

MEMBER REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

(Completed form to be sent to Case Officer and Corporate Manager)
See Planning Charter for principles. Paragraph references below link to Planning Charter.

Planning application reference	DC/19/02688
Parish	Woolpit
Member making request	Helen Geake
13.3 Please describe the significant policy, consistency or material considerations which make a decision on the application of more than local significance	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan (which has been through pre-application consultation) shows that the site is designated as local green space. The draft Joint Local Plan (now in the public domain and shortly to be consulted upon) shows that the site is outside the settlement boundary. The application for housing development on this site is therefore inconsistent with these emerging policies.</p> <p>The impact to highways begins at the pinch point of Green Road/The Street, where the junction with Drinkstone Road contributes to the complexity of the area and the difficulty of establishing clear lines of sight (there are blind spots here).</p> <p>The impact then continues to the congested junction of Woolpit village centre, which can easily back up to the Green Road/The Street pinch point. Adding to congestion here will be very detrimental to properties close to the road, especially Model Cottage.</p> <p>An inability to get to the A14 in a timely manner may easily lead to vehicles diverting along the newly one-way Mill Lane, creating a rat-run along a road with no footpath which ends in a tight junction with a narrow lorry route (Heath Road). The impact on highways will thus continue outside the immediate area.</p> <p>Drinkstone Road is also the main way in which the residents of Drinkstone access the A14, particularly but not exclusively when travelling east. It is also much used to reach Elmswell and Norton and villages further north along the A1088. The development will thus affect residents of (and visitors from other villages to) Drinkstone.</p>

<p>13.4 Please detail the clear and substantial planning reasons for requesting a referral</p>	<p>Drinkstone Road is at present an area full of character leading into the Woolpit Conservation Area. It has a large, dense ancient hedgerow along the north (application site) side with open farmland to the south. The hedgerow changes gradually as the built-up area of the village approaches, from wild natural hedge, to trimmed and cultivated hedge, to closed and open fences, to wall on the other side of Green Road. This provides an excellent transition into the Conservation Area. This development would interrupt this transition with detrimental effects.</p> <p>Drinkstone Road is an ancient road and its hedgerow is likely to be among the oldest in the parish. Its biodiversity and wildlife value is high.</p> <p>A previous application for the site for 45 homes (DC/18/00721) was rejected on several grounds. Firstly, that the lack of pedestrian connectivity to local services meant that it would not represent a sustainable location for residential development. Secondly, that the development would result in increased potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflict in Rags Lane and Drinkstone Road. This is still the situation; nothing has changed since on either Rags Lane or Drinkstone Road, and they are not comfortable or safe for combined vehicle and pedestrian traffic.</p> <p>I note that SCC Highways have asked for mitigation in the form of passing places or road widening. This cannot be done on the north side (in the ownership of the applicant) without significant damage to the hedge and the character of the transition into the Conservation Area. To the south, the verge and field edge is not in the ownership of the applicant.</p> <p>Also see matters detailed under 13.3 above to do with Highways impacts and inconsistency with emerging local and neighbourhood plans.</p>
--	---

<p>13.5 Please detail the wider District and public interest in the application</p>	<p>I have been asked by several residents to call this application in to committee.</p> <p>Woolpit Parish Council have asked me to call this application in to committee.</p> <p>There is a concern from all in the parish that this represents the first tranche of piecemeal or 'salami-sliced' development, for two main reasons. Firstly, the vehicular turning point extends into the non-developed part of the site (currently wildlife-rich scrub and meadow, also in the ownership of the applicant) in an obtrusive way, clearly linking the area under application and the non-developed area and making provision for a future extension into the remainder of the field. Secondly, the pre-application advice from MSDC erroneously describes the site as being enclosed on three sides by existing residential development; this description appears to be that of the entire site in the applicant's ownership, which was the subject of application DC/18/00721 for 45 dwellings (refused by MSDC).</p>
<p>13.6 If the application is not in your Ward please describe the very significant impacts upon your Ward which might arise from the development</p>	<p>It is in my ward.</p>
<p>13.7 Please confirm what steps you have taken to discuss a referral to committee with the case officer</p>	<p>Discussions with Jamie Edwards, case officer; and John Pateman-Gee, area planning manager.</p>