

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Office
New Green Centre
Thurston
Suffolk
IP31 3TG

Tel: 01359 232854
e-mail: info@thurstonparishcouncil.gov.uk



SENT AS AN E-MAIL

Mr. P Isbell
Acting Chief Planning Officer – Growth & Sustainable Planning
Mid Suffolk District Council
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich IP1 2BX

22nd March 2019

Dear Mr. Isbell,

Re: Planning Application DC/18/03547 – Submission of details under outline planning permission 4963/16 relating to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to condition 3, for up to 250 dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure on land west of Ixworth Road @ land west of Ixworth

Case Officer: Alex Scott

Reason(s) for re-consultation: Amended drawings received by the Local Planning Authority on 8th January 2019.

The Parish Council, having considered this application further at its Planning Committee Meeting on 20th March 2019, would like to confirm that it continues to object to this application in its current form as it is still felt that the applicant has taken very little regard of the substantive comments made by not only the Parish Council but also the workings of the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2036 which is now at examination stage following its six-week Regulation 16 Consultation.

For clarity, the Parish Council still has the following concerns:

- Layout – the Parish Council is concerned that the applicant has failed to observe the guidance for spatial organisation as outlined in Suffolk County Council's Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas (2000 revised). The proposal shows a dominant road system with buildings set to a rigid building line which ultimately creates a tunnel effect layout more suited for an urban rather than a rural setting. There is little or no internal landscaping in front gardens and no attempt at creating spaces between areas or groups of houses by creating green open spaces.
- Parking – it is noted that there is now a bank of garages being offered within the scheme. The Thurston Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2036 in its character assessment has raised this as an issue as it is felt that garages should be adjacent to properties which they serve as stand-alone blocks of garages are more suited to an urban rather than a rural environment. Added to this there is the increased risk of perceived fear of crime due to a lack of surveillance.
- Parking in general – the Parish Council is disappointed to note that the applicant has failed to draw reference to the 'Secured By Design' principles which require that all parking spaces are overlooked and that an allocated bay can be viewed from a habitable room window of the residents' property. In line with Secured by Design New Home 2014 guidance, where there are communal car parking areas they should ideally be within view of the active rooms within these homes (*Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2015*).
- The Parish Council draws your reference to the response from Suffolk Constabulary on the above matter.

- Bungalows – the Parish Council, given the demography of the village, and Mid Suffolk in general, is concerned that there are only 4 bungalows on site and does not agree that the need for bungalows for those wishing to downsize will be satisfied by such a number. The Parish Council requests that this is increased by at least double this number for this site.
- House design – there is an urban feel to the design which neither complements nor enhances the village. The designs being offered, despite a few minor alterations, are a stock house type common to Persimmon which has failed to respect not only the character and appearance of Thurston but also that of Suffolk.
- Landscaping details – the Parish Council requests a more substantial northern boundary buffer zone especially if a hogging surface is to be provided as this will form a strong and effective boundary and lessen the impact from the countryside into the development.
- Internal landscaping details - the Parish Council is concerned at the proposals for internal landscaping and would like to see further emphasis on appropriate soft landscaping to the street scene in order to protect the visual amenity of the area as well as further enhancements to the public open spaces to create a strong green infrastructure and attractive outlook from properties and to ensure the biodiversity of the site is maintained.
- Play – the Parish Council is disappointed to note that no regard has been taken of its earlier submissions on the provision of play area / equipment for those aged 12+. The soft and hard landscape proposals do not show any allocation of play provision for this age range and it is disappointing to note that such requests have been ignored. The Parish Council again draws reference to the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2036 in which it supports the need for facilities that will encourage the uptake of sports / fitness / leisure / wellbeing activities for all ranges. It is felt that, given the size of the land within this application, such provision should be catered for.
- The Parish Council has stated on previous submissions that the open space to the south western part of the development is suitable for a facility for 12+ as it is located within reasonable walking distance of the majority of the units within the development scheme as well as those nearby. Such a facility will be of a demonstrable recreational or amenity value and should be multi-functional. Notwithstanding this requirement there should also be the provision of play equipment such as a LAP or LEAP located within other public open space areas of the development. It is acknowledged that the developer has also suggested a possible gym trail along the PRoW route. The Parish Council seeks reassurance that the provision of suitable play equipment for the whole site will be satisfied through constructive engagement with the developer and that, if the application is approved, this should be a condition of any approval going forward.
- Connectivity - the Parish Council still draws attention to there being little or no support for proposals that will assist with the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan's aspiration for connectivity within the village which includes those areas for development that have outline planning permission – (*pages 54-57 of the full plan which can be found at: <https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/thurston-neighbourhood-plan-npd/>*). The Parish Council is keen to ensure that there are safe cycling routes in the village. It would like to see the Public Right of Way (PRoW) within the centre of the site upgraded to a cycle route which will assist with integrating the PRoW within the development as well as providing a safe movement route from the westerly part of the village with key service functions including the new site of the primary school. Given that the PRoW is now passing through the development, the Parish Council wishes to see this route upgraded to allow for alternative sustainable modes of transport to be fully explored.

In summary the Parish Council refers you to its previous submissions dated 30th January 2019 and 30th August 2018 and registers its continuing objection to this scheme in its current form.

Yours sincerely,

Victoria S Waples

V. S. Waples, BA(Hons), CiLCA
Clerk to the Council