

DC/20/1860/OUT Land off Howlett Way

Comments of Trimley St Martin Parish Council

Outline Application (With some matters reserved) - Phased construction of up to 340 dwellings with open space, a new Early Years Facility, new roundabout access from Howlett Way, a foul water pumping station and associated landscaping. | Land off Howlett Way Trimley St Martin Suffolk

1. Objection

The Parish Council considered this application at their meeting on 16 June and concluded that they could not support it.

2. Reasons for Objection

a) Timing of application

Given the nature of the application, and the large number of dwellings involved, members took the view that a site visit to include officials, the District Planning Committee, the Parish Council and other interested parties would be necessary to inform the planning authority's decision making process, but this would not be possible given the restrictions currently in operation as a result of the pandemic. Time needed to be allowed so that this essential step could be carried out when restrictions were lifted. An additional allocation of time, beyond the point where libraries reopen, would also enable those local residents without internet access to view documents and submit comments.

b) Need for Housing

The application was based on the fundamental premise that a significant amount of housing would be required in order to meet housing need associated with expansion of the Port of Felixstowe. Automation at the port, and the massive economic downturn expected as a result of the pandemic, meant that additional jobs would not be created; indeed, it was likely that there would be a reduction in the port workforce. Without a clear link to future employment opportunities the need for additional housing in Trimley St Martin could not be supported.

c) Housing

Density

340 dwellings on the site is excessive and would require a build density more appropriate to an urban setting than a village.

Affordable Housing

Members would like to be assured that in the event of any development the 33% allocation for affordable housing will be considered a fixed and unnegotiable requirement.

Energy & Water Efficiency

It is acknowledged that the design of the buildings would be a matter for reserved matters, but it must be made abundantly clear at this stage that housing design should reflect the highest possible standards of water and energy efficiency. Zero carbon housing is achievable and should be considered the norm for new developments.

d) Parking Provision

Dwellings

Although the parking provision included in the plans may reflect the standards imposed by the District Council it does not reflect the true extent of car use in rural areas. There is very little offsite parking provision so any site must be genuinely capable of meeting the parking needs of all residents and visitors. Within a very short time all vehicles will be electric. It follows that parking arrangement has to be very carefully thought out so that it can be linked to with the provision of sufficient charging points for all. This will inevitably require more space than has been allowed.

Early Years Unit

The Parish Council would prefer to see early years provision situated on the primary school site in order to avoid unnecessary journeys. In the event that the provision on Howlett way is required it would be essential to provide adequate parking alongside the Early Years Unit for those parents and carers who drive to the facility to drop off children.

e) Access to Site & Public Transport

Highways

High levels of traffic and excessive speed have long been a problem for Trimley St Martin - the village simply cannot cope with an additional 700 vehicles travelling along the High Rd each day. The roundabout, the pedestrian crossing at Church Lane and the additional refuge at Howlett Way are welcomed, but are insufficient to solve the problems which would be caused by the additional vehicles. Members considered that it was unlikely that drivers leaving the site would turn right to join the A14 at the nearest junction and additional measures to encourage this will be needed. More broadly additional measures would be required to control traffic speed and volume and to protect the interests of pedestrians. As a C road the verges are cut just once a year which raises a serious prospect of visibility problems at certain

times of year. The Parish Council seek an assurance that adequate provisions will be made to ensure that suitable provision is made to deal with visibility issues.

Use of Farm Track

At present farm traffic uses a track running down the site in order to reach a point where they can cross under the A14 to reach land on the far side. The application makes no reference to this, but it is a factor which must be considered carefully because, without this means of access, it is possible that additional farm traffic may be forced onto the High Rd or, alternatively, attempt to access the High Rd via Thurman's Lane. Neither outcome would be satisfactory as both would involve unacceptable dangers for pedestrians and cyclists. It follows that use of the track by farm vehicles, and the impact of its removal from use, need to be fully evaluated and shared with the parish councils of Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary.

Bus Shelter

The brick built bus stop situated outside the proposed entrance to the Howlett Way site is subject to misuse because of the nature of the structure. Any development on the site should be accompanied by a replacement, glass sheltered shelter.

f) Infrastructure

It has been noted that Anglian Water has indicated that the sewerage provision is sufficient to meet the demands imposed by the development of Howlett Way. Members are not reassured by this because the demands made by the proposed development are being considered in isolation, rather than as part of the full extent of proposed development which includes the following sites: 70 houses opposite the Hand in Hand (outline permission in place); 80 dwellings adjacent to Seamark Nunn (full permission in place), and a proposed 150 dwellings plus primary school adjacent to Reeve Lodge.

Members are well aware that the recently constructed Thurman's Lane development, just over the border into Trimley St Mary, very close to the Howlett way site, suffered problems so severe that foul sewage had to be transported away from the development by tanker. This has not inspired confidence.

When all sites are considered, the extent of the development proposed for Trimley St Martin is such that the population can be expected to increase by around 50%. Given the vast amount of development proposed, and the concerns prompted by recent past experience, the Parish Council would like to be given a very clear explanation of the steps which will be taken to ensure that the capacity of the foul sewerage system is sufficient to meet all expected needs. It follows from this that the same detailed assessment needs to be conducted in relation to all the utilities; the results to be shared with the Parish Councils of Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary.

g) Health Services

Members noted that the developers will be asked to contribute financially to the cost of additional school places and various other services. No evidence has been seen that the local Clinical Commissioning Group has provided information on the contribution which they will need in order to provide GP services to the additional patients. This information must be sought and taken into account in the calculation of the overall contribution required.

h) On Site Roads

The Parish Council would wish to be assured that all on site roads would be adopted by the County council and that all other infrastructure would be adopted by the appropriate authority in order that residents would not be faced with service charges for maintenance of, green spaces, play facilities, SUDS etc

i). Outdoor Space & Boundary Treatment

Pill Box

The Council welcomed the protection afforded to the wartime pill box within the site layout, but noted that it is not registered as a listed building. Members call upon the District Council to pursue listing in order to ensure that it is afforded an appropriate level of protection now and in the future.

Provision for Children & Teenagers

The Parish Council is concerned that, with the increase in population, provision for older children and teenagers in the village is lacking. It follows that any sizeable development ought to include provision for activities for this age group. It would be appropriate to liaise with Level Two, the main local provider of services to this age group in Felixstowe, to establish how this might best be achieved.

Protection of Trees

The Parish Council would like to see the trees along the site boundary with Howlett Way made the subject of tree preservation orders

Caroline Ley

Parish Clerk

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