



Application Number – 20200847

Description – Proposed residential development for 141 dwellings with associated open space, highway and landscaping works. Extension to existing Reepham cemetery

Location- Land west of Broomhill Lane, Reepham

Whilst the Town Council, as then constituted, accepted the Broomhill Lane site as suitable for development there have been significant changes both in the make-up of the Town and of the scale of the development. The original proposal was for 120 dwellings together with provision of a sports hall behind the High School with access from Broomhill Lane. This has now been amended to the current proposal for 141 dwellings and the construction of the sports hall on the playing field adjacent to the Sixth Form College on Whitwell Road. While the reasons for selecting the Broomhill Lane site remain the same, the changes presented by this application make some aspects of it less acceptable.

The Town Council therefore wish to object to the application and make the following comments.

There is concern about the proposed increase in density on the site. The application is not consistent with Broadland District Council DPD Site allocations document (2016) REP 1 which states that: 'The site will accommodate approximately 100-120 homes' and that the sports hall will be built on the site. The Town Council wish to object to the proposal for 141 dwellings and is disappointed that, if approved, the sports hall will have to be built on the school's remaining playing field land rather than being located in line with the policy stated in REP1. The Town Council remain concerned about the effect large scale development will have on the town, the increased demand on the already pressurised infrastructure, including the sewerage system and the significant increase in the volume of traffic on Broomhill Lane, School Road and Whitwell Road, leading to the increased risk for pedestrians including children accessing both the Primary and High School sites.

There is concern that the viability report prepared by Savills for Lovells suggests that the development is not viable. Section 1.8 of the executive summary states that, 'Having appraised the proposed scheme the results confirm that, at policy levels, the scheme does not deliver a value that achieves an appropriate benchmark sum and thus would not be considered technically viable'. It is noted that of the 141 dwellings, only 28, or 20%, are described as "affordable" or "social". This is considerably less than could be reasonably expected from a development of this size. Is the 'unviability' the reason for the reduced level of social housing? The Town Council would wish to see an increase in the level of social housing to 30%.

The Town Council have not consulted with the High School, but would wish to express concern that this development will use land which is currently part of Reepham High School and is currently used for educational purposes (observatory and award winning allotment etc.) The loss of this land and the building of the sports hall on the remaining school land will seriously reduce the school's playing field area and result in the schools inability to be able to accommodate an increased school population in the future (from further development) as the land will no longer be available for expansion.

The application states in Q8 that no right of way will be extinguished or diverted. This is incorrect insofar as the prolongation of Broomhill Lane to Dereham Road and Back Lane from its junction with Broomhill Lane to Whitwell Road, near the Whitwell Station, are both unmade roads maintained by Norfolk County Council. It would appear that both roads are currently subject to the national speed limit. It appears from the plan that the developers intend to build a pumping station on part of the unmade section of Broomhill Lane. The Town Council strongly objects to the extinguishing of this right of way as it is part of the historical heritage of the town and its surroundings and there is no valid reason why it needs to be either extinguished or diverted to enable the development to proceed.

Some of the dwellings are constructed with chimneys, implying that solid fuel of one form or another will be burnt causing unnecessary CO2 emissions. Reepham is an exemplar following the success of the Low Carbon Communities Challenge back in 2012 with projects carried out to reduce our carbon footprint. To ensure Reepham's carbon footprint remains low and to minimise CO2 emissions, the Town Council object to the provision of chimneys on the development.

At least some of the dwellings appear to be provided with heating by air source heat pumps (ASHPs). The Council are unable to find reference to the provision of heating/hot water on the remainder of the dwellings and would seek confirmation from the developer that the provision of domestic heating/hot water throughout the development would not result in CO2 emissions.

It is also noted that, although a parcel of land (adjacent to the existing cemetery) has been allocated for cemetery use, there does not appear to have been adequate ground surveys carried out to ensure that the ground is suitable to be used for burials. This issue must be addressed before approval is given.

The Town Council have already submitted objections to the planning application for the upgrade of Broomhill Lane but question why this is the subject of a separate application when the two planning matters are clearly part of a single development proposal?

Given the large scale of the planning application and the objections raised by the Town Council and by other residents, The Town Council have contacted Stuart Beadle, District Councillor and asked that this application be considered by full planning committee. The Town Council acknowledge that many residents remain opposed to large scale development of any kind and would like to ensure that, during this time of Government restrictions, they are given full and fair opportunity to submit their views. It is for this reason, the Town Council requests that a decision on the application be deferred until such time as public meetings can be held to discuss the application in an open forum.