
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 20 April 2022 08:45
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories:

Application Reference No. : CON/2021/0028 Site Address: Whiston Hall Golf Club Black Lane Whiston Staffordshire
ST10 2HZ Stoke-On-Trent Comments by: Steve Ash

From:
Chestnut cottage
Leek rd
Waterhouses
Stoke on Trent
Staffs
ST10 3HW

Submission: Neither
Comments: Dear Sirs

Re: PLANNING APPLICATION NO. SCC/21/0033/FUL

I write to express my support for the above mentioned planning application.

However, before I set out the reasons for my support, I wish to declare an interest in the matter. I am the presently the Chairman of Whiston Hall Golf Club (WHGC). I acknowledge this may be seen as a partisan position. However I would say that the corollary of this is that having joined WHGC over 20 years ago it has provided me with an informed insight into the issues that effect this golf course.

I have read with interest the objections raised by Kingsley Parish Council and I propose dealing with those objections as a useful exercise in demonstrating the wholly ill informed nature of those objections and more importantly to highlight some of the very many positive aspects of the application.

1. Misleading objective.

The language used in this objection is emotive and pejorative. I would ask the planning authority to disregard the use of such inflammatory language which is unworthy of a public body. It is suggested that the application is a disguised landfill operation. There is no basis in fact for this assertion. It is a speculative and I would suggest ill

informed opinion. I contrast this with the detailed, factual and very comprehensive planning application. The Council have chosen to 'cherry pick' the application repeatedly for their own ends.

The Council take exception to the volume of material that is required to remodel the back nine holes of the course saying it is 'far in excess' of what is required. Firstly, I would ask the Council to justify that objection based upon the expertise the parish Counsellors have in this field. Secondly, if the course is to be re-modelled one wonders how that is to be achieved without bringing in material to achieve that purpose?

Exception is also taken to the volume of traffic that the project would generate in delivering the material. What the objection overlooks is that the volume of traffic would amount to only 2 HGVs per hour, only during the usual business hours, and only then during the re-development period of 24 months.

To suggest that the course was eminently playable when it was properly maintained, is another indicator of the Council's lack of insight into the issues.

Quite simply the back 11 holes of the course overlays a heavy clay subsoil (contrast the first 7 holes which drain well as they are above a substrate of millstone grit.) This means that from Autumn onwards the majority of the course was actually unplayable due to the lack of drainage to deal with surface water on the course. The purpose of the application is to address that issue, no more and no less.

2. Potential dumping of hazardous material.

These remarks are quite inaccurate. The application makes clear that any waste to be taken onto the site is inert waste, soil, stone, gravel etc. The receipt of materials is most certainly not at the discretion of the applicant. There is a strict enforcement regime that regulates the movement of waste, and to disregard it risks prosecution. The remarks of the Council are emotive scaremongering.

3. Negative Traffic impact.

I would respectfully refer the planning authority to paragraph 1 above. The application envisages a short term development only.

4. Noise pollution.

Again wrong. The complaint of the Council conveniently chooses to ignore that a thorough noise impact assessment has been carried out which concludes that noise pollution would be significantly below the relevant threshold.

5. Climate Change Agenda.

The objection refers to the removal of 281 trees. At first blush this appears alarming. However, the proposal goes on to say that over a quarter of the trees on the site are none native Cypress Leylandii. The development proposes a comprehensive replanting scheme of native trees, such that the final position would result in an improved on site bio-diversity.

6. Policy.

This objection is a self serving and circular argument. It pre-supposes that the proposal is a landfill exercise. The proposal is extremely detailed and comprehensive and seeks to achieve a specific purpose, namely the re-modelling of the back nine holes of the golf course to improve it and to make the course usable throughout the year. Plainly if the applicant failed to abide by the detail of the proposal, enforcement action could be taken precisely as envisaged by footnote a) of the objection.

I would also refer the planning authority to its own policies Namely, the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan of 2020. This obliges the authority to make provision for ‘Leisure and tourist facilities’. The proposal clearly falls within both of those objectives.

Policy SS11 of the Churnet Valley Strategy obliges planners to look to

‘increased economic prosperity and opportunities for employment’

Whiston Hall is a significant local employer in the locality. The reinstatement of the course to a much improved 18 hole golf course will inevitably increase the membership of the golf club and attract golf tourists to the area. The benefit of this is obvious.

This is especially so given the recent opening of the world renowned JCB golf course in Uttoxeter which will attract literally thousands of golf enthusiasts to high profile events at that venue. The Golf Legends event to be held in July of this year is an obvious example.

The re-modelling of WHGC will attract some of this much needed tourist revenue to the immediate area. Thus safeguarding local jobs, and increasing prosperity in this community.

I would also remind the Authority of its own C2 Policy, in which the Council undertakes to 'Promote high quality recreation... open spaces and outdoor sports'.

The council will therefore weigh in the balance the legitimate (as opposed to ultra vires) considerations and conclude this application can properly be granted with whatever conditions the authority sees fit.

Yours Faithfully

Stephen J Ash (LLb Hons) Solicitor.

Chairman WHGC.

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