

# Agenda

## Standards hearing panel

Date: **Friday 29 September 2023**

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Time: **11.00 am**

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Place: **Committee Room**

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For any further information please contact:

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# Standards hearing panel

## Membership

Chair

Vice-Chair

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# AGENDA

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## Questions by the public to be heard at full Council

Please ensure you have read the guidance before completing this form.

Questions submitted using this form must be a question to a member of the Executive or committee chair to be heard and responded to at the next full Council meeting. Notice of questions via this online form must have been given by 5.00 pm at least six clear working days before the meeting (for example, for a meeting on Wednesday, the question must be received by 5 pm on the Monday in the week before the meeting).

Please note that each question must give the name and address of the questioner. The questioner will be required to be in attendance at the full council meeting for the question to be considered unless exceptional circumstances apply, details of which should be provided in the form below.

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- 2) is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- 3) is substantially the same as another question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or
- 4) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

Further details of the requirements relating to questions submitted by the public can be found in section 4 of the constitution.

\* Required

1. Name: \*

2. Address: \*

3. Post Code: \*

4. Telephone number: \*

5. Email address: \*

6. What is your question? \*

7. Confirmation of attendance. \*

By ticking below, you confirm that you will be in attendance for your question to be heard by the Members of Council.

- Please tick to confirm your attendance.
- Please tick to confirm you are unable to attend the meeting.

8. Reasons for absence \*

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**Question:**

Regarding the proposed sale of land adjacent to the Hobbucks Nature reserve off Killisick Lane in Arnold. Despite the commitment from Gedling Borough Council Councillors just last year not to sell the land, why has the sale of this land been brought back to the table with a consultation that took place over the school summer holiday period with just 2 weeks for residents to respond? The consultation was made live on the 4th August with a close date of the 18th of August.

**Answer:**

We listened to the views of some local residents last year and we did not go ahead with the sale of the land at the time. Since then a number of things have changed which means we think it's only right that we go back to the people and let them have their say on these new proposals. We now know that the owners of the nearby private land are in the process of selling their site and a planning application is expected imminently from a house builder, which significantly impacts our decisions regarding our land. We therefore needed to move quickly during the summer, as acting quickly could help to secure a more comprehensive form of development on the wider housing allocation. Otherwise, there is a significant risk that individual landowners could progress discrete housing proposals, which could be to the detriment of the area.

If it is possible to secure a more comprehensive form of development, the Hobbucks Nature Reserve will not only be preserved but could be improved and extended, which I am sure will be something that local residents who use the area will welcome. This would meet the needs of our borough for new homes and will also ensure the local nature reserve is enriched. I am proud it was this Labour administration that proposed and established the Hobbucks as a designated Local Nature Reserve, initiated in our Cabinet meeting on 25 March 2015. This Labour-led Council will always protect and invest in the Hobbucks Nature Reserve.

We ran a consultation and advertised the potential disposal of the site for two consecutive weeks in the local newspaper, as required by statute, giving residents the opportunity to respond. We have continued to receive responses since that date and they will be taken into consideration when any decisions in relation to the land are made.

We also cannot ignore the elephant in the room which is the fact that since we made the decision in April we are still one of the worst affected councils in the country in terms of government funding and we are being left with little choice but to look at ways to generate income so we can continue to provide services.

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**Question:**

Since the recent U-turn by Gedling Borough Council on the sale of land in Killisick Fields site H8, I have had cause to study documentation in relation to the Gedling Local Plan, including the Development Brief 2019. It is this document which made it apparent to me that the land within H8 had been green belt land, but was re-designated with the adoption of the Local Plan and included in the housing allocation for development. I have yet to find a resident who was aware of this at the time, many still being totally unaware. I have highlighted concerns around the processes implemented to bring this about in writing to Gedling Borough Council, and how, in my opinion, this has been used as a means to increase the value of their land – as well as that of the other landowners in whose interest it would be to sell simultaneously with Gedling Borough Council. This has led me to dig deeper... In the Development Brief 2019, there is a field to the east of site H8 beyond Darkey's Wood which is labelled as 'potential green belt recreation area' with suggestions of a LAP/LEAP (Locally Equipped Area For Play) and an ISF (Informal Sports Facility, also described as 'e.g. kick about area'). It also talks about the need for lighting etc. They even mention it in relation to present and future housing. Lo and behold, having queried ownership, Gedling Borough Council confirm this field is owned by them. This land is green belt (still) and protected as such – it is NOT included in the Local Plan under either nearby site, H7 or H8. Any such structures would not be in keeping with the green belt and, with the proposed sale/development of site H8 will further decimate the local environment, increasing the impact on the Hobbucks Local Nature Reserve and the resident wildlife.

What does Gedling Borough Council consider to be appropriate development within its green belt policy?"

**Answer:**

To provide background context, the site is allocated for housing in the Local Planning Document Part 2 Local Plan - the general principle of developing housing on this site is established. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a local plan and allocate land for housing development to meet our local housing requirements, which are determined by the Government. The need to meet housing requirements was the Council's key objective for allocating this land and not to increase the value of the public asset.

The Local Planning Document which was subject to extensive public consultation was examined by an independent Planning Inspector who endorsed the plan and the Killisick Lane housing allocation. It was adopted by Gedling Borough Council on 18th July 2018 and at this point the Killisick Lane site was removed from the Green Belt. The Local Planning Document was voted for unanimously by all Gedling Borough Councillors and all political parties represented on Gedling Borough Council at the

time. All current Conservative members of the opposition who served on Gedling Borough in 2018 and attended the Full Council meeting on 18th July 2018 voted in favour of removing Killisick Lane from the Green Belt and the H8 Killisick Lane site being allocated as a site for housing in the Local Planning Document.

To support the Killisick Lane housing allocation and two others to the south-east, including the site currently under construction by Davidsons Homes on Mapperley Plains, a Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared in order to add detail to the requirements for the sites. This was also subject to a period of public consultation at the end of 2018 and was adopted by Cabinet in 2019. The land to the east of the Killisick Lane allocation has not been removed from the Green Belt. It is, however, identified as a potential recreation area with connections to sites and the wider public rights of way network. National Planning policy permits recreational uses, providing the openness of the green belt is preserved. At this time, no proposals have been advanced by the Council to develop this land. As it is green belt, any proposals would need to protect openness and may be subject to planning permission.