

Canal Bank House

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07/09/2023

Private & Confidential

Dear Appeals Officer,

Re: Planning Appeal (P/2022/0869) - 9 Detached Houses East of Cadney Lane, Bettisfield, Wrexham - CAS-02639-F8F7J9

I wish to have the following information taken into account regarding the above Planning Appeal.

The Planning Application was originally quite rightly refused planning consent by WCBC.

Bettisfield is a very small hamlet, which is seriously struggling now without the influx of more houses, people and cars.

I believe this Planning Application is somewhat inaccurate in places and also that it is totally inappropriate for the tiny hamlet of Bettisfield. Bettisfield is a very small linear village of mixed housing with virtually no services and a tremendously weak infrastructure, which barely manages to cope with the existing population and housing stock.

In short, we have no mains sewerage, no street lighting, no mains gas, no regular daily public transport (other than the school bus), only a mini bus just once a week to Wrexham, no shops, no school, no pub, no post office, etc. Bettisfield is simply a group of houses within a rural location. It should be noted that the original Planning Application clearly states that the village is serviced with mains drainage but this is factually incorrect as the entire hamlet of Bettisfield has NO mains drainage and to suggest otherwise is inaccurate.

It is important to note that the proposed development lies outside the WBC UDP building line and runs alongside a green agricultural field; on this basis alone I believe the Planning Application refusal should be upheld at this appeal procedure.

The proposed nine new detached dwellings are planned to run alongside the existing Cadney Lane and would bring even more unwanted traffic, both private and commercial, onto what is only a very narrow country lane and NOT a main highway. It is totally unlit and in a permanent state of disrepair, with almost NO footpath on either side. Please note that the entire village does not have any street lighting.

Despite what the application/appeal endeavours to demonstrate, there is absolutely NO standard daily public/commuter transport within the hamlet other than the school bus and one mini bus per week to Wrexham (2 hour visit max) meaning that almost all visits to the hamlet must be done via private vehicles. Simply put, I do not believe the hamlet can cope with any more vehicles, particularly as the country roads leading to and from the hamlet are in such an appalling state. The proposed housing development has earmarked numerous additional car parking spaces, thus potentially adding to our horrendous problem.

I think it is obvious that the nine proposed houses are planned as family properties so it should be noted that I believe there is a serious safety issue for children going to school. They would have to walk to and from the new housing development, along Cadney Lane to the school bus collection point. Unfortunately, Cadney Lane is approximately 95% without public footpaths. I cannot stress enough the potential danger to these school children, who would in effect have to risk their lives by walking along this narrow, unlit lane simply to get to/from a school bus.

Our hamlet in the past has had other residential planning applications rightly refused.

To paraphrase the authorities' (WCBC & NRW) own words:

“Bettisfield must have NO further building of residential properties as the local infrastructure is incapable of supporting any additional population/vehicles”.

Ecology Report

This states that there is no evidence of badgers within the vicinity of the proposed development, however I believe this to be inaccurate as badgers have been seen near and around the site by Bettisfield residents, and in fact one was recently run over very near to the proposed site. To also state that there is no historical evidence of badgers is mystifying, considering that some years ago badgers were believed by CART to have caused the canal bank to breach, causing part of the village to seriously flood! This incident is well documented as it was extremely traumatic to both properties and residents. I am somewhat surprised therefore that the company carrying out the ecology report has, one assumes, at best simply not carried out a thorough enough search of local archives or else have for whatever reason chosen not to include the information for the planning authority; either way I feel it shows a very poor standard.

I would suggest that the site visits were (a) too short and (b) carried out at the wrong time of year especially for Great Crested Newts.

The European protected Great Crested Newts most definitely survive and thrive well within the hamlet, and very near to the proposed development there is also an open wet ditch almost opposite the site.

Sightings of GCN have been seen and indeed reported to the Ecology Department at WCBC on numerous occasions including fairly recently.

Of serious importance are the dates of the ecology visits, checking for the protected GCNs I understand this is best done during the breeding season, which is between March and June.

Water voles - it should be noted that the protected water voles live within the village, especially I believe along the watercourse which is almost directly alongside the proposed site.

Fieldfare and Redwing - both birds have been seen within the proposed development site. I believe these are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. But as with the water voles, they are not mentioned in the report.

Planning Statement

The proposed development is described as 'Infill'. In my opinion, this clearly is **not** the case as it is a total of nine houses and not the one/two maximum 'infill' is meant to refer to this goes against Guidance Note 13 that clearly states that 'infill' is either one or two at most additional dwellings. It goes on to say that any more than two new properties will have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside; I feel this would most certainly be the case in this instance. This I believe is very important information for the appeals procedure.

I believe the proposed development fails the UDP 1996 2011 on at least four criteria:

1. Scale of the development
2. Safety Issues i.e. my concerns re: pedestrians and vehicle access/egress.
3. It is not near to convenient/decent public transport as there is almost none
4. Safety issues i.e. my concerns re: road traffic directly onto a poorly maintained unlit country lane.

The application states that there is a local bus service while technically true, what we have is *extremely* limited. All that we actually have (other than the school bus) is one bus on a Monday which leaves the village at 10am for Wrexham and arrives back at lunchtime pretty inadequate to say the least. The rest of the entire week is down to car journeys as there is simply NO alternative transportation infrastructure within the hamlet.

Policy PS4 clearly states that developments should maintain existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated within the existing transport network to help reduce overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car. Obviously, I feel this development does not fit the criteria; rather than fulfil this obligation within PS4 I believe it does the exact opposite.

7.0 states that it is a key requirement that occupiers of proposed properties would not have to rely on private cars but as stated earlier, almost the only way to enter and leave Bettisfield hamlet is by private car, as there is NO other standard daily public/commuter transport available so this makes the author's argument completely flawed.

I am surprised that the author did not notice the appalling condition of the roads in and around Bettisfield, the fact that they are narrow and totally unlit, and mainly devoid of pavements or even grass verges. It is also worth noting that in practice there is mainly one through road in/out of Bettisfield, as the Northwood Road side is indeed so bad that the majority of residents refuse to use it due to massive potholes, etc I would say it is mainly used by commercial and agricultural vehicles, which leaves in effect only one decent small road to enter/egress the hamlet.

OPA/Conclusion

This states that this is an "infill" plot but it seems to me that this is clearly not the case, as it is a ribbon of 9 large detached houses and garages which stretches hundreds of yards.

It states that there is good pedestrian and vehicular access but in my opinion this is incorrect, as Cadney Lane is a narrow, badly maintained country lane with almost NO pedestrian footpaths whatsoever near to the proposed site, thus leaving school children and the residents having to walk along a very narrow lane with obvious serious dangers.

It implies that there are good public transport links, which I would strongly disagree with as this is simply not the case.

It states that the nine proposed dwellings would add visual interest to the locality again, I strongly disagree with this. To suggest that a thread of nine detached houses covering a substantial distance, plus accompanying parked cars, vans and the backs of houses, etc. would somehow look better than the current open countryside/rural setting is, in my opinion, ridiculous. I think it is really worth seeing the countryside photographs at the end of their report to see the appalling difference that this development could make.

Finally, the planning and design statement clearly states that this application is a departure from the WCBC plan I think this is a major understatement.

In the authority's (WCBC's) own words about Bettisfield it has stated the following:

"Bettisfield is a very small hamlet with No street lighting, no mains gas, no mains sewerage and no service or facilities, ie it has no shops, post office, public house, no school etc it is simply a group of private dwellings down a poorly maintained country road. There is a serious lack of infrastructure and NO further building, especially housing should take place. The roads are in poor state of repair and only one bus a week"

NRW have previously stated the following about not building in Bettisfield:

"Concerns about the development in Bettisfield in relation to pedestrian and vehicular safety and the suitability of the land. There are no services or facilities to serve more housing. Bettisfield is a linear village and the proposed site would be completely out of keeping with the Rural environment and at odds with the overall strategic statement for the plan. There are no mains drains and the installation of cess pits would result in frequent tanker visits to the detriment of all residents."

As part of a previous planning refusal, NRW were also abundantly clear that NO additional housing should be considered within the village until the village had mains sewerage; needless to say nothing has changed in this regard and to be blunt is not likely to.

I respectfully ask the Appeals Procedure Officer to refuse this Planning Appeal.

Yours Faithfully,

Mr Keith Allan

(I would appreciate confirmation of receipt of this correspondence to [REDACTED])