

STANDISH VOICE – NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

REQUEST TO THROW OUT PLANNING PERMISSION AFTER COUNCIL LAND SALE U-TURN

Wigan Council has decided not to sell land on Chorley Road which would give access to yet another large housing development on greenfield land.

Standish Voice would like to thank all our members who objected to the sale of the council-owned land after we put out a request to do so last month.

We have now asked the local authority to rescind outline planning permission on this housing development of around 100 homes on greenfield land, which was passed by a government inspector in 2015 after the council refused it.

The follow-up detailed planning permission, needed to begin the work, was submitted in 2016 but has still not been determined.

Due to this and the fact that new detailed plans will now need to be submitted after the land sale was stopped, Standish Voice is calling on the council to throw out the original permission with the developer, Bellway, having to reapply if they wish.

The council advertised its intention to sell the land, which is classed as Amenity Green Space, in January but, after many objections, decided against this.

A Standish Voice spokesperson said: “Since outline permission was granted for this site, many hundreds of homes have been built in Standish and we do not need any more.

“Also, in 2019, Standish people voted overwhelmingly for the Neighbourhood Plan, with policies that limit new housing on Safeguarded Land, which this site is.

“Nearby residents have had this situation hanging over their heads since 2013, when the original planning was submitted, and it is totally unfair that they should be left in limbo for almost a decade.

“Even the planning inspector expected this site to be built out quickly and ordered that detailed plans should be lodged within a year, rather than the usual three, but this has not happened.

“We realise planning laws apply, and a government inspector allowed this application, but Wigan Council should now do the right thing and rescind the outline permission as it is totally against the interests of people in Standish.”

Wigan Council is currently considering our request.

You can read a news story on the land sale decision here:

<https://www.wigantoday.net/news/politics/council/wigan-councils-u-turn-on-land-sale-3582032>

You can read our letter to Wigan Council asking to rescind the outline permission here:

<http://www.standishvoice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Letter-to-Wigan-Council.pdf>

STANDISH CHRISTMAS MARKET

Standish Voice and Standish Christmas Market Committee will be organising the Market for this coming December after it was postponed for two years due to COVID-19.

Our first committee meeting will be held tomorrow (Monday, February 28th) in a room upstairs at The Globe pub.

Please join us if you want to help organise this year's event or, if you are unable to come, email us at standishneighbourhoodforum@gmail.com and we will contact you.

AGM

You can find out more about Standish Voice's recent AGM on our website.

You can find out who is on our committee and read our accounts here : <http://www.standishvoice.co.uk/us/>

You can read our chair and vice chairs annual reports, and minutes of our last AGM and other meetings here : <http://www.standishvoice.co.uk/information/management-committee-minutes/>

SECTION 106 AGREEMENT PROJECT FUNDING

Wigan Council's Cabinet has agreed a governance process on the spending of around £6m in Section 106 Agreement funding in Standish

This is money from housing developers which must be spent on infrastructure. Some has already been spent, including on Standish Leisure Centre and the upgrade of The Line. Other money is earmarked for extending Standish primary schools when this is needed.

There is about £3m for other projects and these include the School Lane scheme as well as upgrades to parks and walking and cycling routes.

The council decided to create a process for agreeing these schemes and this governance has now been agreed by Wigan Council's Cabinet – making way for decisions to be made on various projects, including the road widening, car parking, improvements to green space and highways.

Basically, all projects which will cost less than £500,000 can be agreed by council officers, ones over this amount, which would include adding a third lane to School Lane costing £1.3m, must go to the Cabinet for approval.

We hope decisions on the schemes, which people gave their views on in a consultation exercise by the council last Spring, will be decided on soon.

GREATER MANCHESTER PLAN IS SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

The Places For Everyone regional development plan for Greater Manchester has been sent to the Government for consideration and approval.

The plan decides a framework of development for the city region for until 2037, including the Green Belt for Standish.

Developers and landowners want to change the extent of the Green Belt around our village so that more houses can be built there, but the draft plan keeps Standish's Green Belt intact.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority has sent the plan to the housing minister, together with all the supporting documents, background evidence and any representations received during this final stage of consultation. Inspectors will now carry out an independent examination of the plan. This will take many months, with the plan due to be in place in early 2023.

We know some landowners and housing developers have objected to the draft plan with the aim to reduce the size of Standish's Green Belt.

Below is a map showing where they wanted to build when the plan originally asked for new housing areas.

We will keep you updated on the plan's progress.

TREES WILL BE PLANTED ON STANDISH GREEN AREAS

After four years of persuasion, Wigan Council has finally agreed to plant trees on one of the last green fields within the residential development of Standish.

Robin Hill Field, a triangular shaped field next to Standish High School on the other side of The Line, was designated an area of Local Green Space by Standish Neighbourhood Plan in 2019, protecting it from development until 2030.

The council owns the field and Standish Voice was worried that, with housebuilding going on on all sides, the council would sell the land for more development, despite the local authority admitting that parks are in short supply in north Standish.

Standish Voice met Manchester City of Trees on the site in 2018 and the organisation agreed to pay for tree planting and a design project to create a pocket park to improve biodiversity and be a great facility for people, including dog walkers.

But despite numerous meetings and emails, Wigan Council would not entertain the idea.

But now, after four years of badgering, City of Trees will plant trees on a small section of the site.

We will now campaign to have the whole site turned into a facility that everyone can enjoy but also preserve it for the future.

We are concerned that Wigan Council still wants to sell this former playing field off to developers, so we need a proper scheme that will prevent this.

We wanted full consultation about this scheme but it seems Wigan Council will be going ahead with this planting anyway.

Please send in your thoughts on this site to standishneighbourhoodforum@gmail.com

Another area where similar planting will take place is the Victoria Pit reclamation site – which the Neighbourhood Plan also declared as Local Green Space. This is near Pilgrims Way.

The tree planting on both sites will take place in the coming months – trees will be mostly native. You can see these photos from above of where it will take place.