

Land North of Dark Lane, Alrewas, now Green Acres:

Introduction & overview as at March 2024

The Green Acres @ Alrewas development is a significant addition to the Village and quite understandably generated all sorts of views and opinions, many of which were expressed through the Planning Process. The development was the subject of a Public Inquiry which sat in 2015 and was determined in favour of the then developer, Lioncourt Homes Ltd, on 13 February 2017. Refer to Planning Application 13/01175/FULM. This Application was for 121 dwellings, albeit that associated Applications were for a greater number.

In 2018, Crest Nicholson, who were in the process of acquiring the site from Lioncourt Homes, submitted Planning Application 18/01491/FULM, which was determined on 21 December 2018 - Approval subject to Planning Conditions.

During 2019, with construction imminent, the proposals to discharge the Planning Conditions were scrutinised in more detail by Villagers. This scrutiny concentrated on compliance with Planning Conditions and the impact on the Village, particularly during the Construction Period.

This triggered a further Planning Application 20/00359/FULM which was submitted on 05 March 2020 (primarily relating to a change in housing mix, but was used as a mechanism to address concerns and objections from the Villagers on numerous other aspects) and this was unanimously Refused on 04 October 2021 by the Lichfield District Council Planning Committee.

However, some of the proposals that were Refused under Planning Application 20/00359/FULM were Approved under the previous Planning Application 18/01491/FULM on 08 October 2021.

Whilst the procedural approach appeared confusing, it had to be accepted as legitimate, but nonetheless, many concerns that had been expressed through the Planning Process by Villagers over the previous 2 to 3 years, did not appear to have been satisfactorily addressed.

The above is a brief “potted history” of the Planning Process, but to include all the exchanges that occurred throughout this period would be very onerous.

One aspect of the Planning Process that is slightly frustrating and not very helpful to anyone experiencing problems post completion of the development, is the withdrawal of the numerous Public Objections from the Planning Application website once the Application has been determined. It should be noted that statutory consultees, e.g. Highway Authority, Environment Agency, etc. remain on the website. However, the Planning Officer’s Report to the Planning Committee includes a summary/précis of all representations (i.e. Objections and Support).

A further complication that should be noted is that exchanges between the Developer, the Planning Authority and its consultees are not always placed in the Public Domain.

Accordingly, the only opportunity that this document offers, is an overview of the Villagers’ concerns, generally expressed as Objections to the Planning Applications. Effectively, it offers a starting point for anyone who may be encountering issues and wondering where to begin and whether their particular concern has already been raised.

This posting on the Alrewas Archives is structured as follows:

- 01) Introduction and Overview (this document)
- 02) Planning Applications’ Summary
- 03) Objections (General)
- 04) Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
- 05) Biodiversity
- 06) Final Complaint

Each Objection included in this posting (Refer to Section 03), may be specific to a single concern or relate to multiple concerns. Some are brief and some complex. When an Objection is lodged, the originator is sent a confirmation from Lichfield District Council (LDC) Planning Services. The Objections included herein are the majority of those submitted by the Alrewas Residents' Group and John Walton. It should be noted that the Alrewas Parish Council, Alrewas Civic Society and many other Residents submitted Objections, and it is to these originators that enquiries should be made if additional detail is required to that included in this posting.

Villagers' concerns were harnessed by the creation of, and actions of, the Alrewas Residents' Group (ARG). The ARG operated from early 2019 and work was finally concluded in late 2021. During this period, the ARG gathered support and eventually represented some 400 to 500 Villagers and numerous Village Groups.

The matters/concerns addressed by the ARG were plentiful and varied, but the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (FRA&DS) stood head and shoulders above the rest as being a concern that was very significant, in particular the combined effects of the River Trent flooding, groundwater ingress and extreme rainfall events. In addition, the impact of the development on biodiversity was a concern and should have resulted in measures that culminated in a net gain to the impact on biodiversity, in particular assisted by the creation of a Wildflower Meadow, which at the time of this posting (March 2024) had not been created.

Sections 04) and 05) of this posting give a selection of key documents relating to the FRA&DS and Biodiversity respectively.

When the ARG was wound up, in its opinion, many matters remained unaddressed. In addition, it was considered beneficial to LDC to convey feedback on specific issues. This mechanism chosen for conveying these points to LDC was a formal Complaint. The concluding exchanges of this Complaint are included in Section 06) and please note that this Complaint remains outstanding.

Hopefully, no-one will need to access this posting in the Alrewas Archives, but if needs must, then it is hoped that this assists in some way.