

Heritage Issues

This appeal should be refused in our opinion for the following reasons:

This large scale development of 24 houses, together with the two hybrid applications (3872/16 and 4410/16) of 46 houses already approved in 2017 but not yet built, would be out of character with the existing pattern of development of our small village. This would be contrary to development plan policies CS5, GP1, H13 and H15 and would give rise to a significant increase in the overall size of the village without appropriate infrastructure being in place to accommodate the future occupants of the development. This development on its own would reasonably be expected to generate 48 extra vehicles and 55 extra residents to this small village of only some 400 dwellings.

The appeal is misleading in that it states the development is sustainable in terms of there being a pub shop and surgery in walking distance. The reality is that there are virtually no public transport services, no jobs and the inhabitants would all have to travel by car to work, shop and do their day to day business. The absence of existing facilities and services within reasonable distance/traveling time of the development by public transport, walking or cycling would give rise to a reliance on the private car contrary to the provisions of the NPPF, accentuating environmental harm.

As a primary village, with the approved and projected windfall houses, we have met our housing targets for the next twenty years. We do not know what the impacts of the two hybrid applications are going to be yet before the houses granted are not even built. The cumulative impact of this development would be unacceptable. A resounding 94 per cent of the village have shown in a petition that they are against large scale development, not wishing the rural and picturesque quality of life here to be ruined for future generations.

Fressingfield is a national treasure having 58 listed buildings. It is the setting of these protected buildings and for the village as a whole that should be protected according to the local plan and the NPPF. Luckily the remote and isolated setting of the village means its heritage has remained relatively untouched. The small size of Fressingfield means that it is truly incorporated into the countryside and open landscape around it. These assets bring many tourists and visitors to the area.

Already in a village with just 350 houses at its core, the 47 already granted will have a huge detrimental impact on the setting of the heritage and many listed buildings as well as its rural character. To grant any more major development here represented in these three applications would tip the balance and be devastating for the rural and historical nature of this village. Instead of being on the edge of rolling countryside, we would be hemmed in by new developments which are totally inappropriate in scale.

This large development, if allowed will compound with the houses already granted and not built, creating a very large single urban site of 51 houses which is out of scale for this village. It would harm the character, heritage and sense of place here as well as the openness of the village to the countryside around it, contrary to para 192 (a) of the NPPF which protects heritage assets by sustaining and enhancing them. Neither does the development make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness of the village contrary to para 192 (c) of the NPPF. This proposal would also harm the setting of the Fressingfield Conservation Area, providing no clear justification or public benefit for this harm contrary to para 194 of the NPPF and HB8 of the local plan.

This development would impact directly on open land to the immediate rear of a Grade II listed building, Ladymeade cottage and substantially harm its setting which the original planning decision noted contrary to policies HB1 and HB8 of the local plan and 196 of the NPPF. The development would also ruin the setting of another Grade II listed building, Mount Pleasant which is within 50m of the proposed site. The harm to both of these buildings and their setting as well as to the village as a whole is not less than substantial as this appeal suggests and the levels of harm to designated heritage assets has been



clearly balanced by the original planning decision against planning policy and the benefits it might deliver. The appeal suggests that a mixture of trees and hedges - (in winter months this coverage would be minimal!) - would mitigate the effects to these listed buildings but they are too close and their setting would be harmed immeasurably.

The proposed development would not deliver any public benefits which would outweigh on this identified harm and would also harm the setting of the village as a whole, being extremely visible from the approach to the village, Harleston Hill. The view of Fressingfield here has special mention for protection in the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. The impact of this large development cannot be mitigated from a heritage and setting perspective, contrary to the appellant's Statement of Case in this appeal. It is misleading in that it claims that by limiting development the village would be a "static monument to a historic rural village" which is contentious and untrue. The village has delivered already over its quota as a primary village in the planning numbers recently granted as well as the wind-fall allocations of houses. This development would not be appropriate in scale or context having an adverse impact. Nor would its impact be any less on the setting of the conservation areas of the village contrary to this appeal and the provisions of policy HB8 and the NPPF do apply here despite the appeal claiming they do not.

It is the same with landscape and our relation to the rural environment.

“Protecting and enhancing the historic environment” is an important component of the National Planning Policy Framework’s drive to achieve sustainable development (as defined in [paragraphs 6-10](#)). The appropriate conservation of heritage assets forms one of the ‘Core Planning Principles’ ([paragraph 17](#) bullet 10) that underpin the planning system.”

Our distinctive and valuable rural landscape is also our heritage and as the Core Strategy sets out that the District’s approach to sustainable development must conserve and enhance the local character of different parts of the district as well as restrict development in the countryside to defined categories. The NPPF and saved policy of the district (The Core Strategy Focused Review 3.2) clearly describes sustainable development as including the principle of enjoying a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life for future generations. These documents also outline the importance of safeguarding the environmental and landscape of the countryside. The local plan also incorporates Core Strategy 2008 which promises a better heritage for future generations, to safeguard the distinctive and attractive areas of Suffolk.

Objectives SO1 and SO4 of this strategy clearly set out that the historic, heritage and environmental character of local towns and villages are protected from new developments which must be appropriate in terms of scale and context of settlement.

This proposed site at Post Mill exits onto the main street, (New Street) of the village, which is very narrow and frequently congested. The traffic and road safety implications here are severe and should be refused in line with the NPPF (P32).

The existing sewerage system here is at or over capacity as it stands and cannot absorb further housing developments. Flooding and overload of the sewerage system is a long term problem that the District and Anglia Water have acknowledged.

The proposed site lies outside the identified development of the boundary and is contrary to policy CS2, in conflict with the development plan and posing harm to the setting of the village.

For these reasons the proposal should remain refused as it is inherently unsustainable triggering the tilted balance in a negative way, the adverse impacts being significantly and demonstrably evident.