

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

14th January 2025

At a meeting for **Plans** at the Memorial Hall on **Tuesday 14th January 2025** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors H King (Chairman), C Coleman, H Clarke, P Duigan, Z Flint, A Greenwood, S Green, and P Morton.

Also Present: Town Clerk T Needham and Deputy Town Clerk J Barron

As neither the Mayor nor Deputy Mayor were in attendance to chair the meeting it was proposed by Councillor A Greenwood that Councillor H King chair the meeting, this was seconded by Councillor Z Flint and agreed. Councillor H King took the chair.

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Councillors A Brooks, L Monument and R O'Callaghan.

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1. PL/2024/1180/FMIN

Land at Swanton Road, Dereham

Proposed Residential Development - 3 dwellings

The council object and made the following comments:

1) **Density** – *The edge of a settlement is usually less dense in order to give the settlement a soft edge. The proposed three properties appear to be a higher density than the edge of the adjacent Abel Homes development. Councillors felt that this appeared cramped and over developed, three properties were too many on such a small edge of town development.*

2) **Access** – *there does not seem to be a footway along the carriageway to link with the footway being installed by Abel Homes. There needs to be a footway to connect with the other footways, this would be the route people would take to the town centre, Northgate school and junior schools. Without a footway people would either drive or walk in the carriageway.*

3) **Access onto RB31** – *this would be a well-used route by the new properties for leisure and access to the Neatherd high school and Dereham Sixth form. This section of RB31 already floods on a regular basis as can be seen from the surface water flooding map. For this to be a usable route, improvements will need to be made to the RB31 to*

make it suitable for walking and cycling in all seasons in clean cloths.

4) Biodiversity net gain – Proposal seems to show a well-established hedge being removed along RB31 and replaced with a fence. The Council find this proposal totally unacceptable this is a mature hedge, its removal would harm biodiversity and would create a very urban feel to the edge of the development. There are discrepancies between the plans submitted and the biodiversity net-gain reports. The calculations in the BDNG are based on the hedge on the eastern boundary being retained, but the plans show the hedge being removed, the plans need to be amended to show the hedge being retained. The use of arable cropping to provide the baseline biodiversity was decided because the owners stated that the area had been in arable rotation in the previous year. This may not be correct, if you see the aerial image below from summer 2024, the area was clearly not within an arable rotation. Additional evidence below shows that it may only have been in an arable rotation infrequently.

5) Sewage disposal – It is believed the Environment Agency's preferred approach is that, if it is reasonably possible to connect to mains sewage, properties should connect to mains sewage. Nothing could be seen in the application to justify why connecting to mains sewage was not possible. The layout does not appear to show sufficient room for a tanker to turn and park to empty the sewage treatment plants, they should show a swept path analysis of a tanker pulling in and turning.

6) Nutrient enrichment – the calculations are based on the existing site being an arable field. As can be seen from the aerial images below, from 2010 the area has rarely been cropped. It was not in arable cropping last year or currently. Given the size of the plot, it is unlikely to ever be cropped in the future. The nutrient calculations should be revised to reflect the area being unimproved grass receiving no fertiliser rather than arable cropping. The site will discharge additional nutrients into the ditch network around the Neatherd. While the developer is proposing to purchase nutrient mitigation credits, these will benefit areas further downstream of the Neatherd. The Town Council has been putting considerable efforts into reducing the nutrient levels on land around the Neatherd in order to improve biodiversity. The water in this ditch does not flow in and out of the Neatherd, it passes through a pond and will now be subject to additional nutrient loading. The Town Council does not wish to see additional nutrients discharged onto its land, all additional nutrients should be

mitigated on site to prevent adverse impact on the neighbouring County Wildlife site.

Images of site showing land use over time.

2024



2022



2020



2017



2016



2013



2010



Chairman