



Whittingham Parish Council

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22nd October 2019

Dear Mrs Beardsworth

06/2019/0365 - Outline planning application seeking **approval for access** from Henry Littler Way and Cumeragh Lane for the development of up to 750 dwellings; the **redevelopment of the Whittingham and Goosnargh Sports and Social Club** and associated outdoor facilities; approximately **1.5 hectares of land reserved for the delivery of a primary school** and associated development; redevelopment of the former waste water treatment works for up to three dwellings; **landscaping, public open space** and other on-site infrastructure (all other matters reserved).

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the above application with representatives of Whittingham Parish Council at the end of September. As a result of the discussion, Members understand that the principle of 650 homes is accepted in the Core Strategy - with Taylor Wimpey having already commenced work on 150 of the approved homes. **This application is a 'new submission'** which seeks approval for 750 homes using some land previously earmarked for class B1 employment. For clarity, if the application is approved, **the total number of dwellings will be 900** (150 Taylor Wimpey + 750 in the new application).

Sustainability – Based on the above information, it is accepted that the site was considered sustainable in terms of delivering **650 homes**. However, the Parish Council's primary concern is that several other planning applications have been proposed since the original application was considered - and the cumulative impact of all of the proposals, will have an adverse impact on the rural nature of Whittingham Parish. Consequently, it is felt that the new development should be supported by shops and local amenities which will help to increase the long-term sustainability of the development. However, we understand from our discussions with the City Council and Homes England, that developers are not obliged to provide the above - unless the land use is specifically allocated in the Local Plan. With this in mind, the Parish Council will ensure that additional services and amenities are a consideration in the refresh of the Local Plan.

However, the Parish Council notes that the original application included **9000sqm of Class B1 employment land** which could have been used for office and light industrial use. Although this use would not have provided local shops, amenities and health provision, it would have provided an opportunity for local employment, which in turn, would have reduced the need to travel. As such, the Parish Council believes that the increase in housing on land previously allocated for employment use under EP1.1 of the Local Plan will have an adverse impact on the long term sustainability of the site.

Highways – LCC have confirmed that they have carried out new traffic modelling exercises to ensure the network can cope with the traffic to be generated by this development and other recent proposals – consequently we respect your request to refer any highway capacity issues directly to LCC. Notwithstanding this, the Parish Council is increasingly concerned that all traffic in and out of Whittingham is dependent on the B5269 Whittingham Lane, yet local residents confirm that it was once possible to drive through the Whittingham estate, exiting at the southern entrance on to Houghton Green Lane. The Parish Council notes Homes England's intention to retain this route as a green 'cycle and pedestrian' route, but given the substantial amount of CIL monies to be generated by the development, the Parish Council intends to approach LCC to see if the CIL monies can be used locally to improve Houghton Green Lane with a longer term vision of opening up the southern access to the site to relieve pressure on the B5269 and Broughton by pass.

As part of this application, it is noted that traffic calming is proposed at the new access on Cumeragh Lane, but concerns are expressed that additional calming measures may also be required at the Church Lane junction and the bend at Camforth Hall Lane. The Parish Council also believes that this application should seek to address the parking situation outside the Post Office which will become a serious hazard as more and more traffic uses the Henry Littler Way junction.

Gottfield – Whittingham Parish Council notes from para 1.18 of the Landscape and Woodland Management Plan that *Gott Field to the north of the site currently falls within Homes England land ownership but does not form part of the outline application. Gott field is currently under agricultural tenancy and is excluded from the landscape management plan.* It is noted that a small amount of housing is proposed to the left of Henry Littler Way but it is understood that this land is not part of Gott Field and in design terms, is considered an important frontage encouraging links between the new and existing development in Goosnargh. The decision not to develop Gott Field is welcomed by the Parish Council and we understand from our meeting with Homes England that they will not be promoting the future development in the refresh of the Local Plan.

Affordable housing – Planning applications should deliver 30% affordable homes however, Homes England have calculated that other provisionally approved developments in the area are likely to provide **199** affordable homes. 30% of 750 equates to **225** affordable homes. As 400 affordable homes is likely to exceed the local need for the area, it is understood that Homes England are proposing to build 10% on site (**75**) whilst financing 20% (**150**) off site. Given that the development of Whittingham Hospital was agreed in principle in the Core Strategy – well before the other applications were submitted – Whittingham Parish Council strongly opposes this strategy and maintains its arguments that the ‘over provision’ of homes should have been a material factor when determining the additional planning applications, however the Parish Council notes that further objections to the City Council will not overturn the decisions. As the City Council would benefit from any off site financial contribution, it is noted that the City Council have commissioned experts to check the viability of the proposal.

S106 – It is understood that Homes England remain committed to many of the obligations proposed in the S106 agreement accompanying the previous application, however as a new submission, the application will be subject to Community Infrastructure Levy - likely to be around £6.5m. Homes England have confirmed that they have already paid substantial amounts under the old S106 Agreement, consequently, discussions are still taking place to confirm which aspects of the S106 will be carried forward in light of the CIL requirement. With this in mind, the Parish Council met with Homes England to discuss the points below, but as the detail of the S106 is drawn up after the application is determined, the Parish Council respectfully requests that the following points are noted as part of our application comments.

Primary School – It is noted that the application seeks to reserve land for a school and your attention is drawn to our comments that Gottfield should be protected from development. We also note that the detail, construction and parking aspects will be the subject of a separate application once Lancashire County Council decides the school is required. However, we request that the future school provision is secured through S106 funding so that the funding can be allocated locally rather than under the CIL contribution.

Local Transport Provision – It is noted that £200,000 has already been paid to LCC for a bus service and the application proposes bus stops in the site area. The Parish Council had concerns that other Green Travel Plan initiatives itemised in the old S106 Agreement would not be taken forward, however we have received reassurances from Homes England that they will be standing by this aspect of the S106 and with this in mind, the Parish Council has arranged a meeting with LCC’s Travel Plan monitoring officer to ensure the S106 Green Travel plan commitments will be fulfilled.

Sports & Social – Development of the Sports and Social club will come forward in a later phase and will include the club house and car park, the retention of the bowling green, a football pitch, tennis court, MUGA and event space. The new facilities will cost around £2.2m and will be the subject of a separate planning application. Negotiations regarding the design, construction and future operation of the building still need to be negotiated with Homes England and the Sports & Social Club. Under the previous S106 Agreement the Parish Council was named as a key stakeholder on the proposed Community Liaison Group - tasked with preparing a proposal for the ownership, management and operation of the Community Facilities. The Parish Council notes that this 'commitment' will not be a feature of the new application and requests that Homes England and the Sports and Social Club continues to keep the Parish Council informed of any progress or difficulties with the facilities.

Public open space – Whilst the previous application and S106 Agreement referred to the provision of allotments, Homes England have confirmed that these will not be provided as part of the new submission as the design encourages access to the formal parkland area with the existing woodland being retained. The Parish Council respects this decision but given the initial interest in allotments by residents, will liaise with the City Council to see if land can be identified through the refresh of the Local Plan. The Parish Council has also requested that the paths and cycle routes are wheelchair friendly but understands that this detail will be part of the reserved matters application if the application is approved. The Parish Council welcomes the decision to appoint a land management company to manage the upkeep and maintenance of the public open space.

Sewage and drainage – The old waste water treatment plant will be decommissioned and a new sewer has been constructed to service the site, consequently there are no objections to the drainage arrangements and the Parish Council welcomes the news that UU or the land management company will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the SUDS system.

Conversion of St John's church – As the Church is a Listed Building, the Parish Council welcomes the news that Homes England will be carrying out repairs to stop the water ingress and although the future use of the Church does not form part of this particular proposal, the Parish Council also welcomes the news that Homes England are still considering the possible use and conversion of the building.

Yours sincerely

Julie Buttle

Mrs Julie Buttle
Clerk to Whittingham Parish Council

PHASING PLAN

