

ASHBY HERRINGFLEET AND SOMERLEYTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council held an Extraordinary Meeting on Thursday 18th November 2021, to which members of the Public were invited to attend to contribute their views. The following is the Parish Council's agreed formal response to this Planning Application.

In general the Parish Council welcomes this Planning Application which relates to one of the two agreed Designated Sites for housing development in Somerleyton. The range of housing, including the provision of affordable housing is welcome. The Landscape design is very good. There are, however, a number of concerns that the Parish Council wishes to raise, which it hopes will be taken into account when the Planning Committee decides on the Application.

1) The Development follows the preferred layout; where inside the retained hedgerow a terrace of houses, faces The Street, mirrors Widows Row, and seems to draw the new development into the existing Village. However, the Parish Council now recognises that this layout brings the development close to the working Mill Farm, on the opposite side of The Street. Mill Farm is an important local enterprise, farmed by a local family over generations, which by its very nature creates noise, dust and odours. The National Planning Policy Framework requires developers to take into account the impact of existing businesses on their development. The impact of Mill Farm does not appear to have been taken into account in the existing application but we anticipate that the applicant will be required to do so before this application is progressed. We are aware that the current Farmer has submitted a consultee response to the Planning Application which outlines his concerns in detail.

2) The Parish Council welcomes the commitment to the preservation and ongoing maintenance of existing hedgerows, as a part of the overall maintenance of the communal spaces in the new development.

3) The Parish Council has serious concerns about the delivery of this development and the smaller one at the Old Forge Site north of The Street. Appendix 1 Infrastructure and Delivery Framework of the Local Plan anticipates that the Forge Garage site (WLP7.5) will be delivered before the Mill Farm Field (WLP7.6) is commenced. The Planning Applications have been submitted only 3 months apart and the Parish Council is concerned that the relative timetable in the Local Plan will not be adhered to (relative because we understand that dates have slipped).

4) The new development at Mill Field Farm will place further stress on Station Road, particularly on its northern end where it meets The Street at a T junction. This junction is notoriously difficult. Both verges are often overgrown, and the edges of the road are ill defined. Vehicles travelling north along Station Road are often forced to pull to the right before turning right on to The Street. The Parish Council expects that there will be improvements to this important road junction, in light of the anticipated significant increase in traffic, both during construction and once the development is occupied. The Parish Council suggests that Station Road is returned to a condition whereby two moving vehicles may pass each other with neither having to stop or mount the verge throughout its length from the junction with Station Road to some point south of the southern entrance to the new development.

5) An overhead telephone line on poles runs along Station Road at the west boundary of the new development. At points between poles the line is close to the hedgerow, and the telephone link to this part of the Village will probably need to be changed as part of infrastructural improvement. The

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Parish Council asks that, an alternative is found which avoids making excavations close to the roots of the hedgerow, thus causing damage to this key habitat of the site.

6) The pedestrian exit from the site on Station Road is sited access extremely close to the road entrance to Morton Peto Close, and there is concern that this is dangerous. The Parish Council requests that this exit be moved to a safer position.

7) Finally, as stated in our introduction, the Parish Council is pleased to see the provision of 11 affordable homes in this development. There are currently only 3 publicly available affordable homes in the whole of the Parish Council's three constituent villages. The Parish Council would strongly object to any 'transfer out' of this allocation using WLP8.2 and asks that this is reflected in any permission.

Sue Read

20th November 2021