

Richard Holmes
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Directorate
Isle of Wight Council
Seaclose
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Monday 22 February 2021

Dear Richard

Planning Application Ref. P/01514/17 – 7 Bungalows off Field Lane, St Helens

The St Helens Parish Council (SHPC) were recently advised upon enquiry that the above referenced planning application (the Application), dating back to 2017/18, is very much still alive and a determination could be made in the near future by the Planning Office.

This has come as a complete surprise given the length of time that has passed without determination and, most importantly, without appropriate local consultation. The Application represents a material development within St Helens and creates significant issues (summarised below), which require appropriate consultation and review, which hitherto has not been forthcoming.

Accordingly, we seek your assurances that the Planning Office will engage with the Parish Council and local Community on the issues noted below prior to determination and, critically, the Application will be determined by the Planning Committee following a site visit, thereby ensuring appropriate transparency and democratic rigour.

SHPC would take this opportunity to raise the following issues which should be addressed within appropriate consultation and review prior to determination;

- Housing Needs

Since the time of the submission of the Application, the IWC Executive and local MP have stated the overriding Island housing need to be Affordable Housing, which this application does not include.

We recognise the site is unsuitable for Affordable Housing and are aware that there are discussions in regard to potential contributions in lieu of the provision of Affordable Housing within a proposed Section 106 agreement. Although SHPC are not aware of the details and have not been consulted on potential contributions to support the local Community, including; Parking, Greens Management and Social Services, which should be addressed prior to determination.

- Dangerous Site Access

Site Access is on an extremely sharp bend (please see attached Photographs) with limited visibility, creating a dangerous new directional flow of traffic at a busy junction, which includes the travel route to and from a large mobile home holiday park site. Island Roads point out that the road should be set at 20mph and that the Application requires material junction improvements, including road widening and a new pathway. The Application requires a detailed traffic study to ensure road safety is not compromised and is enhanced.

- Loss of Common Land

The location of the required junction improvements includes Common Land (see attached drawings). It would appear the required junction improvements would require the loss of Common Land, which requires the consent of the Secretary of State, involving a public consultation.

- Parking Constraints

The adjacent area of the Application is a local parking problem hot spot with limited parking, resulting in illegal parking on the Common Land causing damage and subsequent repair bills. The Application will create further issues without any remedy offered.

- Adverse impact of Construction
Closure of the Field Lane road for the junction improvements will cause traffic flow issues, given the only other access road in the area is the Diggings, a one-way flow route. Furthermore, the position of the access on a sharp bend, together with the limited width of the site access, will make the construction phase extremely difficult and will have adverse consequences to the local community and holidaymakers alike. No information is provided on how this will be addressed.
- Environment
The Application represents a further loss of green space in a rural setting and the potential loss of habitat and risk to endangered species, without delivering the housing stock of Affordable Housing the Island needs!
- Inadequate local consultation
The Applicants discussed the proposed Application with a 'handful' of residents with properties adjoining the site location. However, as demonstrated above, the proposals have far wider reaching consequences to the local Community, requiring significantly greater local consultation.

Accordingly, we would seek your urgent attention to the following;

- 1) Ensuring appropriate local consultation prior to determination, including a site visit to discuss the issues raised above and to also arrange (by SHPC) a public forum, where the local Community can raise questions.
- 2) Ensuring the determination is made by the Planning Committee, given the material nature and consequences of the scheme to the local Community.

Thanking you in advance for your urgent attention to these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Chairman

St Helens Parish Council