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8th September 2025

**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY 27th AUGUST 2025** at **ST MARY’S CHURCH HALL, RUFFORD** commencing at **7.00 PM**.

Present

Cllr Newsham Chair

Cllr Pryke

Cllr Smith

Cllr Pickervance

Cllr Bradshaw

Borough Cllr Hesketh

Borough Cllr Gordon

LCC Cllr Edwards

Kevin Newsham Clerk

There were four members of the public present.

1. **CHAIRPERSON OPENS THE MEETING**

The Chairman of the committee opened the August meeting at 7.00 PM with a warm welcome to councillors and residents, thanking them for attending the meeting given the shorter notice due to no full council meeting being held in August.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENSE**

There were no apologies for absence.

1. **DECLERATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declerations of interest.

1. **ADJOURNMENT FOR COMMENTS FROM COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Gordon opened the comments from borough councillors by introducing flood risk maps. He outlined that the majority of Rufford and Holmeswood lies within Flood Zone 2 of the flood zoning categories. Cllr Hesketh then raised concerns about WLBC currently having no active local plan and a new one will not be developed until 2028. This leaves the rural communities even more vulnerable to development. Cllr Edwards from LCC stated he sits on LCC planning committee. He outlined that LCC are retracting some planning applications of their own which are occurring within the greenbelt. He stated that LCC are taking a firm stance to development in greenbelt.

1. **ADJOURNMENT FOR RESIDENTS’ POINTS OF INTEREST**

Two members of the public present were objecting to 2025/0663/FUL at the Rufford Marina. They stated that access was poor already to their own properties on the marina, including road surface, which is incomplete, the kerb height is double what is regulation and there is no street lighting. They also stated that the proposed area for development will disrupt parking for the marina café. On busy days, the car park is overrun and people park on the road, blocking access. The residents also highlighted that the properties have original features from when it was a farm. They have formed a group to protest the proposal and have sent in objections to WLBC.

1. **DISCUSS PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

2025/0663/FUL - Rufford Marina, Watersedge Drive – *The parish council objected to this application.*

*The proposal will be affecting drainage in the area. The current plans currently show that sewage waste and surface water will go into a combined sewer. The drainage report suggests surface water going into a sewer is not suitable and infiltration should be the primary form of drainage. The council recommends a SUDS report is required for this property. It is also noted that there is a loss of habitat through loss of greenbelt grassland. Additional lighting through the development could disrupt the bats present and the area is a suitable sett building land for badgers. Furthermore, house martins are present on this land and are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The council recommends a further ecological assessment is required as well as bat report. Additionally, the road into the marina is not adopted and has not been resurfaced correctly since development of the original properties and therefore the kerb is extremely high and dangerous to pedestrians and road users. There is also no street lighting for pedestrians. The parking spaces to be built for the properties are going to encroach on the parking for the Rufford Marina Café. On busy days, the area is already overrun with vehicles, often obstructing houses and Church Road. The council believes a site visit during a busy time (nice weather) should be conducted to see the parking situation. Finally, the proposed plans are not fitting with Rufford Parish Councils Landscape Character Assessment Plan. The site has a long history and the currently dwellings are in fitting with the old barns and dairy farm.*

2025/0704/PNC - Meadow Farm, Sandy Way – *The parish council objected to this application.*

*The parish council considers this proposal is inconsistent with Paragraph 154, Clause g of the NPPF, which provides an exception for development on the Green Belt for 'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land.' The NPPF provides a reasonably clear definition of what can be classified as 'previously developed land' in its Glossary, and this specifically excludes 'land in built-up areas such as residential gardens.' In Section 2.1 of the Planning Statement, the location of the site is described as located 'within the curtilage of Sandy Cottage.' However, according to the site plan and on the ground, the proposed development is in the existing garden of the present dwelling. Therefore, the proposal does not meet the criteria of 'previously developed land', and permission should not be granted on this basis. Moreover, the parish council considers that foul waste would have to be connected to a cesspit. The area is already near capacity for sewage in the area. Due to this, the parish council recommends a SUDS report. Furthermore, the site has many trees. Over recent months, trees have been felled on the northern side of the property. The parish council will be contacting the forestry commission over the tree felling and would recommend for a tree report to be conducted as some of the trees on the site are of an ecological importance to the area. Finally, the parish council believes that three properties on this land is overdevelopment of the existing land and area.*

2025/0711/PIP - Sandy Cottage, Sandy Way – *The parish council objected to this application.*

*Looking at previous history on planning for the property, Ref. No: 2020/0084/FUL - Application for the removal of agricultural occupancy condition from planning permission 8/06/1481 dated 10/10/1952 was refused in 2020. This was to allow non-agricultural workers to live at the property which is on the same site as the proposed application. This application sought the removal of agricultural occupancy condition from planning permission 8/6/1481. This condition states: "The bungalow shall be occupied, together with the four acres of land comprised in the curtilage of the site, the subject of this permission, by a person engaged or working the said land as a small holding". The reason for this condition being "That approval to the erection of the bungalow in this isolated position on agricultural land is only granted to assist in reclaiming the land in the interests of agriculture". Using this previous planning refusal, the parish council considers that the land should remain agricultural, which is the purpose of the condition on the bungalow, and therefore, the use of agricultural buildings will be required. Additionally, the site is in zone 2 of the flood risk mapping. It is in the Holmeswood Pump Basin and is located on the edge of the historical Martin Mere. Moreover, the odour report states that the land is suitable for grazing. This has been occurring recently. This is likely to result in odour. The report also states the impact of slurry spreading which occurs within the area. This is likely to result in odour. Finally, access will be difficult as it is currently a small farm track to get from Sandy Way to the end of the site where the agricultural buildings are located.*

**No next meeting date was arranged as planning committee meetings will only be called in extraordinary circumstances.**

The meeting closed at 8.25 PM.

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Chairperson’s Signature Date