

Urgent Item - Planning Committee - 3rd December 2007

Weights Farm, Weights Lane, Redditch Refused Planning Application B/2006/1278

This application was received by the Local Planning Authority on 22nd November 2006 and discussed at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 5th February 2007 where Members resolved to accept the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Environment Services and refuse the application for the following reasons:

1. A clear and established need for the proposed development has not been proven. Therefore, the proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances exist that clearly outweigh the harm caused. As such, the proposal is contrary to policy DS2 of the Bromsgrove District Local plan, policies D.12 and D.39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the provisions of PPG2 and PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.
2. Sufficient housing has been completed or identified within the District to meet the strategic housing land requirements for the District as set out in policies D.2 and D.4 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan (1996 - 2011). To grant planning permission for additional sites would prejudice the aims of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and would clearly be contrary to the 'Plan, Monitor and Manage' approach to housing provision advocated in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 10: 'Managing Housing Supply in the District of Bromsgrove'.

The applicant has appealed against the decision of the Local Planning Authority to refuse consent and it is intended to deal with this matter through the Public Local Inquiry procedure. The Inquiry is scheduled to take place on 8th and 9th January 2008. The Council's Proofs of Evidence are required to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by 10th December 2007.

The Head of Planning and Environment Services has sought the views of Counsel on the reasons for refusal. Counsel has advised that the second reason for refusal, in relation to the issue of oversupply, should not be pursued. If the agricultural need is not met, it would be considered as a new dwelling in the Green Belt which would be contrary to Green Belt policy which is covered in the first reason for refusal. As the policies underlying SPG10 are not saved within the County Structure Plan under the review of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), it is likely to lead to an application for costs against the Council.

The views of Members on this issue are therefore invited.