

SaveOurWoods.org

Planning application for forty-five dwellings

February 2020

Dear Neighbour,

Developers are proposing to build 45 dwellings on the woodland and open land that borders Danescourt and Radyr Woods. Road access will be via De Braose Close, so all traffic to this new estate will come through Danescourt. Although this land has been designated for protection as part of the River Taff Corridor in Cardiff's Local Development Plan, the Council's Planning Committee will meet to decide whether to approve this development. If they grant permission, the development will go ahead.

If, like me, you oppose the destruction of this popular woodland and open countryside, please register your opposition by submitting your objection to Cardiff Council. You can do this online, by email or in the post. Your response must be received by 4th March to count. You are free to express your objection in any way you like, but a local working group has put together some guidance on submitting an effective objection, and this is shown below, in case you would like some help. There is further information on our website, SaveOurWoods.org, where you can also sign the local petition.

Thank you,

Simon

How to object

Online	Email	Post
At https://planningonline.cardiff.gov.uk	Send an email to:	Write to:
Search for "20/00187/MJR"	developmentcontrol@cardiff.gov.uk	Chris Ellis
Select "Comments"	Quote reference 20/00187/MJR	Strategic Planning
You have to register your own login before you can submit a comment.		County Hall
		Cardiff CF10 4UW
		Quote reference 20/00187/MJR

The Council's officers and members of the Planning Committee can only turn down the planning application on the basis that it breaches existing Council and government policies and guidance. So if you want to make your objection count, you have to provide solid evidence that the council would be acting correctly, in accordance with policy, in rejecting the planning application. That means your objection has to be clear and concise, and must be specific in highlighting the policies and guidance that would be breached if this development were to go ahead. And you must include the reference 20/00187/MJR.

You can't be expected to be an expert in planning policy, so we've assembled a group of local experts who have provided the guidance given overleaf. Whether you select one aspect or several is entirely up to you. They reference the relevant policies and planning rules and are organised by topic, so you can use them in your objection, but should adapt the wording to make it your personal objection. Thank you.

Environment

The proposed development contravenes Policies EN4, EN5, EN6 and EN8 of the Cardiff Local Development Plan.

EN4 states *"The Natural Heritage, character and other key features of Cardiff's river corridors will be protected, promoted and enhanced, together with facilitating sustainable access and recreation."* The entire site falls within the Taff River Corridor.

EN5 states *"Development proposals that would affect locally designated sites of nature conservation and geological importance should maintain or enhance the nature conservation and/or geological importance of the designation. Where this is not the case and the need for the development outweighs the conservation importance of the site, it should be demonstrated that there is no satisfactory alternative location for the development which avoids nature conservation impacts, and compensation measures designed to ensure that there is no reduction in the overall nature conservation value of the area or feature."* Radyr Woods is adjacent to the site and is liable to be significantly impacted by the proposal.

EN6 states *"Development will only be permitted if it does not cause unacceptable harm to: Landscape features of importance for wild flora and fauna, including wildlife corridors and 'stepping stones' which enable the dispersal and functioning of protected and priority species;"*. Pasture and woodland are an important mix of habitat "stepping stones".

EN8 states *"Development will not be permitted that would cause unacceptable harm to trees, woodlands and hedgerows of significant public amenity, natural or cultural heritage value, or that contribute significantly to mitigating the effects of climate change. ... Trees, woodlands and hedgerows offer multiple benefits, including visual amenity, defining a sense of place, providing places for relaxation and recreation, habitats for wildlife, improved health and wellbeing and mitigating the effects of climate change. To maintain these benefits, the protection and enhancement of a sustainable urban forest is critical."* The developers propose to remove more than a third of the higher quality trees on the site.

In 2005, upholding the Council's rejection of plans to build just 5 houses on this land, the Planning Inspector concluded that *"It is evident that the area of open space, within which the site lies, is valued by local residents because it is an easily accessible area that has retained, to a significant extent, a rural character, and which also contributes to the enjoyment of recreational users who appreciate its role as part of a larger area of open space....further development would erode the present balance between the natural environment and the built form."* It is clear that if 5 houses would undermine the rural character of the area, 45 dwellings would totally destroy it.

Flooding and Drainage

The planning application states the land is not at risk of flooding. However, the NRW Development maps show the land is at risk of surface water flooding. The application fails to take account of this flood risk. The slope of the site will carry water towards the railway embankment, negatively affecting its stability. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approval has not been obtained by the developer, and Welsh Government National Statutory SuDS Standards have not been followed.

Traffic

De Braose Close is a narrow residential cul-de-sac serving 70 properties. Due to a lack of previous provision of an adequate number of parking spaces, it has cars parked upon it, making progress for vehicles awkward. It contains a sharp 90° bend, preventing large vehicles, such as construction vehicles, from gaining safe access.

According to the Transport Statement, the road will be expected to receive an additional 249 vehicle journeys between 7am and 6pm, an intolerable burden for existing residents, and a risk to children who play near the road, with its safe access to the woodland.

The proposed access road will require a vehicular crash barrier on its curve at its western end, seriously damaging any attempt to preserve a rural character to the neighbourhood.

The quickest route to reach the site will be via Radyr Court Road. Although vehicular access to the site via this route will be blocked, it is inevitable that extra traffic will adopt this route along the single track lane shared with cycle and pedestrian routes. This will contradict the decision of the Planning Inspector of the most recent appeal for planning permission on this site, and parked vehicles at the end of Radyr Court Road will block access for emergency and council vehicles, impeding the ability to turn at the end of the road.

Public Transport

The recommended maximum walking distance to a bus stop should not exceed 400m. The walking distance to the nearest bus stop via De Braose Close and Timothy Rees Close is 1.1km. The alternative route, via Radyr Court Road, is about 390m, but is steep, and unsuitable for the elderly, and impossible for the disabled. The application wrongly claims a route via Nicholson Webb Close is 480m; it is actually 770m to the bus stop. These routes are all too long to expect residents to walk to a bus stop.

Contamination

Radyr Quarry was used as a site for disposal of domestic, commercial, industrial and special wastes from 1962 to 1970. The site investigation report states *"There is potential that the extents of the landfill may have encroached within the northern boundary of the site and/or a possibility of overspill of materials from the landfill operations."* The lack of record keeping at the time means that the content and geographical extent of the waste are unknown. This poses a clear and unquantified risk to site workers and future residents, and contamination may have leached across the entire development site. No contamination sampling and testing has been conducted.