

Mr Hargreaves' statement

FIFIELD DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 1ST APRIL 2021

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS.

1. Fifield development approved – plans show tree belt along the boundary with The Old Forge House to be retained.
2. It should be noted that the tree belt is growing in perfectly good soil.
3. Developer removes all of tree belt after approval.
4. Landscaping scheme agreed which includes the requirement to replace the tree belt around the **whole** of the boundary with 12foot mature yew trees.
5. Developer constructs garage with side doorway approximately 4foot from the boundary together with toilet/washing facilities and associated drainage and water supply pipes along the area to be landscaped.
6. Works in 4 not included within approved development plan.
7. Doorway boarded up.
8. 4 yew trees planted to rear of garage. 1 further tree to be planted at rear per planning officer's delegated report attached to the most recent planning decision.
9. A number of varied planning applications submitted by developer.
10. The same landscaping scheme regarding the yew trees remains as a specific planning condition.
11. Throughout whole process developer maintains that it can and will plant the yew trees in accordance with the agreed scheme.
12. The confirmation in 10 is given many times to officers, to the owner of The Old Forge House verbally, and in the developer's latest Design and Access statement.
13. Through many discussions with the planning officer the owner of The Old Forge House is told more than once that the tree officer is not concerned about the viability of the landscaping scheme. In particular, the planning officer stated in a telephone conversation of 11th February 2019 with owner that the tree officer had said that only "18 inches" is required for the trees to be planted.
14. Developer refuses to landscape.
15. Enforcement investigation is raised.
16. Developer still refuses to landscape.
17. Section 73 Application to have obligation to landscape the boundary removed submitted. Submission was made after receiving pre-application advice from enforcement officer and planning officer.
18. Application supported by tree specialist that is not independent and:-
 - (a) Makes not one mention of yew trees.
 - (b) Makes reference to the garage only and makes no reference to the void that remains to be landscaped (see attached photograph).
 - (c) Makes no mention of maintenance problem with regard to trees that have been planted.
19. Planning officer makes site visit and takes photographs.
20. Tree officer makes no site visit.
21. Tree officer comments after the deadline with the result that no comment can be made in respect thereof. The comments are at odds with previous advice.

22. Planning officer recommends acceptance of application with the additional condition that the yew trees that have been planted should be dug up.

