



NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Council

Discussions held virtually at **6.30pm** and ratified under the Scheme of Delegation
on Tuesday 19th April 2022

Present:

Cllr Mike Kelly (Chair)
Cllr Jonathan Duckworth
Cllr Robert Maitland
Cllr Colleen Rothwell
Cllr Paul Francis
Cllr Steve Robinson
Cllr Angela Norman
Cllr Natalie Bennett
Cllr Patsy Freeman

Minutes:

Clerk

Apologies:

Cllr Ros Mulhall
Cllr Shelley Rider

2021/276

Verbal Introductions

Those present identified themselves.

2021/277

Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensations

There were none.

2021/278

Consideration of Planning Applications received as follows:

CONSULTATION

- a) S.22/0680/FUL. St Georges Church, Church Street, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire.
Application: FUL. Addition of gates to south porch
Comment: Withdrawn – this is permitted development.
- b) S.22/0713/LBC. St Georges Church, Church Street, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire.
Application: LBC. Addition of gates to south porch.
Comment: Withdrawn – this is permitted development.
- c) S.22/0729/HHOLD. 76 Nortonwood, Forest Green, Nailsworth, Stroud.
Application: HHOLD. Demolition of existing timber framed porch and construction of a new extension to front.
Comment: No observations.
- d) S.22/0206/OUT. Land At M5 Junction 13 West Of Stonehouse, Eastington, Gloucestershire. Application: OUT. Proposed Eco-Park development comprising a 5,000 capacity football stadium, indoor and outdoor playing pitches, an Academy building, up to 37,700 sq. metres of Class E offices and 18,000 sq. metres of B2/B8 employment floorspace with up to 2,750 sq. metres of ancillary Class E food/retail/creche, a hotel with up to 100 beds, a Care Village including a 70 bed Care Home, as well as associate access, parking, landscaping and other ancillary works. Outline with access details submitted
Comment: Object. NTC's previous comments were collated, including the impact of FGR's stadium move on Nailsworth. See end of these minutes for the full comments submitted.*



- e) S.21/1523/VAR. Land At, Pike Lane, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire. Application: VAR. Variation of condition 1 of S.17/0883/REM - Changes to detailed house designs of plots 1 & 8

Comment:

Object. This application was opposed by over 1,000 people and was won on appeal. Development was given permission on the design quality and cohesion, and these variations degrade the design quality. The developer's reasoning is that the changes are to make the engineering easier, however the original consultation drew attention to the need for heavy engineering work. Increasing the height of these buildings will make the development even more inappropriate in this setting. There continues to be much concern on how the developer will meet the access restrictions of the site during the construction phase. NTC request this application is called in for DCC decision should it be approved by the planning officer.

- f) S.22/0504/LBC. 4 Merton Cottages, Shortwood Road, Nailsworth, Stroud. Application: LBC. Erection of side and rear extension with associated works

Comment:

To note, there is a longstanding flood issue in the garden of this property due to natural springs and surface water drainage.

TREES IN A CONSERVATION AREA

- a) S.22/0676/TCA. Wellington House (Renishaw PLC), Inchbrook Trading Estate, Bath Road, Woodchester. Application: TCA G3 Hazel and Ash - Fell. G4 Birch - Remove Ivy and reduce by 300mm. G5 Alder and Birch - Fell. T1491 Alder - Remove Deadwood. T1492 Goat Willow - Pollard to 3m. T1493, T1494 Willow - Fell. T501 - Fell. T503 Maple - Remove Deadwood. T1459 Maple Prune by 1m

Comment:

NTC request replacement tree planting is planned to mitigate the loss of these trees.

Concern was raised about signs of movement in the public right of way at Arnold's Lane, above two newly constructed dwellings (S18/2107/FUL). This has been noted by GCC. The retaining wall has now been clad with timber and so it's no longer possible to monitor movement from the new dwellings.

The Clerk undertook to raise this with GCC.

2021/279

To confirm minutes of the Full Council meeting and Recreation and Amenities Committee held 5th April 2022

Both were agreed.

2021/280

To consider Recreation & Amenities committee recommendations:

It was **recommended** to authorise a spend of up to £2,000 for the installation of more powerful, permanent uplighters at the Clock Tower.

Agreed.

It was **recommended** to remove the chess table at Mortimer Gardens after speaking with the Men's Shed. *NB Following this meeting Men's Shed have agreed to remove the chess table themselves.*

Agreed.

It was **recommended** to remove hire charges for NTC venues over the Jubilee weekend (from Thursday 2nd – Sunday 5th June).

Agreed.



It was **recommended** to install twin slot shelving in the Mortimer room cupboard at a cost of £580.
Agreed.

It was **recommended** to accept the quote for both grass cutting and pitch treatment at a cost of £4,064 + VAT
Agreed.

It was **recommended** to agree to increase the cleaning contract to daily cleaning from Monday to Friday in the Mortimer Room.
Agreed.

2021/281

Matters of Urgency *important items that have arisen since the meeting summons (agenda) and cannot wait to be addressed with a written report at a future meeting, due to inflexible deadlines. No decisions can be made on these items.*

There was a reminder of the Annual Town Meeting this Saturday 23rd April from 10.30am to 1pm.

There has been a request for a dog waste bin on Newmarket Road. There was a discussion on the action to take when a resident requests a dog waste bin. Usually SDC are informed of persistent dog fouling issues so they can take enforcement action; problems are often caused by just one or two people. It was noted there is a dog waste bin provided by the Donkey Sanctuary.

2021/282

Accounts

To agree payments in accordance with the budget as listed in the attached reports.
All agreed.

2021/283

Financial summary and bank reconciliations

Noted.

2021/284

To review NTC's Covid-19 Risk Assessment.

It was noted that at this time of year the office is very busy with the Annual Town Meeting financial end of year, internal and external auditing. Staff sickness has impacted on the team's ability to carry out this work as quickly as they would like. This will continue to have an effect until at least June.

2021/285

Report from Town Mayor

Noted.

2021/286

Report from Deputy Mayor

Noted.

The lecture by David Olugosa OBE was open to the public and held at Wycliffe School. It was fascinating to hear about experiences of both overt and covert racism.

2021/287

Report from County Councillors

GCC have again been reminded of the potholes which need fixing on Spring Hill.



The Police & Crime Commissioner visited the Youth Club which has been granted a further £5,000 towards outreach youth work and the Arkell youth café. The new High Sheriff will also be visiting and has given a further £2,000.

2021/288

Report from District Councillors

Community Development Worker: it was agreed that as there are a lot of questions that will need answers to before this can be considered, several cllrs will work together to collate these, for the District Cllrs to address in a paper to NTC.

The following cllrs have agreed to do this: Cllrs Ros Mulhall, Shelley Rider and Angela Norman.

It was noted that families having to leave rented accommodation will need to be housed outside of Nailsworth, despite school and work ties. The importance of Nailsworth CLT was noted and the advantage of CLTs being given the opportunity to build on land, for example the land for SDC's new Ringfield housing development. It was queried whether SDC have a long term strategic plan to address this.

2021/289

To receive an update on NTC activities and support during Covid-19.

The advantages of SDC and GCC sharing their digital mapping was highlighted and praise was given to Parish Online for their help.

Graffiti at Miles Marling Field (on the furniture and gym equipment) was noted as needing removal quickly.

Play Gloucestershire are working in Lawnside this Easter holidays.

2021/290

To ratify all decisions made at this meeting via the Scheme of Delegation

All the above decisions were ratified by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Deputy Clerk under the Scheme of Delegation.

.....
Town Mayor
Nailsworth Town Council
Civic Centre, Old Market, Nailsworth, GL6 0DU

.....
Date

***Minute 2021/275 d)**

S.22/0206/OUT. Land At M5 Junction 13 West Of Stonehouse, Eastington, Gloucestershire. Application: OUT. Proposed Eco-Park development comprising a 5,000 capacity football stadium, indoor and outdoor playing pitches, an Academy building, up to 37,700 sq.metres of Class E offices and 18,000 sq. metres of B2/B8 employment floorspace with up to 2,750 sq. metres of ancillary Class E food/retail/creche, a hotel with up to 100 beds, a Care Village including a 70 bed Care Home, as well as associate access, parking, landscaping and other ancillary works. Outline with access details submitted.

Object. Nailsworth Town Council reiterate comments on previous similar applications.

As SDC acknowledge in their report on 19/1418, the development of the football stadium at J13 will have a negative impact on Nailsworth in terms of spending, vitality and viability, and the image of the town. As a result, the Council opposes it.

In parallel with the loss of employment the proposal to move FGR's stadium from Nailsworth will result in a significant loss of amenity to the area. Currently there are the following



facilities: Gym, Football Club, Football pitch, Part time bar, Blood Donation location (no other venue possible in the town), Conference rooms, Party function facility, Dance room.

All of these will be lost to Nailsworth, with nothing planned to replace them. In fact, the club has already removed these facilities from The New Lawn to the disadvantage of their longstanding neighbours in Forest Green. The reliance that can be placed on their promised commitment to the Eastington community and can be predicted from the way they have treated previous 'commitments' to Forest Green.

The development needs to consider that the loss of facilities and their replacement with 95 houses is not improving sustainability at all.

This is an application for a development that goes against the adopted Local Plan and NTC support comments made by Eastington PC. Forest Green Rovers, a football club of 130 years standing, is hugely valuable to Nailsworth; it is a large part of the community and town. It is known world-wide, and helps put Nailsworth on the map. Nailsworth Town Council, like Stroud District Council, has declared a Climate Emergency. Nailsworth has always had an eye on impact on the environment, and we are hugely proud of what the football club has done in our town.

A community is like a jigsaw, made up of pieces, large and small. FGR is a large piece of the jigsaw that is Nailsworth. When you look at the jigsaw, you see the picture. But when pieces are lost, the picture becomes unclear, weak, hazy. This large jigsaw piece, this green club, now wishes to move away from its community, to a green field site elsewhere, going against the district's Climate Emergency declaration.

A report on the impact of a stadium move has previously been submitted by the applicant, the key items are:

Impacts underestimated

The Report's headline figure of impact on the town centre is 0.7%. This is flawed and misleading for the following reasons:

- The assumptions of future expenditure in the town centre is based on limited survey responses, which claim existing visitors will continue their current pattern of visits in the future. Statements of future intentions are notoriously unreliable and there is no discussion as to why future visitors should retain current visit patterns from a stadium that is 9 miles away.
- It is even more implausible to assume that additional fans coming to the new stadium will replicate the visiting patterns of existing fans, particularly in that Gloucester, with its attractions and accommodation offers, is equidistant. There is no discussion of these matters in the report.
- Whilst the Report's headline figure shows a 0.7% impact on turnover, deeper in the report is the statement that affected sectors will suffer a reduction in turnover of 1.6% i.e. a stadium move would result in impact more than double the headline figure.
- The report has simply looked at the effect on turnover, however, for any business the key issue is profitability and viability. Apparently small reductions in turnover will have greater effects on profitability and viability and fundamentally affect survival.
- The Report states the impact on affected sectors will be 1.7%. This is not true: looking at a business with a turnover of £100,000 and a 10% net profit, £10,000, would actually suffer a 16% impact on net profit. For a business trading with a 2.5% net profit there would be a 64% reduction in net profit. In other words, profits would fall by 2/3rds.
- A business currently breaking even would be driven into loss and closure. Town Centre attractiveness and viability is significantly damaged by closures and vacancies.

Mitigation from additional attendances

The report claims that there will be a 0.2% mitigation from additional attendances at a new stadium, based on the assumption that a new stadium would be full from day one. This is totally unrealistic, and a proper, justified analysis of attendance growth should have been used.



The attendance assumption also carries the implication that a new stadium would be too small from day one.

Mitigation effect of new houses

There is an apparently precise calculation that a development of up to 80 houses could generate £1.04m in household expenditure and the Report then simply asserts: "a large proportion of this expenditure could be captured by businesses in Nailsworth". No attempt has been made to quantify the level of this expenditure or the likelihood of it being captured by Nailsworth businesses.

The Report assumes that congestion caused by the football has an impact on the Town Centre. In fact, times of high congestion from football do not coincide with times of high expenditure in the town, football congestion occurring after 5pm on a Saturday, and after 9pm on a Tuesday.

Conversely traffic generated by 80 new homes will be daily and at peak times, severely impacting the town centre.

Net employment

A stadium move would result in a net employment loss in Nailsworth, firstly through the jobs lost at the stadium and secondly as a result of the impact on viability of the town centre. Much is made of the increasing role of Nailsworth as a destination in the District, however there is no recognition of the role that the football club plays in putting Nailsworth on the map. Taking FGR out of Nailsworth will damage the role of Nailsworth as a destination and therefore impact on its viability as a market town.

Survey quality

It is disappointing that the survey this report is based on is so flawed. This very brief survey does not conform to best practice, for example it asks about typical behaviour rather than what they actually did on that day. It is also not stated how many of the responses were online rather than at the stadium and where the online responses came from.

The misleading headline impact figure is 0.7%; the impact on affected business is over double that. However turnover is not the key, the key is Net Profit and viability. Businesses with low net profit (such as many of the small businesses in Nailsworth) will be devastated by turnover loss. Lost business mean lost jobs and more environmentally unsound journeys out of the town.

Impacts on Market Towns are cumulative. It only takes one decision to tip the balance. The District Council may not have influence on some factors, but its decision here can have a positive and decisive effect on the viability of the market town of Nailsworth.

In Ecotricity's report, the predictions of spend and future behaviour are based on limited data and don't conform to best practice. One of the assumptions is that some expenditure from a new stadium will come to Nailsworth, 16 miles away. However this is based on having a new stadium full from day one. So their own report implies the new stadium is too small.

Currently there is scant evidence of a strategic approach to match day travel to the stadium in Nailsworth. This results in congestion and parking issues, and wound up residents.

The report assumes that football congestion has an impact on our Market Town Centre. In fact, the congestion does not occur at busy times - but after closing on Saturdays and on Tuesday evenings. 95 additional houses at the top of the hill would have a far greater effect. There is laudable work done by the club to lead the world in sustainability at sports grounds. However almost all sports clubs and stadia are not able to move; their response to the Climate Emergency has to be in their existing grounds.

We would hope that the greenest football club in the world would not be wasting all the embedded CO2 in the existing stadium and building brand new on untouched green field near a motorway. Instead it could provide the world with an exemplar; a model of how any existing sports stadium can be made truly green. The club could be enthusiastically devising a way of transporting people to facilities such as this, that is a model for all similar locations across the country, and the world.



With the proposed development next to the M5 junction, the predominate mode of transport will inevitably be the private motor car. Recent reports have shown that the benefit of electric cars is heavily outweighed by the public's SUV buying behaviour.

Tackling climate change is not going to be easy. We are crying out for innovation that leads to changes in behaviour. Instead we have a boilerplate application that looks backwards, a natural successor to motorway developments of the last 40 years. This is not a new green model, but an old, classic, car-based development.

It will damage the Market Town community it leaves and will damage the community it moves to.

Positive impacts on NTC from FGR's location include:

- Extra trade to shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs, hotels, B&Bs etc from supporters and accompanying visitors, who may choose to spend a weekend whilst taking in a game. NTC has anecdotal evidence supporting this, whilst the applicants have failed to carry out any impact assessment*
- Profile and name recognition. FGR has raised the profile and increased recognition of Nailsworth nationally and internationally, with positive effects on tourism and trade.*
- Town identity. FGR has been part of the town for 130 years, and its loss will be strongly felt in the community*
- The loss of the football club and its benefits to the town is directly contrary to Stroud District Council's Supporting Market Towns initiative.*

Claimed adverse impacts

The applicant has made much of adverse impacts on the town and residents as a result of traffic and parking on match days.

These arise largely because the club has refused to take action to manage traffic as it has grown – inevitably leading to problems and an adverse effect on the club's reputation locally. Sustainable solutions could be put in place by the club to make transport to matches much better managed. For example: fully utilised and publicised Park and Rides; shuttle buses from Stroud and Cam and Dursley; traffic management through working with local highway authorities and funding TROs etc.

Summary

This development is contrary to the Local Plan and promotes development that is unsustainable and has very significant and substantial adverse effects in Eastington.

It has substantial adverse impacts on Nailsworth, with no compensating benefits. This proposed new stadium brings no net gain to the District and it should be refused.

The application is largely in the name of one company. Given the significance of this proposal and the effect on our town, the proposed change of ownership of the football club (announced on 1st April 2022) throws up important questions for the future which could in turn have quite a significant effect on this development.

If this development is granted, NTC ask for planning gain that reflects the loss of amenity and damage to the town's vitality.