

BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL

In the County of Warwickshire



Minutes of the Public Meeting held on Monday 18th April 2005 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Meeting Room/School, Bramley Way, Bidford on Avon to discuss the Proposed Extraction of Sand and Gravel from Broom Court Farm.

PRESENT

Chairman : Mrs. Keeley
Councillors: Ms. Deacon, Gerrard, Hiscocks, Langston, Sandle. Smith & Spiers

Also present : County Cllr. Barnes and District Cllr. Pemberton (who arrived after the meeting had started)

Approx. 300 members of the public and 1 member of the press

The Chairman welcomed all to this special meeting, which had been called by the Parish Council in response to the large number of members of the public attending the Planning Meeting on 11th April where the Application for the proposed extraction of sand and gravel at Broom Court Farm was mentioned as an item of information.

The Chairman stated that, due to the large number of people present, those speaking would be restricted to 3 minutes to ensure everyone had a chance to put their point.

There were a large number of speakers throughout the meeting, each expressing their reasons for opposing the proposal, which included a lengthy report carried out by a resident with knowledge on this subject. A version of this report will be available.

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The main reasons for opposing the application proposal were:

- Health and Safety – it is a large site and mainly unprotected. Mention was also made of the fact that the applicant's current safety measures at Marsh Farm are far from appropriate and are a danger, specially for children.
- Environment – Many residents mentioned the fact that the river and its surroundings attract a large variety of fauna and birds, including otters, badgers, kingfishers, herons etc. All this would be lost if the proposal is accepted. Many residents highlighted the fact that the Big Meadow, with its proximity to the river, is a very beautiful area, which attracts large numbers of tourists every year. If this proposal goes ahead, it will have direct impact on the Big Meadow, which is to the south of the site, with all the resulting environment and economic consequences to the village.
The land on the site is good agricultural land – however, this will cease to be the case once all the gravel and sand is taken out.
Many of the new residents of the village, which has grown considerably in the last years, chose to live in Bidford attracted by its quiet and rural setting – this will disappear if the proposal goes ahead.
- Noise and dust – residents living close to the current Marsh Farm site made it very clear that the noise from the quarry will be intrusive. One resident even making the remark that it made it impossible to work from home. Marlcliff residents are particularly worried as noise travels to the village and is then reflected back.
As the sand and gravel is being transported from the site to Marsh Farm by conveyor, many expressed their worry regarding dust which, in the normal prevailing wind, will come straight into the villages of Bidford and Marlcliff
Concern was also shown with regards to the length of the conveyor – between 1,500 and 2,000 metres, with a number of change of direction, making it difficult to monitor as access will be on foot. It will also be extremely difficult to stop children gaining access or to detect spillages and blockages.
- Doubts were expressed as to the comprehensiveness and accuracy of some parts of the Environmental Impact Assessment produced by the Applicants and grave doubts were raised as to the time frame with many suggesting that the time could easily be doubled with the fact that there is already a delay at the current site of some 18 months.
- There was also high scepticism regarding the proposes restoration plans and many voiced their opinion that the site would end up as a Landfill

When all had expressed their opinion, one resident requested a Parish Poll take place. This was unanimously supported by the attending residents and accepted by the Parish Council.

The Chairman then advised that, as per the Local Government Act 1972, as a Parish Poll had been requested, the wording of it had to be agreed. The meeting was then adjourned for 10 minutes for residents to consult. The following wording was then put forward and unanimously accepted:

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