

Norton Radstock Town Council 29 June 2009

Statement from Radstock Action Group on Reserved Matters 08/02332/RES

Radstock Action Group urges NRTC to seek urgent discussions and negotiation with BANES on the latest round of proposals in relation to the Railway land.

We suggest that the manner in which the latest proposals have been put forward are designed to deter involvement of local people, as well as of NRTC which is a statutory consultee.

In addition, the papers lodged in the Victoria Hall are confusing.

According to the Senior Planning Officer for this case, 'The plans are all revisions to previous drawings. The revision to each drawing is identified by a letter in the bottom right corner and explained in the notes in the top right corner.' However, a 30 minute examination of the papers lodged at Victoria Hall did not make this clear and it is proving very challenging, identifying all changes, as this will require a lot more time than has been available so far.

We believe that it is the responsibility of NRTC as the representative local council of the people of Radstock to ask BANES to defer the current round of discussions until the following have been done:

1. Public announcements have been made via the press, other media and notices, including site notices, informing local residents and businesses of the fact that there are new plans available, stating clearly when and where they may be viewed and allowing at least 21 days from the date of the notices being posted for responses to be sent to BANES.
2. A meeting should be arranged between the Planning Officer, David Audsley, and NRTC Planning and Environment Group in order for the officer to explain in detail all the changes which he suggests have been made.
3. BANES publishes a note of the decision of the April Development Control Committee so that the public can see how the decision in relation to the application on that date was reported back and what the officer thought was necessary as a result.

This is particularly important as David Audsley was not present at the Development Control Committee and there is no proof that the correct points were reported back.

4. BANES explains why the plans are being considered whilst the reports relating to the Market Town initiative has yet to be fully consulted on and published. Additionally, we suggest that to be pursuing this proposal in isolation from all the other planning possibilities which are currently emerging is a breach of good practice and will inevitably lead to piecemeal development rather than a strategic and sustainable vision for Radstock.
5. BANES publishes its intentions in relation to undertaking a new bat survey, since, even by their own admission, there is not a current one. It should also be obliged to enforce a process whereby the developer is not responsible for monitoring its own ecological and environmental interventions.
6. Similarly, BANES should be required to publish its intentions in relation to the required archaeological surveys.
7. BANES publishes the business case for pursuing both the current proposals and the new road proposals which also feature in the paperwork currently up for discussion.