

**PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE
12 FEBRUARY 2024**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR I G FLEETWOOD (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs C L E Vernon (Vice-Chairman), P Ashleigh-Morris, T R Ashton, I D Carrington, A M Hall, M Hasan, N M Murray, Mrs S A J Nutman, Mrs M J Overton MBE, N H Pepper, N Sear, P A Skinner and T J N Smith

Councillors: A J Baxter and S Bunney attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Jeanne Gibson (Programme Leader: Minor Works and Traffic), Neil McBride (Head of Planning), Martha Rees (Solicitor), Marc Willis (Applications Manager) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

75 APOLOGIES/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

There were no apologies for absence.

76 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

77 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

78 TRAFFIC ITEMS

79 GRANTHAM, CROFT DRIVE - PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS

A report was received which invited the Committee to consider an objection to waiting restrictions proposed for Croft Drive, Grantham and a minor modification to those restrictions.

The Programme Manager – Traffic introduced the report and shared a presentation which detailed the area under consideration.

Members confirmed they were familiar with the area and could see the reasons for some of the objections. However, officers were thanked for working with the residents to find a compromise.

On a motion proposed by Councillor I G Fleetwood, and seconded by Councillor P A Skinner, it was

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the objection be overruled and the minor modification approved, so that the Order, as advertised, may be introduced.

80 A631 MARKET RASEN TO LOUTH: PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT ALTERATIONS

A report was received which invited the Committee to consider objections to the lengths of new 50mph and 40mph speed limits proposed along sections of the A631 as shown at Appendices B and C of the report.

The Programme Manager – Traffic introduced the report and shared a presentation which detailed the areas under consideration.

It was reported that nine objections had been received to these proposals. With concerns including that a reduction in speed would lead to an increase in overtaking manoeuvres resulting more accidents, as well as increasing journey times and congestion.

Analysis of reported injury accidents demonstrated that there had been 260 casualties since 2010, with eight of these resulting in fatalities.

Councillor S Bunney addressed the Committee as the local member for Market Rasen Wolds, and made the following comments:

- Due to the position of De Ashton School, the speed of traffic on this road had long been a risk for students as they arrived or left school. Those that lived in the area did get used to it, but visitors were often scared by it.
- It was difficult to think of many year when there had not been a fatality on this stretch of road, and they were usually in the summer months when there were more visitors to the area.
- Work had been started with the previous County Councillor, Lewis Strange, and the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership to reduce the speed entering the town. The town council had also purchased two reduction devices.
- It was very clear that people in the local area were very concerned about the speed of traffic and anything which could be done to reduce the speed would be of great benefit.

The Committee discussed the report, and some of the points included the following:

- There was support for the comments made by the local member, in relation to the section of road in Market Rasen (Appendix D of the report). However, concerns were raised regarding the sections identified in Appendices A, B and C of the report and the potential for risky behaviour such as overtaking if the speed reduction was introduced, and it was queried whether junction improvements may be more beneficial.
- It was queried whether there was evidence which showed that the accidents were speed related. Officers advised that the data would have been analysed by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, and that as this met the criteria for the speed limit policy, this was the data which was passed on. It was also noted that there were a number of speed cameras which were due to be installed.
- In relation to concerns that the speed reduction would increase journey times and the potential for congestion, one member commented that from experience of a similar scheme in their division, the slightly lower speed limit reduced congestion and also made it easier for people joining from side roads.
- It was suggested that if the speed reductions were not as successful as hoped, then maybe other measures could be explored.

On a motion proposed by Councillor I G Fleetwood, and seconded by Councillor Mrs M J Overton MBE, it was

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the Committee overrule the objections to the proposed speed limits, so that they may be made operative.

81 COUNTY MATTER APPLICATIONS

82 FOR A 1.97 HA SOUTH-EASTERN EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING SAND AND GRAVEL EXTRACTION OPERATIONS WITH RESTORATION TO AMENITY/NATURE CONSERVATION AT LAND AT CEMEX WEST DEEPING QUARRY, KING STREET, WEST DEEPING - CEMEX UK OPERATIONS LTD - S23/2249

Consideration was given to a report which outlined an application by Cemex UK Operations Ltd for a 1.97ha south-eastern extension to existing sand and gravel extraction operations with restoration to amenity/nature conservation at Cemex West Deeping Quarry, King Street, West Deeping.

The Applications Manager introduced the report and shared a presentation which detailed the areas under consideration. It was noted that the Committee had recently visited land adjoining this site during a site visit for an application by Breedon Trading Ltd. The proposed development would allow the removal of approximately 80,000 tonnes of sand and gravel over a 2-3 month period.

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Some of the concerns that had been raised by West Deeping Parish Council included planning creep and concerns that the cumulative impacts had not been considered fully. These concerns were also echoed by Deeping St James Parish Council. It was noted that no concerns had been raised by Highways, the Environment Agency or Natural England. In terms of representations, 17 had been received from members of the public, and a summary of the issues raised was included within the report.

In terms of need and justifications for the release of materials, it was noted that this was an extension to an existing site, and the report set out how the application needed to be considered against the local plan. Due to the size of the site it would not be viable in the future to be worked as a standalone site as it was a contained parcel of land. The proposed works could be carried efficiently and the land would be restored on plan. This would be a continuation of an existing operation and would be short term. Assessments had been carried out and the activities would be compliant with existing conditions.

The cumulative impacts had been considered by officers and these considerations were detailed in paragraph 101 of the report. In terms of future workings, whilst a site had been allocated to the south of the village, there were no details for the working of that site and there was no planning permission in place.

Mr Graham McGee spoke as an objector and made the following points:

“Do you know when enough is enough?”

Enough is enough when people from small Lincolnshire villages arrive here in this great chamber to address you.

We live at the southern most edge of Lincolnshire

And enough is enough.

I want to say thank you for having had the chance to address you now 3 times

I myself have now had 9 minutes of your time

9 minutes out of 70 years of consistent unrelenting open cast mining to our doorstep.

Planning applications have been coming to you in piecemeal small amounts

You are never presented with them as one big assessment.

You don't get them in a total acres, total number of species lost or total numbers of lives blighted.

You have had 7 small applications now in the last 6 years for “just a bit more” land to quarry

“Just a bit more” every year or so makes it seem like it doesn’t have an impact

They do have an impact -,huge permanent harm to our landscape and to our health and to our lives.

*The **cumulative impact** of this unrelenting mining on our landscape is called Space crowding and Time crowding. The mining activities being so relentless they give the landscape , ecology and the communities no chance to recover.*

Over 50 % of our parish has now been quarried and you will get an application in the next year for you to decide whether to take this to over 75%.

In anyone’s book that cannot be right. Appropriate balances are so far skewed in the wrong direction as to make a mockery of Lincolnshire policies to protect us.

Who is doing this ?

The quarry companies make the applications but it is the minerals and waste officers here at Lincolnshire who are aiding and abetting them to ignore Lincolnshire policies to protect us the residents and communities.

The abundance of HGVs continues

The wildlife continues to be displaced

The wind continues to blow silica dust into our lungs

Our listed buildings continue to be harmed

The promised restoration isn’t done.

The reality is far distanced from what you are told here in this great chamber.

This small Cemex field isn’t allocated.

Current reserves and land banks are sufficient Policy M4 indicates this application should be refused.

However this small field is all that remains of First Field - ancient open fields - enclosed in 1813 it with Middle and Far field had fed West Deeping for centuries.

Now First, Middle and Far Field are hollowed out shells it’s all a desolate wasteland thanks to this “great chamber”.

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This is the final straw in 70 years of cumulative impact this is where constant and persistent open cast mining has not stopped and this cumulative impact means we have had enough.

West Deeping has had enough.

We have had enough.

Please leave this last bit of First field alone and start standing up for the residents that you are supposed to protect!"

The Committee asked a number of questions to Mr McGee, and the following was noted:

- Further information was sought in relation to the cumulative impacts on the parish, and it was noted that this was the constant disturbance to the environment, to livelihoods, from the lorries and vehicles on the roads that were affecting local people.
- Clarification was sought regarding the 75% of the parish which had been quarried. It was confirmed that the figure was currently 50% of West Deeping had been quarried, and another application was expected to be submitted in the next 12 months for a further 25%.
- It was queried whether the promised restoration of other parts of the site had not taken place. It was commented that with large schemes there was often a delay in the restoration taking place

Mr Andrew Barton, Cemex Ltd, addressed the Committee on behalf of the applicant and made the following points:

"Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this committee meeting.

Cemex is a global producer of cement, concrete and other building materials. In the UK, we are a leading producer of readymix concrete and manufacturer of aggregates, with around 2000 employees.

Cemex have been operating sand and gravel quarries in the West Deeping and Baston area for several years. We are regularly monitored by officers at the Council and no significant concerns have been raised in terms of the way we run our current operation at West Deeping. We place great emphasis on ensuring that all our developments are carried out in strict accordance with planning permissions and in line with our own internal policies, procedures and adherence to ISO14001. This means that any impacts arising from our developments on the environment, the community and our neighbours, are reduced to an absolute minimum. We strive to maintain good working relationships with the community and regularly attend the local quarry liaison meetings which take place periodically with other operators in the area.

This application relates to a very modest, but logical extension to our current West Deeping Quarry, constituting an additional reserve of around 80,000 tonnes. At our current rates of extraction, we would work this mineral within around 2-3 months. The duration is therefore

very short, on a limited footprint, and can easily be incorporated into our existing programme of works.

Despite being a small extension, the development is important to the company as it would release valuable, high quality sand and gravel reserves, allowing us to continue serving a number of important local markets and customers.

The timing of the application relates the limited duration of our operations at WD – by making the application now it means we can utilise the existing infrastructure in place, so we can easily transfer the mineral across to the processing plant and export off-site via the well-established access onto King Street. There would be no intensification in lorry movements from the site than currently exist. If we didn't make the application now, whilst we have access to the processing plant, its very unlikely that we would re-visit the site in the future as a 'standalone' application as it would not make economic sense or practical sense to work it in isolation – the mineral would therefore very likely become sterilised indefinitely.

As the officer's thorough report states, we supplied a range of environmental reports to support the application, all of which demonstrate that we would be able to carry out the development without causing any significant adverse impacts on noise, dust, air quality, traffic, landscape, flooding or ecology. Additionally, we could continue the very successful archaeological programme of works that has been occurring across a wider area (both Cemex and Breedon sites), to essentially complete the last part of the 'jigsaw' and add to the body of archaeological knowledge.

The final restoration scheme, which we can implement as soon as the extraction is finished, would comprise a range of important habitats and would deliver significant biodiversity gain over and above the current agricultural field which is of relatively low ecological interest.

In closing, we hope that members of the committee concur with the officers recommendation for approval. the report provides a range of conditions to impose on a planning permission if granted – Cemex have reviewed those and are happy to proceed on that basis to ensure the development can be undertaken in an appropriate, diligent and sensitive manner.

Thank you for your time"

The Committee asked a number of questions to the applicant and the following was noted:

- It was queried why the entire area could not be returned to agricultural use. Members were advised that there needed to be a balance between best and most versatile (BMV) land and biodiversity net gain, and the wetland restoration would deliver more in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- It was confirmed that the restoration would be predominantly wetland.

Councillor A J Baxter addressed the Committee as the local member for Deepings West and Rural, and made the following points:

- With reference to the 'last piece of the jigsaw', it was suggested that this would be the start of new projects, which was why the Parish Council was concerned about the cumulative impacts.
- In his division, one of the largest solar farms in the country was planned; quarries were planned in Baston and West Deeping; there was an ever expanding caravan park, and the area had just been hit by flooding. The impacts on the ward was relentless, and what was a rural, farming community had become an industrial park.
- The cumulative impacts were increasing, where it was now the 'island of West Deeping' and if applications such as this continued to be allowed the people of West Deeping would continue to suffer.
- Reference was made to the application being relatively short term, which it was feared would actually mean years.
- There was frustration with way that paragraph 101 of the report was written as it was thought it was confusing and was implying that the cumulative impacts didn't matter.
- There were no benefits to the people of West Deeping, or the people of Lincolnshire of the quarries.

The Committee discussed the application and some of the points raised included the following:

- There were concerns about the number of applications and the planning creep, as well as the delay to restoration.
- There was sympathy with the speakers and the concerns that had been raised, as there were significant allocations within the local plan for this area.
- There was already substantial quarrying activity on the rest of the site, and whilst the arguments regarding cumulative impacts were understood, it was not thought that there were significant grounds to refuse this application.
- It was suggested that it was logical to allow this relatively small extension to a site where there was already the infrastructure in place, rather than seek this equivalent amount of material from a new application for a different location. It was not believed that this application would do any particular harm beyond that which was already accepted due to the existing application.
- It was commented that it was important to listen to the concerns of the local people.
- Reference was made to paragraph 101 of the report, and it was noted that the point it was trying to establish was whether the cumulative impacts were damaging, and it highlighted that the further potential applications could not be taken into account. However, it was suggested that the Committee should be considering how much development was too much for one parish. It was commented that as this site was not an allocated site, it should be refused under policy M4.
- Officers commented that paragraph 73 of the report set out the need for the authority to plan for a steady supply of aggregate, and there was a requirement to provide a minimum of 7 years landbank, and Lincolnshire currently had 9.6 years. It was emphasised that the seven years, was a minimum requirement. Until those applications came forward, decisions could only be based on the data which was available.

- In relation to the 50% point, officers advised that members that did visit the Breedon site a few months ago, did look back over the Cemex site, and the northern end had been restored, and it was a relatively small area that was still in active use.

On a motion proposed by Councillor T R Ashton, and seconded by Councillor I G Fleetwood, it was:

RESOLVED (9 in favour, 3 against, 0 abstentions) (Councillor Mrs M J Overton MBE requested that her vote against the application be recorded)

That following consideration of the relevant development plan policies and the comments received through consultation and publicity, that conditional planning permission be granted.

83 FOR CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO BE USED FOR THE STORAGE AND PROCESS OF INERT MATERIALS AS PART OF AN EXISTING WASTE TRANSFER STATION AT GAINSBOROUGH SKIP HIRE, LAUGHTON LANE, MORTON - GAINSBOROUGH SKIP HIRE AND AGGREGATES (AGENT: ARQ DESIGN) - 147385

Consideration was given to a report which outlined a planning application by Gainsborough Skip Hire and Aggregates for change of use of agricultural land to be used for the storage and process of inert materials as part of an existing waste transfer station at Gainsborough Skip Hire, Laughton Lane, Morton.

The Applications Manager introduced the report and shared a presentation which highlighted the areas under consideration. It was noted that no significant objections had been received. Morton Parish Council requested that the proposed screening bund was put in place at an early stage, and also suggested a condition to ensure that traffic was kept to a minimum. In total, 22 representations were received, of these only two were objections, with 20 in support of the proposal.

It was highlighted that this was an extension to an existing established business. The Waste Local Plan Policy set out that waste processing facilities should be location in appropriate places and as the site was in close proximity to Gainsborough, it had an existing customer base.

Mr Ian Eccleshare, the applicant and owner of Gainsborough Skip Hire, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- We have been providing waste management and skip hire to Gainsborough for around 40 years including household waste and inert waste.
- In these 40 years we have seen significant increases in volumes in waste streams in Gainsborough and the surrounding areas.

- Since 1991, Gainsborough alone has increased in population by around 6,000 and this number will again rise with over 3000 homes proposed within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, and the new development sites which had started already.
- With a rising population comes an increase in waste, and with the increase in development comes a need for high quality construction materials.
- The site was currently running at capacity meaning that when inert waste came onto site it had to be immediately processed so it could leave the site as soon as possible to make way for more material which came in daily.
- This is leading to a higher number of vehicles coming through the village at this time.
- The ideal situation and solution would be to retain the waste for longer on the extension site that was proposed and shown on the committee plan so the yard can operate in a more efficient way and slow down the traffic coming into Gainsborough.
- The planned extension would provide two big advantages, the first being better organisation of the inert material, and the extension was only for inert material. The second would be a reduction in the frequency of machinery use on the site as well as vehicle use.

During discussion of the application, members noted the growth of Gainsborough since 1991, and the substantial growth which was expected in the future, and considered that it was sensible to extend an existing site to help the applicant's site become more efficient than for there be a need to find a new site.

On a motion by Councillor I G Fleetwood, seconded by Councillor T J N Smith, it was:

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That following consideration of the relevant development plan policies and the comments received through consultation and publicity, that conditional planning permission be granted.

At the end of the meeting, the Chairman advised the Committee that this would be the last meeting for Marc Willis, Applications Manager who was leaving the authority. The Chairman thanked him on behalf of the Committee for all the work he had done over the years with the Committee.

The meeting closed at 11.41 am