.</p> <p>Cllr Lacey responded that this is a County responsibility, it is sub contracted to the District Council which then sub-contracts the work and they have only done one cut this year and it is a shambles and this issue is being brought up. John Powell added that there has already been an accident since the resurfacing.</p>		
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