

LANGFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

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To: The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Reference: APP/P0240/W/21/3273963

Since our original objection (June 2020) to the Outline application (attached on pages 2-5) the objections made in that submission remain unchanged with the exception of progression on two points:

1. The (now adopted) Central Beds Local Plan allocated upto 150 homes off Cambridge Road in Langford. The Outline application for this site (upto 150 homes) received approval in April 2021 and the site is now out for consultation on the Reserved Matters stage for phase 1 of this site (79 homes). Pre-development work has already commenced on this site.
2. The Langford Neighbourhood Plan was formally adopted by CBC on 23rd September 2021 therefore all policies within the Plan should be given full weight when determining this application.

Conflicts with Langford Neighbourhood Plan

This proposed site conflicts with the Langford Neighbourhood Plan, particularly in relation to being outside the village settlement and the following policies:

Policy EN1.1

Has negative impact on existing green space

Policy EN2.2

Has a negative impact on wildlife, open village aspects, scenery and wildlife corridors

Policy EN2.3

Loss of open land views and agricultural land (grazing)

Policy EN4

Does not complement the village character

Policy IF 2.1 to IF2.4

There are currently insufficient Langford Lower School places for the expanding population in the village. This development will exacerbate this.

Policy TM1.2

Transport links and public networks not sustainably supported

Policy TM1.3

Aggravates traffic volumes and conflicts with Rowley Meadows and Ewbank Corner housing arising from site. Access to the site is dangerous because of the volume of traffic along Langford to Biggleswade Road and inappropriate for line of sight when exiting (already raised with CBC by residents).

Policy PD1

No evidence the site would meet Housing needs

Policy PD3.5

Out of character with local existing housing stock

Policy PD4. 1 to PD4.6

Negative impact on settlement envelope, exceeds preferred size of site, negative impact on greenfield site, exceeds definition of in-filling, negative impact on bio diversity, road access too narrow, junction with Langford to Biggleswade Road too dangerous and density of housing exceeds recommendation (PD3). The LNP (Policy PD4.6) states a maximum of 30 dwellings/ha. The scheme density is therefore above the maximum set for our rural village context (not "Fit in as a logical, urban extension...." [Design and Access statement]) and is therefore unacceptable.

If the Inspector is minded to overturn the CBC refusal and approve this appeal then this site should only be considered as a site for the over 55's only.

Yours faithfully



Michelle Albone
Langford Parish Council Clerk and RFO

Langford Parish Council OBJECT to this application on the following points:

We wish to start by saying that LPC feels very disappointed with yet another new planning application in the village.

Many of the new owners of the over 55's development, we know, are extremely disappointed with this application. These residents have moved to a peaceful setting next to a new cemetery to the north and open countryside to the west with hopes of a scenic, quiet and secure setting which alone offers its own health & wellbeing benefits. Now a short time after most have moved in there is a proposal for 35 family homes built on this open countryside right next door to them with access through the over 55's estate for both the construction period and as a permanent access.

1. The NPPF has an environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural environment and it also acknowledges that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production. The NPPF sets the standards for recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
2. This location was not included within Central Bedfordshire's Local Plan and falls outside the category of a "windfall site".
3. Central Bedfordshire Council considers (which was recently acknowledged by the Inspector in the February 2020 refusal of appeal decision - APP/P0240/W/19/3236423 – Land west of Langford Road) that it has a housing supply equating to around 6.03 years.
4. The Emerging Langford Neighbourhood plan acknowledges the allocation of 137 new homes in Langford as detailed in the CBC Local Plan (Bridge Farm and Thistle Hill). The LNP states that any homes approved from 2016 will be counted towards the housing targets for the Village. The Parish has fulfilled and far exceeded its housing obligation and no further development sites were identified as part of the LNP. Policy PD3 within the LNP recognises residential infill but that permission should be supported for suitable small residential developments of upto ten dwellings on infill and redevelopment sites with the Parish that lie outside the protected green spaces.
5. The site encompasses 35 homes and should be considered as an overdevelopment of the site. Much of the site cannot be built on due to being at high risk of flooding, therefore further reducing build area and causing a denseness on the site. The land itself is home to an abundance of wildlife. Due to the location close to the river it is water logged much of the year.
6. The access in and out of the proposed development is a real concern. Residents of the existing Rowley Meadows have already brought to the attention of CBC their dissatisfaction on the poor visibility splays. This new proposal makes no allowance for any improvement on the visibility splays. This development would cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
7. Further considerations need to be made on the above in relation to the number of vehicle movements on Church Street and the speed of these vehicles

8. National Policies DM4, CS 14 High Quality Development, CS16 Landscape and Woodland, DM3 High Quality Development and DM14 Landscape and Woodland apply to this application. Together these seek to preserve the character of the countryside as defined by the Landscape Character Area (LCA), require development proposals to enhance landscapes of lesser quality and to protect trees, woodland and hedgerows.
9. From the east bank of the River Ivel the site would appear visible at several points. Whilst the proposal indicates the western part of the site could include flood attenuation and biodiversity enhancement this form of mitigation would not be sufficient to overcome the harm to this areas character and appearance.
10. With the recent opening of the new Langford Cemetery the Parish Council have concerns on the impact this would have on the cemetery in relation to flooding, peace, ASB and aesthetically.
11. The outfall from the Cemetery detention basin/balancing ponds need to be protected at all costs to prevent the cemetery and the adjacent housing development from flooding.
12. The fall of the new estate should ensure that no surface water is redirected towards the cemetery which could cause surface water flooding.
13. The willow trees along the western boundary of the Cemetery must be protected as these form part of the bioremediation strategy agreed for the cemetery with the EA
14. A fair proportion of the new proposal is in flood Zone II and III, which is not appropriate for a residential development, surface water drainage would be difficult to manage as the site would be at risk of flooding.
15. We would also query the location of the detention basin in the flood zone, as we understand on some sites these have been moved out of the flood zone.
16. The Cemetery has two bore holes located within the northern boundary of this proposed development which we measure monthly for water table readings. We are concerned that these would need to be retained with appropriate access for future readings.
17. As highlighted within the applicants Flood Risk Assessment (section: Sewage Flooding, 3.3.1) they have acknowledged that Anglian Water has confirmed there have been incidences of records of sewer flooding in the vicinity of the site. AW could not disclose any further information on the exact whereabouts of the flood incidents. We would wish for this to be further investigated

Indicative site layout specific comments.

Although labelled as an indicative site layout historical applications have shown us that these indicative site plans do not generally alter significantly at RM application stage.

Therefore we wish to add the following comments on the site layout.

1. The site is very compact and we would wish to see less houses and more spaciouly spread through the site to meet similar layout of the Rowley Meadows development.
2. The proposed footpath through the eastern side of the development does concern LPC. We wish it to be recorded that LPC advised CBC that it would not permit any footpath through the Cemetery.
3. In relation to point 3 the safety & security issue a pathway would have on the existing residents of Rowley Meadow and Ewbank corner is a concern to LPC.
4. We assume that as a public footpath is proposed that this will be carried through on the Planning Conditions so the new homeowners are aware of this at time of purchase and that new homeowners will not be liable for maintenance charges relating to this footpath and the road will be adopted by CBC and not a private road
5. ASB issues in this location does concern the Parish Council especially with the location of a secluded parking area to the eastern boundary.
6. Comments on the permeability of the proposed layout should be sought from the Police
7. Comments should be sought on the feasibility of emergency vehicles into this location from the Police
8. We note that the Shared ownership homes are grouped together in one location. We would wish to see a pepper effect with the Shared Ownership properties spaced through the site
9. We would not wish for the houses to be an overbearing impact on the cemetery, therefore a sympathetic approach should be taken on the final design, and layout of each home so as not to overlook the cemetery to an unacceptable extent and consideration be taken on the level of the homes.
10. We do have concerns on how the vehicle trip rate is calculated and whether this is truly reflective of a modern environment in a rural location.