

**Minutes of the Planning Consultation meeting  
1255/18/FUL West Devon Borough Council  
Development of new farm shop, with ancillary café, supporting secondary areas and  
a dedicated children's soft play area (class uses A1/A3/D2)**

**Hosted by Drewsteignton Parish Council, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Whiddon Down  
Village Hall**

Present:	Vice-Chairman Bill Savage	Cllr Debi Brooks Cllr Ysanne James Cllr Graham Hester	Cllr John Redman Cllr Ian Rowe
In attendance	Clerk and 51 members of the public	Apologies Chair Imrie and Cllr Ridgers	

Cllr Savage opened the meeting at 7.30pm, there had been a prior period of 45 minutes for members of the public to examine the plans.

Cllr Savage pointed out the Fire Exits in the building.

Apologies had been made by Chair Imrie and Cllr Ridgers, both of whom had prior engagements.

Cllr Savage

The meeting is being held as a Public Consultation as this means there will be no time constraints on how long people can speak.

The applicant V B Farms Retail Limited (VBF) and their agent are unable to attend. Cllr Savage asked if anyone from VBF or their agent was present and no one came forward.

West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) is the Planning Authority, Drewsteignton Parish Council (DPC) will support, object or take a neutral view, taking into account planning policy.

Cllr Savage explained the role of DPC in planning, that they are informed of applications, and may attend a site visit, and may comment after, taking into account planning policy.

This planning application 1255/18/FUL will be discussed at the next Ordinary Meeting of DPC, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 7.30pm,, Whiddon Down Village Hall.

Due to the amount of people at the meeting it was not always possible to have full names of the speakers.

David Foyle, Woodleigh Coach House

Employs seven members of staff, uses local produce and cooks in house. Thinks this Planning Application is a service station in all but name. VBF have stated in their plans that they expect 140 cars per day – this speaker had 85 cars at his business today and thinks that VBF have understated this. This new shop and café will dilute takings for all local businesses. Where is the provision for staff parking?

David Campbell, Flood Cottage

Expects 800 cars per day rather than that stated in the Planning Application. There is a blind bend on the approach and the only way to improve this access is to use land which VBF do not currently own. Highways have stated there have been no accidents on this bend but this is a quiet country road. Policy says that farm shops need to have 75% local produce and must be ancillary to a local farm business. The plans have been checked and there is no butchery or hanging room and the car

park is very small. Effectively this is a change of use application for the land and any retail unit might then use the grounds. He invited DPC to object.

Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Hog and Hedge

Has taken legal planning advice. Policy supports a sequential test meaning that the best site for should be selected for the business, ie possibly town centre or outskirts. This land has not been previously developed as VBF state. Planning policy document does not mention cafés or children's play areas.

Chris Seagar

Thought the view from a junction should be 100 yards – possibly incorrect. Are any wildlife surveys to be carried out?

Clr Hester said that Highways England, which is the Government Department responsible for the A30, have asked for more information from VBF but have not yet received same.

Libby Tirrell, Hittesleigh Parishioner

Thinks there will be increased traffic through local villages, either through poor direction via Sat. Nav or just through people visiting VBF farm shop. This increase would be an inappropriate use of the narrow local roads which are not able to take increased traffic, and already struggle.

Occupants of Beer Ford Cottage, Spreyton

Lorries get jammed at the ford and in the bends close to their home, this is close to the potential development and HGV traffic may increase. The ford is currently impassable on a motor bike as the surface has been destroyed by lorries. Clr Savage directed the speaker to bring this to the attention of his Parish Council.

Liz Campbell, Flood Cottage

Thinks that DCC will agree in principle.

Clr Savage said that anyone could put pressure on their County Councillor and District Councillors.

Separate members of the public made the following comments or questions

- That the Spreyton Parish Council supports the application.
- There was no proper economic impact statement with the application.
- What is the provision to safely walk to the development from Whiddon Down village?
- Cars may have to queue on the A30, surely Highways England will be interested in this?
- Roger Cann said he was against the development.
- The development is not a genuine farm diversification project as the farm is 4.8 miles from the site.
- When the A30 junction was redeveloped protective screens were erected for the protection of dormice, what protection will there be if this development goes ahead?
- What are the plans for waste treatment, plans allow for a septic tank, 850 people a day would surely need a treatment plant.
- Large developers will push hard to continue to build, even with opposition. There may be unscrupulous development creep.
- There would be three T junctions in quick succession potentially causing a traffic snarl up. Clr Savage pointed out that Devon County Council (DCC) is in charge of the roads except for the A30.

Adrian Bowden

Do we actually need another shop as there are plenty locally. Has the need been quantified.

A member of the public asked if there had been an extension to the planning response. Cllr Savage explained that so far as he knew the date of 16<sup>th</sup> May closing for comments stood but that DPC had an extension to 22<sup>nd</sup> May which allowed them to comment at their meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> May and report to WDBC the following day.

Catherine Gillard, Thornberry Farm

Neighbouring property to the proposed development and will be overlooked. Thinks that the vitality of the village will be prejudiced if the development takes place.

Cllr Hester said that under the Freedom of Information Act he had requested WDBC to release all documents relating to V B Farms Retail Limited, but as this company was only incorporated five days before the planning application was submitted this may be of limited interest.

On being asked by Cllr Savage, Hog & Hedge said that the majority of their staff came from outside of the Parish, and that the last job they advertised had 32 applicants and only one was from the Parish.

Stuart Luxton, Luxtons Farm Shop, Okehampton

Luxtons farm shop had to overcome much before planning was agreed, now has a S106 agreement, an agricultural tie, the product range is limited to what is produced on the farm, which had to physically be attached to the farm shop. The farm shop cannot be sold independently of the farm. It is still not a retail property. It is 35 square meters in size.

Peter Baldwin, East Fursham

Reminded everyone of the incinerator planning incident when there was a public enquiry. In his opinion the area in which the development is proposed is an area of outstanding natural habitat.

Judith Colton, Fingle Bridge Inn

Water run off has increased since the junction on the A30 for Whiddon Down was altered from a roundabout to a through road. At the Inn they notice the stream runs a lot higher after rain than it did in the past. Will run off cause problems for someone to the north of the proposed development?

Local businesses employees information

Hog & Hedge have one local employee out of a total of 25.

Post Inn have six from Drewsteignton Parish

Woodleigh Coach House have seven to ten, all from neighbouring parishes.

Colin Drake, Oinkers

Retail is 30% of the floor space at Oinkers, the rest is preparation area, butchery.

Cllr Hester has worked out the maximum height of the new build to be approximately 29 feet – a member of the public commented that this would show up very clearly on the horizon from many view points, including Dartmoor National Park.

No one in the room had received any letter from WDBC regarding the application.

Cllr Savage asked member of the public to sum up and they briefly commented as follows

- Highways
- Junction
- Blind bend, poor visibility and traffic backing up.

- Size of car park
- Application is disingenuous
- Water run off
- Not a genuine farm diversification project
- Development not attached to any farm owned by V B Farms Retail Limited
- Impact on natural beauty

The meeting concluded with Cllr Savage reminding everyone that they were welcome at the DPC meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May where this planning application would be discussed again.

The Clerk informed everyone that meeting agendas and minutes were always on the website [www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk](http://www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk) and asked that if anyone was writing to WDBC regarding the application she would appreciate being copied in if they saw fit.

The meeting was closed by Cllr Savage at 9.15pm.