

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: 2nd November 2018



All planning enquiries should be sent to the Local Planning Authority.

Email: planningadmin@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

The Planning Officer
Mid Suffolk District Council
1st Floor, Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 2BX

For the Attention of: Vincent Pearce

Dear Vincent

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 -

PROPOSAL: Various Planning Applications in Fressingfield

LOCATION:

- **1648/17 Land off Post Mill Lane, 24 dwellings**
- **1449/17 Land off Stradbroke Road, 85 dwellings**
- **1432/17 Land off Shepherd Road, 99 dwellings**

Following the July 2018 revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Suffolk County Council has reviewed its position regarding planning applications 1648/17, 1449/17 and 1432/17. The significant change in the NPPF is para 109 that states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an *unacceptable impact on highway safety*, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This revises the previous guidance that stated that development should only be refused where the residual cumulative impacts are severe.

In our previous response we stated that the impact of the proposed development was at the high level of significance in terms of road safety, but that no single road safety issue was considered severe as no significant numbers of crashes had been recorded in the area and hence we could not recommend refusal of these applications based on the 2012 version of the NPPF.

Recent planning appeal decisions¹ have clarified the Planning Inspectorates views on road safety and we have considered these in our response. In summary the Planning Inspectors have viewed each site as unique and that the absence of a history of crashes should be balanced against observed road safety issues when deciding if there is an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Due to concerns raised by residents during the planning process additional site visits were undertaken involving both driven and walked inspections. I personally visited the area on the morning of the 12th October 2018.

New Street

Pedestrians exiting from the footway north of Woodyard Cottage have poor visibility to either side and step straight onto the carriageway. Pedestrian barriers are present to restrain pedestrian but constrain the footway for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

No footways are present on New Street resulting in pedestrians walking in the road. During the site visit a number of pedestrians, some elderly, were observed walking to the local shop. When vehicles approach there was a tendency for pedestrians to step into private driveways when possible. Where parked cars were present pedestrians often must walk into the road around them. When two cars meet one must stop if a pedestrian is in the road and no driveway is present.

Having examined the site, it is difficult to see how significant lengths of footway could be provided without reducing road widths and relocating on street parking. The presence of buildings abutting the road places further limitations as existing thresholds will need to be maintained.

Travel Modes

While not considered a scientific survey, it was noted that in the morning site visit only 3 children accompanied by two adults walked to school from north of Jubilee Corner, but a significant number of school children were in cars travelling through the junction. It is possible that concerns about safety discourage pedestrians particularly in the core of the village.

Conclusion

There are hazards to non-motorised users travelling on New Street or through Jubilee Corner. The layout of the village means that this is the desirable route to reach many services. The proposed developments will result in increased vehicle and pedestrian movements through this core area.

While it is appreciated that all three developers have contributed in finding ways to improve road safety the constraints imposed by the existing highway network severely restrict the practical options. The measures proposed are the best solution available within the existing constraints they fall short of making the highway safe for pedestrians.

While it is noted the few crashes have been recorded in this part of Fressingfield recent planning appeals have determined that weight should be given to observed conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. It is the Highway Authority's opinion that this is the case on New Street and Jubilee Corner if further development were approved which increased pedestrian and / or vehicle movement through the core of the village without the provision of safe, practical alternatives.

It is the Highway Authorities opinion that further traffic passing along New Street and / or through Jubilee Corner would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety particularly for vulnerable pedestrians.

For this reason, the Highways Authority recommends that permission is refused for these applications.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Merry
Transport Policy and Development Manager
Growth, Highways and Infrastructure

1: Planning Appeal References
APP/D3505/W/18/3197391 Land off Darking Road, Boxford
APP/W3520/W/18/3196561 Derry Brook Lane / Little London Hill, Debenham