



WOOBURN & BOURNE END PARISH COUNCIL

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Enquiries to: Clerk to the Parish Council

10th February 2021

Hollands Farm Development Brief

Dear Buckinghamshire Council,

Further to the Parish Council's letter of 25 January 2021 which raised our concerns in respect of Highways issues relating to the Hollands Farm site, we have further comments in respect of the Development Brief. We explain the issues below and trust that the Planning Authority will address them in a revised Development Brief for Hollands Farm.

1. Housing density

We are concerned that housing density for the site will not be in keeping with adjacent areas and in particular Bridgestone Drive for which there are misconceptions on its housing density.

Local Plan Policy BE2 and supporting paragraphs set an indicative capacity for the site of 467 homes, based on size of the site which was given as 23.74 hectares (Table 20 paragraph 5.4.5).

However the net area after taking into account the School, the playing fields, the link road and buffer zones is closer to 14 hectares and this is further reduced by inaccurate description of the Site which has included the United Reform Church land which is unavailable. The average density if the net area is 14 hectares is about 32 dwellings/hectare for the site which is nearly double the average density in Bourne End.

While, the site will have lower density buildings up the slopes (1-1.5 storeys), and we commend the intent of paragraphs 6.2.4b), 6.3.2 c), 6.3.4 and 6.4.3.b) relating to Hawks Hill and the conservation area; we are concerned that the proposed higher density buildings in the central area of the site (heights 2.5 to 3 storeys] paragraph 6.3.2e) and 6.3.5, **will not be in character with buildings or other developments in Bourne End.**

The Development Brief is understandably written to maximise the number of dwellings to achieve the Local Plan target. The Local plan indicative target was "desktop" and did not consider the reality of what needs to be delivered on the site.

Objective 1 (paragraph 5.2.2) of the Development Brief says: "Adopt a landscape-led approach to site layout and green infrastructure which responds sensitively to the surrounding environment".

Landscape led does not just relate to Green and Blue Infrastructure, where playing fields, SUDS and buffer zones are located, but it is also about how the dwellings fit within the landscape [which paragraph 6.4.3 b) recognises in relation to the conservation area] but fails to address elsewhere in the site.

How the dwellings fit relates very much to their location and scale. At the moment, the target of 467 dwellings is driving housing density on the Site and therefore Objective 1 of the Development Brief is not being met.

Objective 3 (paragraph 5.2.4): "Sensitively integrate with the existing residential areas to form a cohesive area.

- a) Follow the guidance set out in the Residential Design Guidance SPD.
- b) Ensure the amenity and security of existing residents is protected.
- c) Orientate buildings and blocks to minimise overlooking and impact.
- d) Integrate trees, green infrastructure and open space for mutual benefit.
- e) Integrate with the development on Hellyer Way and the end of Bridgestone Drive."

The target of 467 homes clearly impacts housing density as explained above. It also impacts the ability of the Development to meet Objective 3 e) above because although the Bridgestone Drive development may on paper have a similar density, the buildings are just 2 storeys and are maisonettes. This explains the high density of the Bridgestone Drive development. Clearly, Buildings that are 2.5 to 3 storeys are not in keeping with the surrounding developments and will create a wall of buildings in some areas which is also not in keeping with the character of Bourne End. It is also not in keeping with the intent of paragraph 6.2.4 a):

6.2.4 The following specific landscape considerations will inform design of the development:

- a) Respond appropriately to the character areas immediately adjoining the site through a combination of borrowing design elements, employing complementary design elements and making a sensitive transition between the two;

We would also point out that the houses at the end of Bridgestone Drive/Hellyer Way do not back onto Hollands Farm as stated in the brief, **they face it**. The 9 houses at the end of Bridgestone Drive / Hellyer Way are **very** different in character/ setting to the rest of Bridgestone Drive and Hellyer Way, with a density of 11 d.p.h.

Unless the number of dwellings is reduced, thereby reducing the housing density, **the Development Brief will fail to meet these objectives** and will have areas in the site which will be more than **double** the average housing density in Bourne End.

Therefore Wooburn and Bourne Parish Council **strongly recommend** that the indicated number of dwellings in the Local plan **should not be a driver of the number dwellings** and the Development Brief should **make clear a revised lower number of dwellings** in keeping with average housing density in Bourne End and to reflect the real site capacity given its constraints.

Utilities

The Development Brief had a single paragraph on Utilities:

Paragraph 4.17.1 Utilities enter and cross parts of the site, as indicated in Figure 4.26. There are no existing overhead utilities such as power and telecommunications. A foul sewer and foul rising main enter the site at the entrance to Hollands Farm, passing through the farm and extending along the site's western boundary to Millboard Road. Foul sewers enter the south-eastern quarter of the site from Hedsor Road and Hawks Hill. **Thames Water have identified the water network capacity in this area is unlikely to be able to**

support the demand anticipated from the Hollands Farm development.

Strategic water supply infrastructure upgrades are likely to be required to ensure sufficient capacity is brought forward ahead of the development.

The sewer mentioned above has ongoing issues for residents along Hedsor Road when the water table is high. The pumping station struggles to cope with its two pumps and there have been pump failures at critical times resulting in effluent bubbling up through drains. This paragraph 4.17.1 of the Development Brief says "developers are encouraged work with Thames Water early on in the planning process"

On 9 February 2021 a local resident reported on the Bourne End facebook forum their conversation with Thames Water about a sewerage issue which Thames Water attended that day; Thames Water said "it is because there is currently hydraulic overload caused by rainwater".

Unless paragraph 4.17.1 is amended to make it a **condition** that the Developer reaches agreement with Thames Water on the installation of required upgrades, **before any planning application is considered** then the **developer will do nothing and this development will simply make matters considerably worse.**

2. Delivery of former Orchard.

The delivery of the former Orchard is very important as Bourne End is already short of recreational green space.

The Local Plan Policy BE2 paragraph 3. Green Infrastructure/ Environment says:

- d) Protect and enhance the biodiversity and green infrastructure value of the former orchard in accordance with Policy DM34, providing public access and ongoing management as part of the overall development.

Wycombe's Open Space Framework Assessment¹ (WOSFA) provides maps and tables of the Open Spaces in the Wooburn and Bourne End Parish - see pages 20 to 25. However, it concludes with the statement that the Parish has a "**A strategic and a local open space deficiency**" in both Wooburn Green and Bourne End, stating for Bourne End "Even when restricted open space is taken into account there is therefore a deficit of 4.82 ha/per 1,000 population, or only half of what there should be."

Sadly, the closure of Sapper's Field (approximately 6 acre site) due to the sinkhole has made the deficiency worse. Therefore delivery of the former Orchard is very important not only to the future residents of Hollands Farm but also to Parish residents in general.

However, the Development Brief fudges its delivery in paragraphs:

4.13.2 Adjoining the site to the east is an old unmanaged orchard approximately 2.3 hectares. It fits the criteria for being a Traditional Orchard (a priority habitat) and is designated as a Green Space in the Local Plan as well as

¹ **WOSFA Appendix 2-2: Settlement Analysis for LCA Chepping Wye Valley** is at...

<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Planning/Planning-policy/Topic-based/Open-space-framework-Settlement-analysis-Chepping-Wye-Valley.pdf>

being protected by a Tree Preservation Order. It contains a mix of small to medium trees with a few large mature native deciduous trees at its boundary

5.9 There are several aspirational footpath links off-site as follows, delivery will be sought through cooperation between adjacent land-owners and the Parish Council:

a) Through the former orchard to the east, linking with WOO/6/1 (bridleway);

7.2.2 Planning applications will need to demonstrate that the full package of on and offsite infrastructure set out in this brief will be delivered (but not limited to):
Onsite Infrastructure

f) Section 106 contributions to facilitate public access to the former orchard;
These paragraphs imply delivery of the Orchard is aspirational.

Nowhere does the Development Brief explain how the former Orchard will be delivered. This reduces the credibility of the Development Brief because it portrays amenities associated with the development that are not deliverable.

The Development Brief must make the Orchard a condition of the planning application thereby ensuring that the Developer will be accountable for delivering the Orchard.

3. Parking on Princes Road and Millboard Road

The Development Brief is silent on what will happen to cars that currently park on Princes Road. These will be displaced by the new Link Road – the Development Brief makes no provision for this impact.

It is also likely parents will drop off children on Millboard Road for the School and unless there is a plan to manage this, there will be new safety and parking issues on Millboard Road.

4. Toilets

The Development Brief and Sustainability Appraisal are silent on the provision of toilets for the Hollands Farm playing fields and at the Little Marlow Country Park. This is a significant omission given the likely usage of these amenities and the need for such facilities.

5. Buffer zone for Bridgestone drive residents facing the new Link Road

As mentioned in the paragraph relating to density, the houses at the end of Bridgestone Drive/Hellyer Way do not back onto Hollands Farm as stated in the brief, **they face it**. The 9 houses at the end of Bridgestone Drive / Hellyer Way are **very** different in character/ setting to the rest of Bridgestone Drive and Hellyer Way, with a density of 11 d.p.h.

We recommend that a buffer zone should be provided between Bridgestone Drive and the new Link Road to provide necessary visual separation from the development and to minimise impact of new Link Road on Bridgestone Drive residents.

We trust that Buckinghamshire Council will take these points seriously and address them **positively** in the Development Brief prior to its adoption.

Yours faithfully



Cllr. Sue Wagner
Chairman – Wooburn & Bourne End Parish Council