

Swilland and Witnesham Grouped Parish Council

Clerk to the Parish Council: Steve Barron

Telephone: 07719 176917

Email: swill-witpc@outlook.com

MINUTES

Planning Committee Meeting

Monday 14th November 2022 at 7.30pm

The School Room, Witnesham Baptist Church

1. **Present:** Mrs Shaw, Mr Collings, Mr Hindle (Chair), Mr Barlow and Mr Burrows.
Apologies for absence: Dr Nicol and Mr Roots.
2. **Councillors' declarations of interest:** None
3. **Minutes of the meeting of 26th September 2022** were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.
4. **ESC decisions received since the meeting of 26th September 2022:**
 - a) DC/22/2592/FUL **Low Farm Kirby Lane Swilland.** PC "No Objections".
ESC permitted.
 - b) DC/22/2625/FUL **Witnesham Hall Church Lane Witnesham.** PC "No Objections".
ESC permitted.
 - c) DC/22/2859/FUL **Fynndale House Upper Street Witnesham.** PC "No objections":
ESC Permitted.
 - d) DC/22/3183/FUL **Fieldview Hall Farm Church Lane Swilland** PC "No objections":
ESC Permitted.
 - e) DC/22/3382/FUL **Toad Hall Newton Hall Lane Swilland.** PC "No objections":
ESC Permitted.
5. **Planning Applications for Consideration**
 - a) DC//22/0998/FUL **Land East Of B1077 Mow Hill Witnesham Residential development of 32 dwellings, together with areas of new public open space and the provision of a new access to the site from the B1077.**
Chair informed the meeting that this was the third consultation request for this application. It was noted that a continual lack of response from the ESC case officer to requests from the PC was not acceptable. The meeting agreed that a letter should be written to ESC Cllr Colin Hedgley seeking his assistance in addressing this lack of communication.

After viewing the site plans and discussing these, the following response was agreed.

START

DC/22/0998/FUL; Land East of B1077, Mow Hill Witnesham

Swilland & Witnesham Parish Council Response to the Third Consultation, November 2022

1) The Parish Council objects in principle to this proposed development of 32 dwellings as being too large, out of character and scale for the village. It maintains its objection to the allocation of this site in the Local Plan. The development is contrary to "SCLP 5.2; *Housing Development in Small Villages*" where development should be "a small group of dwellings, of a scale appropriate to the size, location and character of the village". There is no justified need for this development in the village as there are already substantial allocations or permissions for dwellings in the village and over 3500 more dwellings proposed in Ipswich Garden Suburb, only 3 miles away. There is a lack of local services, particularly space at the local school and the development is on "greenfield" agricultural land, when an alternative nearby vacant brownfield site is more appropriate. It comes at a time when consideration is also being given to the application for 20 dwellings at nearby Street Farm. The prospect of both developments going ahead, potentially at the same time in close proximity, is alarming for the village.

2) If development is to be agreed in principle by ESC, the Parish Council objects to the development as it stands. It does not meet the criteria a) d) e) and f) given in the Local Plan policy SCLP 12.7; Mow Hill Witnesham. If development is to be permitted, the Parish Council requires that these criteria are met in full and enhanced as follows;

"a) Provision of affordable housing on site; "

The development provides for 10 affordable dwellings out of the 32 proposed dwellings. *SCLP 5.10 Affordable Housing on Residential Developments; expects 1 in 3 units to be affordable dwellings.* Therefore, the Parish Council believes the minimum requirement for developing 32 dwellings should be 11 affordable units not 10 as proposed in the resubmitted proposals. Witnesham is very short and in real need of affordable housing, only 2 affordable units have been provided out of 28 dwellings in new developments over the last 5 years. **The Parish Council requests greater provision of affordable housing from this very large development and for it to go beyond the policy minimum level of 11 units.** It would like to see more affordable units, and include bungalows to meet *SCLP 5.10 in providing "needs for affordable housing for older people"*. **The Parish Council asks that priority is given to people connected to the village, in allocating the affordable housing.**

"b) Retention of the hedgerow which borders Mow Hill, except where removal is required for access."

The Parish Council considers it imperative that the existing trees and hedging bordering Mow Hill and the site are retained with removal only allowed for the surfaced road access splay. **There should be no removal for access sightlines nor the removal of trees and hedgerow, as proposed, along the eastern boundary of Plot 1 nor along the north eastern corner of the Public Open Space**

There is no revised Landscape Strategy Plan with the new consultation. The revised External Works Layout (20/10/22) and the revised Planning Layout 20/10/22) are inconsistent with the Landscape Strategy (26/08/22). In particular, the impression is given in the Layout Plans of new bands of hedge/tree planting (dark green) along the west and south west site boundary. These are not given in the Landscape Strategy Plan. All existing trees/hedges along Mow Hill are on highway land outside the site boundary. **The Parish Council seeks reassurance that it is proposed to provide a new hedgerow inside the western site boundary, alongside Mow Hill and that this, as requested by ESC Strategic Landscape Advisor, is to be maintained by a management company.**

"c) Provision of pedestrian connectivity southwards on Mow Hill."

The Parish Council wishes to be assured that there is safe pedestrian connectivity from the access entrance, across the B1077 and to the pavement on the west side. It would seem that the revised application provides for this.

In addition the Parish Council asks for increased pedestrian connectivity northwards, with provision of a surfaced footpath link from the north west corner of the site, through to the B1077, opposite the former woodyard. This would link to the roadside pavement opposite, giving better access to the northern part of the village, including to the school, shop, village hall and church and to Public Footpath 22 and the excellent network of public paths to the west of the B1077.

"e) Provision of landscaping to create a soft edge to the eastern and northern boundaries of the site."

The site is very exposed to the open countryside and higher ground to the east, public footpath 26 and the nearby Grade 11 Listed Buildings to the south (*criteria d*). Only limited planting is proposed along this boundary. To meet the above criteria and to ameliorate the impacts identified in the Landscape Assessment, a substantive landscaped tree belt is required, along the eastern and south eastern boundary of the site. The ESC Strategic Landscape Advisor has also objected to the present proposals as providing inadequate amelioration along eastern boundary. **The Parish Council requests a 10 metre tree belt all the way down the eastern boundary (on or off site) alongside the development, strengthening of planting along the eastern boundary of the Public Open Space and a small tree copse planted in the triangle of land, which will be difficult to farm, between plots 5,6 and the farm track/Foot Path 26. This**

should be maintained by a management company as Public Open Space.

These measures would substantially reduce the visual impact of the development to the open countryside to the east, provide some real beneficial Public Open Space to the local community and some carbon off-setting for the development. These proposals are in line with those made (12/10/22) by the ESC Strategic Landscape Advisor

The Parish Council objects to the provision of the spur access road and pavements to the eastern boundary and the gap this makes visually opening up the eastern boundary and contrary to meeting the objective of the above criteria (e). The Parish Council sees no need for this spur. Any expansion of development to the east of the current proposal should be resisted and means of facilitating this should be removed from the current proposal. The Parish Council would like to see an alternative layout for plots 26,27,and 28 and their access road.

The Parish Council have had meetings with Denbury Homes and the landowner who state that this spur is for agricultural access to the field. The landowner has retained a land strip to the south east which provides as existing, direct access to the field from Red House Farm. **The Parish Council objects and thinks it is unacceptable to have an additional new agricultural access for tractors, ploughs, muck spreaders, combines and all other machinery through a residential housing estate, with the consequences of mud, straw, noise, disturbance and potential damage to infrastructure and parked vehicles. The Parish Council sees no need for the proposed new access and seeks its removal as part of the application.** If the developer, landowner and Planning Authority deem it absolutely necessary to provide agricultural access through the development, this should be immediately south of the sub-station and north of the Public Open Space

"f) A site specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required and any mitigation provided."

The Parish Council needs complete assurance that there is adequate provision, both on site and with connection to the culverted water course for surface water drainage and that there is no risk of flooding to neighbouring properties south of the site. **The Parish Council needs to know who will be responsible for the future management and maintenance of the drainage system, attenuation basin and the off-site culverted watercourse to which the system is connected? To date this has not been provided.**

3) Public Open Space (POS);

The Parish Council welcomes the idea of providing POS, indeed it was the Parish Council who suggested an area of POS in a previous application. It is a misnomer for this application to say that there will be 0.25ha of POS when

in fact most of the area is provided as a drainage attenuation basin along with associated structures. The Parish Council questions the compatibility of such dual use and has not found any other joint use Suffolk. It would like to see a POS provided that is attractive, accessible, unfenced and safe; an area that can be enjoyed all year round by villagers and is not just a carved out drainage basin with little area that can be properly considered as a usable POS, as is proposed. **The current POS proposal is unacceptable and the Parish Council is most disappointed that its request for discussion and consideration on the provision, future ownership and management of the POS and the attenuation basin;- usable space, landscaping, paths, equipment and management, gradients, gabions and safety, has been ignored by Denbury Homes and Planning Officers. The Parish Council still seeks discussion on these matters and an agreed management plan, secured by a planning condition before building commencement.**

As a minimum it seeks;

- a) Improvement to Public Footpath 26 where it passes through the POS, including;
 - Replacement of steps at the western end with a surfaced slope entrance from the B1077 pedestrian crossing, to enable access by pushchairs and the less able to the POS.- An open access, with no stile nor gate at the west site boundary.- Providing a hardened stone hoggin surfacing of FP26 down the side of the POS. All these, with the support of SCC Public Rights of Way were requested in the last revised application.
- b) A short surfaced public footpath link from the corner of the internal access road, where it turns north, across the northern edge of the Public Open Space to join off site, with Footpath 26. This would provide a direct foot access from the new housing to Footpath 26 and connecting footpath network. The Parish Council sees that the resubmitted plans provide for a hoggin surfaced path as far as the site boundary. This needs to be extended to join Public Footpath 26.
- c) A stone, hoggin path along the eastern boundary of the POS linking 2) above with FP26 and providing, in connection with the above, a surfaced walking circuit around the POS.
- d) Detailed planting and vegetation management plan
- e) Seating and other equipment provision
- f) Detailed Drainage basin and outfall management.

4) Internal site landscaping;

The Parish Council seeks improved internal site landscaping including the provision of more roadside trees and the planting of roadside and swaleside daffodils. (The Parish Council has a programme for roadside daffodil planting)

For the area of POS proposed at the northern end of the site the Parish Council requests management plan details and asks that the proposed roadside chain link fencing be removed

5) Sustainability;

The Parish Council seeks assurance that measures, beyond the minimum regulations, are being taken to provide sustainable dwellings and reduce energy use, including provision of electric car charging points for each dwelling and solar power generation on all suitable south and west facing roofs

The Parish Council requests that no street lighting is provided.

6) Construction disruption;

The Parish Council seeks assurances and consultation on measures to be taken to minimise the major disruption that would be caused by such a large development to services, the B1077 and the village.

7) Other;

Whilst objecting to the proposed development, the Parish Council has tried hard to engage with the developer, Denbury Homes and the landowner and to improve the proposals for the local community. It is most disappointing that so far these have not been met. Equally it is disappointing that the Planning Officers have not been willing to engage or respond to various queries raised by the Parish Council on the proposal, in particular the POS and landscaping proposals. The Parish Council feels frustrated and the local community let down by the processing of this application to date.

The Parish Council requests that it be represented when the application is considered by the Planning Authority.

END

6. Update status on DC/21/4111/FUL Street Farm The Street Witnesham. No reply had been received from an email sent to the ESC case officer on 15th September 2022 from the PC Clerk stating as follows:

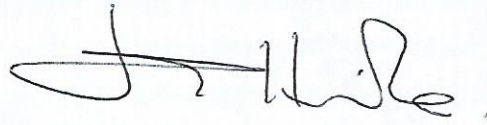
"There does not seem to be any consultation response from the ESC Arboriculture and Landscape Officer and requests that this is undertaken. Likewise the Parish Council requests that the ESC Strategic Housing Officer is consulted on the application and the provision of affordable housing."

It was agreed that the PC (via the Clerk) should write again to the ESC case officer. It was also agreed that an entry into the public domain via the ESC Planning comments facility should be submitted posting these formal requests from the PC.

7. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Planning Committee.

None relating to planning issues.

Meeting closed at 8:25 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. H. L.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

13/12/22.