

Meeting of Greystoke community regarding Atkinson's proposal to build 30 houses on land by Church Road

Date: 23/06/2022
Time: 19:00
Location: Greystoke village hall
Chairpersons: Corrine Green (CG)
Guy Challands (GC)
Minutes: Stephen Green (SG)

1. Present

- 51 people in attendance.
- 11 apologies from people who wanted to attend, but couldn't.

2. Introduction

- CG and GC explained the proposed format the meeting would follow, and this was approved by the floor.
- CG discussed Eden District Council's (EDC) local plan and how that impacts on planning decisions.
- A show of hands highlighted that everyone in the room was opposed to the proposed housing development.
- The meeting was then opened up to general discussion.
- Unless otherwise mentioned, any comments noted below were raised by members of the community attending the meeting.

3. Greystoke village housing targets

- CG and GC highlighted some key points from the EDC local plan regarding building targets for Greystoke village
 - i. Greystoke has a target to build 69 new houses by 2032.
 - ii. 63 houses have already been built or approved.
 - iii. Historically 1-2 individual new houses are approved each year in Greystoke.
 - iv. Greystoke will have met its target before 2032, without any new major housing developments.
- It was raised that following the Storey homes development on the edge of the village, that the village will have virtually met its housing targets in the EDC local plan, and that Greystoke has already 'done its bit'.
- CG noted that if EDC fall behind overall targets for the region, then areas approved for future housing growth can be opened up for development – there are no such areas in Greystoke.

- If large housing developments are approved beyond the targets set for the village, then the character and community feel of the village will be lost for ever (Stainton was raised as an example of this).

4. Flood zones

- GC noted that the proposed development only builds on flood zones 2 and 3A, but the access to the site on Church road would be in flood zone 3B.
- CG highlighted that to the EDC local plan, houses can only be built on flood zones 2 and 3A if there is an overriding need, and if no other suitable sites are available.
- GC highlighted that in their planning applications, developers need to provide a flood risk assessment accounting for the next 100 years (which may increase flooding estimates by 50-60%).
- GC noted that developers need to prove that they won't displace water elsewhere.
- Numerous concerns were raised about building on the flood plain, existing flooding in the fields and on Church Road, and that the proposed development would exacerbate the flooding and displace water elsewhere.
- It was noted that the Greystoke Parish Council (GPC) chairman is now saying that access for the proposed development would now be via Icold Road, and not via Church Road (this is to be confirmed though).
- Doubts were raised about whether the sewerage system would be able to cope with 30 new houses and the impact on the water table.

5. Impact on village

- Concerns were raised regarding the impact on the view of the church (especially from Icold road).
- It was also noted that based on their previous developments, Atkinsons may not build the houses in a way that is in keeping and sympathetic to the village.
- Concerns were also raised about the inability of the village infrastructure to cope with 30 more houses.
- It was noted that if access to the proposed development was via Church Road, then that would lead to an increase of at least 45 cars (1.5 per household) using Church Road regularly.

6. Greystoke Parish Council (GPC) communications with Atkinsons

- There was a general unhappiness in the room with how the chairman of the GPC is dealing with Atkinsons, and that this might be perceived as improper or unethical.
- Some attendees questioned the process that GPC were following and whether they should have been speaking to Atkinsons before a formal planning application was made.
- GC noted that if GPC is approached by a developer, then the proposal can be discussed by GPC.

7. Nutrient neutrality

- GC highlighted new legislation covering nutrient neutrality which is currently preventing ANY new planning applications being approved at the moment.
- New housing schemes must ensure that the amount of nitrates entering the water system must be offset by the removal of an equivalent amount of nitrates.
- Councils and developers are currently trying to work out what is required here.
- It was noted that development on the flood plain would surely increase the risk of nutrient run off into the Eden river catchment SSSI.
- It was noted from the floor that this is a hot issue at the moment with phosphate levels in the lakes being very high at the moment (leading to green algae blooms).

8. Affordable housing

- It was noted by many that affordable housing was an issue that Greystoke should try to address. However, the proposed development would be very unlikely to do much to solve this issue.
- A number of people highlighted that the Story homes development initially promised this, but the number of affordable homes was significantly reduced as the planning application progressed (12 down to 4), and when they were listed, the 'affordable homes' were not at affordable prices.
- The clear feeling in the room was that exactly the same thing would happen with the Atkinsons development if it ever went ahead.
- CG noted the EDC local plan allows developers to cut the number of affordable houses if development costs increase (which they undoubtedly will).
- CG highlighted that a far more effective way to build affordable housing would be for the parish council to engage with the community and explore Community Led Housing and the creation of a Neighbourhood plan.
- This idea received general support within the room, and a number of people indicated they would be happy to contribute. This initiative would be progressed separately.
- It was noted that local occupancy rules are tied into affordable housing, to ensure that affordable housing goes to local residents.

9. Community core team

- In order to effectively formulate responses and objections to the proposed development, volunteers were sought to form a core team who would work on behalf of the community.
- It was noted from the floor that we need to clearly ascertain the skills we think are needed, and communicate that to the community in order to help get the right people involved.
- The following people initially agreed to be part of the core team:-
 - i. Corrine Green

- ii. Guy Challands
- iii. Dominic Rhodes
- iv. Mike Bousfield
- v. Margot Dent
- vi. Alan Marshall
- vii. Andrew Mandale
- viii. Keith Mandale
- ix. Gavin

10. Petition

- It was agreed in the room that a petition should be created for Greystoke community members to register their opposition to the building proposal.
- The petition will be available both online and also in paper form for people to sign.
- A number of people have offered to take the petition round door to door.
- The village shop and Boot & Shoe pub will be asked if they are willing to host the petition for people to sign.
- ACTION – CG and GC to agree wording for petition.
- ACTION – CG to set-up online petition and advertise it on the Greystoke village facebook group.
- ACTION – CG to speak to village shop and Boot & Shoe regarding hosting the petition.

11. Rsepsonse to Greystoke Parish Council (GPC)

- A show of hands highlighted that 35 of the community members at this meeting are intending to attend the July GPC meeting.
- Discussion was held regarding the best way to approach GPC with our concerns, and the objections we would like them to raise on our behalf.
- Volunteers were sought to speak at the parish council meeting, and CG agreed to do it if none were forthcoming. At the end of the meeting Alan Marshall (AM) also kindly offered his assistance.
- ACTION - GC to prepare draft notes of the community's response for the GPC July meeting and circulate amongst core team for review.
- ACTION – GC to liaise with the GPC clerk regarding who would speak on behalf of the community at the July GPC meeting, and the process that needs to be followed.

12. Adjournment

- There being no other business, the meeting ended at approximately 20:15.