



HOVETON PARISH COUNCIL

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Summary of Open Public Meeting to Discuss Planning Application PF/19/1659 (Brook Park Phase II)

Wednesday 11th March 2020, 6.30pm, Hoveton Village Hall

This informal public meeting was arranged and hosted by Hoveton Parish Council. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Peter Howe (Vice-Chairman of Hoveton Parish Council) and was attended by representatives of Persimmon Homes, North Norfolk District Council, Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre, Broadland High Ormiston Academy, St. John's Community Primary School & Nursery and many neighbouring/nearby parish councils. Also in attendance at the meeting were Councillor Nigel Dixon (District and County Councillor) and approximately 160 members of the public.

1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF MEETING

Meeting organised to give local residents the opportunity to discuss application PF/19/1659 with Persimmon Homes and North Norfolk District Council, to better understand the application and how it fits in with current planning policies, to ask any questions, and to share views. Residents were reminded that Hoveton Parish Council is only a consultee and has no powers to approve or reject planning applications. The Parish Council will submit its views on this application to the local planning authority (North Norfolk District Council) once it has had the opportunity to listen to and fully consider the views of the local community, but the Parish Council's response will be counted as a single response and will likely carry little weight unless local residents, as separate individuals, make direct representations to NNDC as well. Residents were invited to write down any concerns/questions not addressed at this meeting on the forms provided at the back of the hall.

2. BROOK PARK PHASE I OUTSTANDING MATTERS (PERSIMMON HOMES)

Members of the public were thanked for attending the meeting and the public exhibition held on Wednesday 4th March. Planting, weeding and maintenance is due to begin at the end of March, once the growing season commences. This will include weeding, spraying, and replacing plants which need to be replaced. The cycleway/footpath to Tunstead Road is due to be surveyed this weekend in order to determine responsibilities for maintenance. Play equipment is now in place on the public open space and NNDC is satisfied with this. Waiting to see if work done to solve drainage issues on the public open space was successful. NNDC has agreed to empty public litter bins if Persimmon supply these. Persimmon will install, maintain and pay for the emptying of these bins until the site is adopted by NNDC. Footpath repairs are scheduled for 19th March and NNDC has agreed the tree stump should be removed. Work is ongoing on plans to transfer ownership of/responsibility for the Summer Drive footpath to the residents of Summer Drive (the

Highway Authority no longer requires this footpath). There are three options: 1) transfer the land to a nominated person acting as a representative for the residents (it was noted the land can't be transferred to an organisation such as a residents' association, and Persimmon has offered to pay the legal costs to complete this transfer and to maintain drains for ten years); 2) transfer the land as described above but with drainage removed; 3) to remove the footpath and drainage and to restore the land to its previous state to be handed back. Persimmon needs to identify an individual who would be willing to enter into negotiations over this footpath on behalf of Summer Drive residents. Apologies were offered by Persimmon for the unacceptable delays experienced and reassurances were given that Persimmon is doing its best to ensure all outstanding matters are resolved asap.

Questions/Comments From Members Of The Public

- High turnover of staff at Persimmon since Brook Park was built has contributed to a lack of communication with residents. Has been waiting six months for Persimmon to respond to a query regarding the transfer/maintenance of the Summer Drive footpath. Residents of Summer Drive have not yet been contacted with details of the three options outlined at this meeting. Information is not being passed from one person to another as new people come into post. *Persimmon: communication concerns and other issues raised at meeting to be discussed with Managing Director. On track to have everything addressed by June 2020.*

Cllr Nigel Dixon reported he has been corresponding with Persimmon for a number of years and it has been very difficult for him, Hoveton Parish Council, the residents of Brook Park, and even NNDC to get a response from Persimmon. NNDC has been forced to spend a lot of time and effort chasing Persimmon. There is a serious issue concerning public confidence in Persimmon and professional standards. Residents expect better than Persimmon has delivered. Cllr Dixon was disappointed to hear that options regarding the transfer of the Summer Drive footpath had not yet been discussed with Summer Drive residents.

- Phase I issues have been going on for five years now. Why has the local authority not taken enforcement action against Persimmon? NNDC needs to be more aggressive in its approach.
- Is Persimmon aware that the drainage of surface water from Brook Park into the Stalham Road drainage basin is failing? Following the heavy rainfall of 6th October, there was no water in the drainage basin. Instead the water flooded Stalham Road. *Persimmon: aware of this problem. The basin was delivered by NCC Highways and is to their specification. If these issues extend onto the Brook Park site, Persimmon will need to discuss the matter with NNDC. Otherwise, residents are advised to approach the local Highway Engineer. If residents have records/photos of the problems, please send them to Persimmon so this can be investigated further.*

3. BROOK PARK PHASE II APPLICATION (PERSIMMON HOMES)

Exhibition boards displayed around the hall explain the story of this development and how it has been approached. Application for 150 houses plus open spaces, including a play area. Includes 52 affordable units and link road from Stalham Road to Tunstead Road. Two character areas of

houses (rural/village areas). All houses two storey, with a mix of 2-5 bedrooms. Affordable units will be 1-4 bedrooms plus six bungalows. Outline only planning permission is sought for elderly care dwellings and this section of the application will be delivered by a third party. Section 106 benefits include a pedestrian crossing outside the Village Hall, new roundabouts, contributions to schools and library. Work expected to start in 2021 if planning permission granted. Feedback from the 4th March public exhibition has been noted, including outstanding issues with Phase I, concerns about the link road becoming a rat run, impact of the building work on the residents of Brook Park, and removal of the hedge. The proposal will be amended accordingly if necessary. Elderly care units will be self-contained 1-2 bedroom apartments; high quality accommodation. The building will include a communal dining area and facilities such as a hairdressers. Care will be provided. Persimmon will work with the provider of these units, in discussion with NNDC, to deliver the stated elderly care provision.

4. PLANNING POLICY UPDATE (NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL)

Proposed site is part of Hoveton's allocation in the emerging Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan follows a statutory process and there are still several rounds of public consultation to come (the next consultation is due this time next year). In the meantime, NNDC still has to follow the current planning policy (the Core Strategy) and the emerging Local Plan carries little weight, but the site has been identified as being suitable for residential development. Local residents were reassured that the application is under assessment and nothing has been determined yet. Hard copy comments on the application that are delivered to NNDC will receive a receipt, or residents may comment online.

Cllr Nigel Dixon's Comments

The site's status is 'countryside' at present, which means the land can't be built on. NNDC must decide where developments of all types will be placed across the district – it is not the job of a developer to decide this on NNDC's behalf. Residents are advised to consider the principle of development before the details of this application. NNDC is two years away from completing the new Local Plan. Why aren't Persimmon waiting two years until this land is officially allocated for development? *Persimmon: Persimmon has had an interest in this site for 5-6 years and is keen to develop it but Persimmon's option agreement with the landowner is due to expire. The Local Plan should be more advanced at this stage; NNDC isn't as far along in the process as it should be (NNDC response: delays have been caused mainly by staff turnover/ill health, but NNDC is working hard to move forward with the new Local Plan). The five-year land supply is still up for discussion as it hasn't been calculated exactly as the Government advises; it is not set in stone. Persimmon decided to submit this application so it could be considered while the five-year land supply is being discussed.*

5. HOVETON & WROXHAM MEDICAL CENTRE

Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre has been based in its current building since 2003, but as of 2008 this building has not been big enough to support the practice area, which reaches as far as Rackheath. Work has been ongoing since 2008 to address this issue. A planning application has now been submitted for an extension to the premises. This is phase one of the plans and it is designed to cope with current patient numbers only (there has been a 12% increase in patient numbers since 2015). Phase two, scheduled for 2023 at the earliest, will include a new medical

centre for Rackheath. This will increase the capacity in terms of room numbers, but the medical centre's staffing capacity will also need to be increased. Resilience and continuity planning with regards to staffing is ongoing, with plans to recruit more support staff to help enable the GPs and clinicians to do their jobs. The medical centre's partners are fully aware of local expansion needs.

6. BROADLAND HIGH ORMISTON ACADEMY

Currently has 720 students. This number is expected to rise to 733 in September 2020. Expects to be at capacity (750 students) by September 2021. The academy admits 150 pupils each year and there isn't a huge amount of capacity in the existing building to go beyond this number. The Trust has committed to improving the premises/facilities for existing students, but it has no plans to expand the premises at the moment. *Persimmon: discussions were held concerning setting aside part of the Brook Park Phase II site for Broadland High. The education authority looked into this but said the land wasn't needed for expansion of the academy. The education authority works out the number of children expected to move into an area as a result of a development and advises the developer accordingly. The developer then pays an agreed amount per child expected and the education authority uses this money to create facilities and spaces in schools.*

7. ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

Thirty children are admitted each year and the school is always (historically) full. When families move into the area with children of different ages, the school can sometimes only accommodate one child from a family but not others, as there are usually only four available spaces across the whole of the school. The Headteacher believes strongly that local schools should be accessible for local children, but the building of 150 extra homes in Hoveton will put extra pressure on local schools.

8. BROOK PARK PHASE II APPLICATION (PUBLIC FORUM)

- Concerns that link road is not suitable in terms of safety; children will be playing nearby. Concerns about extra vehicles arising from the extra houses and the impact on Wroxham Bridge/traffic congestion. *Persimmon: traffic speed on the link road will be kept to a minimum (20mph or less) and the geometry of road/bends is designed to restrict speed. Persimmon has been asked to provide a link road. Residents could suggest it is used as an emergency access road rather than a through road. NCC Highways best placed to comment on the possible impact on Wroxham Bridge (it was noted that Highways had declined HPC's invitation to attend the meeting).*
- Cllr Nigel Dixon. Infrastructure concerns would normally be dealt with during the process of land allocation (part of the principle of development). This process considers possible impact of development on schools, water, power, gas, sewage networks, roads/transport network, etc. These problems all need to be resolved before land is allocated, but in this case the problems haven't been dealt with yet. There's been no word from Highways as to the suitability of this site for development. Timing is an issue; the suitability of this site has not yet been established. This site is still at the principle of development stage and is not ready to move to the application stage. *Persimmon: these issues will be looked at as part of the application process, just as they would as part of the land allocations process.*

The same process must be followed, whether there is a red line around this area of land in the Local Plan or not.

- If funds are made available, is there any scope to expand St. John's Community Primary School & Nursery? *St. John's: yes, there is space on the 'ground' to do this, but it would require a quick and thoughtful strategy as to how this could be achieved. The school has just had an extension built to replace a mobile temporary classroom.*
- North Norfolk District Council has declared a climate emergency, but how will Persimmon implement climate change strategies that are due to be included in the new Local Plan? *Persimmon: responding to climate change is an emerging area and Persimmon will look at what is being done in other regions and at national planning regulations (future home standards). Architects, designers, and planners need to ensure that what is delivered is suitable for the future. Persimmon is aware of the issues involved and the need to work with other parties to find solutions.*
- Cllr Nigel Dixon. Any planning application that is approved now, under the current Local Plan, will need to comply with current standards. Understanding of climate change has changed rapidly in the past few years and North Norfolk District Council needs to decide what it will do to respond to the climate emergency. Supplementary Planning Documents included in the new Local Plan will set out the standards required of future developments, but these SPDs haven't yet been agreed, and the District Council is currently working to standards set in 2008. If this planning application is approved before the Supplementary Planning Documents are approved, there will be no requirement for the development to meet the new standards for climate change that will be included in these documents. We need to act now to reach climate change targets.
- Hoveton has ongoing drainage problems. Concerns that Anglian Water gave inaccurate information concerning the Church Field development and did not recognise the drainage problems being experienced in the village, and that Church Field was therefore approved based on inaccurate information. Residents understand that a similar drainage system to that included in the Church Field development has been proposed for Brook Park Phase II. Concerns that this system will not be fit for purpose. What will happen to properties in the lower part of the village when the sewage in this system is 'let go' after 24 hours? Concerns that this development will make the village's foul water flooding problems even worse. *Persimmon: we have engaged with Anglian Water to obtain pre-application advice and are aware of Anglian Water's position statement, but Anglian Water can't withhold permission for development. A multi-agency site meeting has been organised for 3rd April in order to discuss and adjust the drainage strategy to take account of issues. Anglian Water is looking at the wider problems being experienced in Hoveton and Persimmon is happy to work with Anglian Water to investigate issues.*
- Cllr Nigel Dixon. Need to focus on mitigation and solving of the 24-hour problem. In times of heavy rainfall, when the holding tank is full after 24 hours, the tank will discharge into the existing system if not emptied, and the tank's contents will go into the lower part of the network. It's been suggested that a tanker could visit and empty the tank at the 24-hour point (similar to the system used in Wherry Gardens, Wroxham). But this unpleasant 'solution' would need to be in place for several years until the underlying problems are resolved. It is vital the village finds solutions for the drainage problems it already has and doesn't add to these problems.

- Concerns about appalling air quality along the main road through Hoveton and Wroxham. The proposed new development will add to these problems. However, a report submitted with the planning application only refers to the area north of the bridge. *Persimmon: this matter would need to be discussed with NCC Highways in terms of how to address traffic issues.*
- Concerns that the ecological report submitted with the application is not representative of some of the species in the area (for instance, skylarks and tawny owls are not included). Resident requests that Persimmon carries out more ecological surveys. *Persimmon: the phase I ecological survey of the site included in the report was carried out by consultants, as required. The site has limited ecological value (existing trees, hedgerows and bushes) and bat boxes, bird boxes and hedgehog holes have been proposed. Any residents who wish to conduct their own ecological surveys are advised to submit their results to North Norfolk District Council.*
- Chairman of Belaugh Parish Meeting. Belaugh Wastewater Treatment Works is currently the recipient of Hoveton's sewage. The road to the sewage plant is not suitable for HGVs but large trailers visit several times a day now. The road has been damaged as a result. Intends to ask Anglian Water to attend the next Belaugh Parish Meeting to address these concerns and will report back to Hoveton Parish Council on this matter.
- Why has Persimmon decided to bring the link road out onto Tunstead Road as shown in the plans, rather than opposite Two Saints Close? Residents of Tunstead Road already encounter serious problems exiting their driveways thanks to speeding traffic. Concerns about noise and light pollution, increase in traffic/speeding. Suggestion that Persimmon could build a roundabout at the Two Saints Close junction if the link road exited there, as this would solve the problem of parents dropping off children at school and turning cars around in Two Saints Close. *Persimmon: proposals include extending the existing 30mph section of Tunstead Road to the north and an 'entry gate' into the village to reinforce the change of speed limit. Joining the link road with the Two Saints Close junction would've required a roundabout, but design guidance suggested a roundabout wouldn't be suitable for this location. A mini-roundabout might be possible, however. The link road/junction's location resulted from the proposed site layout, which evolved through Persimmon's work with architects.*
- Concerns that more consideration has been given to making money through ensuring the development's layout looks good than to road safety. *Persimmon: will speak to Highways about access to the road network, but primarily this is about safety and meeting national guidelines for the safe locations of junctions (in terms of visibility etc). NCC Highways will guide a decision as to whether a roundabout is needed.*
- Concerns that the three junctions emerging onto Tunstead Road will be very dangerous, as this will result in three extra lots of traffic joining the road. A roundabout would help to reduce these problems.
- How will construction traffic access the site? Via Brook Park Phase I or Tunstead Road? *Persimmon: this will be discussed with North Norfolk District Council and a Construction Management Plan will be produced.*
- Concerns about dangers of traffic joining Tunstead Road from the junctions. In term time, cars are parked outside the high school and all down Tunstead Road, so traffic entering the village often ends up on the wrong side of the road due to these obstructions. Traffic

will therefore be on the wrong side of the road when approaching the proposed junctions. The traffic includes school buses and agricultural vehicles. Tunstead Road can't take any more traffic.

- There is currently a persistent problem with parents dropping off children at school and then doing u-turns in Two Saints Close. Has Persimmon carried out a survey in term time in the mornings and afternoons to monitor school traffic and the impact this has on Two Saints Close? *Persimmon: a traffic count has been carried out at various junctions during holiday periods and at rush hour and a full transport assessment has been prepared. The Highway authority will review this assessment and advise North Norfolk District Council on this matter.*
- Concerns about density of the proposed development. The proposal is for 150 houses on four hectares of land, which is a smaller area of land than that used in Brook Park Phase I. *Persimmon: the proposed density is considered to be acceptable for a development of this size.*
- Cllr Nigel Dixon. Brook Park Phase I consisted of 120 houses on seven hectares of land. Phase 2 is proposing 150 houses on four hectares of land. This is not consistent with the density of surrounding developments in Hoveton.
- What do local residents need to do to make sure this application is delayed until the new Local Plan is agreed? *NNDC: this application is still in its public consultation period. All comments submitted to North Norfolk District Council by the consultation deadline will be collated and taken into account alongside existing planning policies. NNDC is duty-bound to take local residents' comments into consideration, but only if those comments are submitted directly to NNDC. Residents are advised to focus their comments on material planning considerations.*
- PC Tom Gibbs. Looking at matters from a policing perspective, there are minimal issues with Brook Park Phase I. However, the design of the development does limit the ability of some residents to park safely, with some forced to park on pavements in order to avoid blocking the road and restricting access for emergency vehicles. Manoeuvring vehicles is also difficult sometimes, which creates danger for pedestrians. If the proposed density of Brook Park Phase II is higher than Phase I, it seems likely this will create further parking problems.
- Why can't Persimmon renegotiate its agreement with the landowner to take account of the two year wait for the new Local Plan? Is Persimmon just trying to 'jump the gun' on its competitors? *Persimmon: once the option agreement ends, the landowner could offer the land to another developer. Persimmon has a contractual agreement to apply for planning permission before its option agreement ends. There are many commercial considerations to bear in mind.*
- Request from a member of the public. If anyone experiences sewage problems or sees sewage going in the river, please report this to the Environment Agency as pollution. The more incidents that are recorded, the greater the chance of getting Anglian Water to act.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Local residents and guests were thanked for attending. Residents were reminded to send their comments to North Norfolk District Council by the consultation deadline of 25th March 2020. The meeting closed at 8.30pm.