

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK PLANNING REFERRALS COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Needham Market on Wednesday, 12 July 2017

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Roy Barker	Gerard Brewster
	Michael Burke	David Burn
	John Field	Jessica Fleming
	Kathie Guthrie	Lavinia Hadingham
	Matthew Hicks (Chairman)	Sarah Mansel
	John Levantis	Jane Storey
	Wendy Marchant	David Whybrow
	Keith Welham	

In attendance:

Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning
Planning Officer (DJ)
Highways Officer (SM), Suffolk County Council
Development Contributions Manager, Suffolk County Council
Legal Business Partner – Planning (IdeP)
Governance Support Officer (VL/HH/RC)

25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTIONS**

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Julie Flatman, Barry Humphreys MBE, Diana Kearsley, Anne Killett and Lesley Mayes.

26 **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

Councillor Roy Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest as he knew a number of the landowners.

Councillor Kathie Guthrie declared a non-pecuniary interest as her husband owned shares in Persimmon Homes Limited.

27 **DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that the majority of Members had been lobbied.

28 **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL SITE VISITS**

Councillors Gerard Brewster, Kathie Guthrie, Matthew Hicks, John Levantis, Sarah Mansel, Jane Storey and David Whybrow had undertaken a personal site visit.

It was noted that Councillor Sarah Mansel had also attended the public consultation exercise.

29 **QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

None received.

30 **QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

None received.

31 **RF/17/1 - SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS**

In accordance with the Council's procedure for public speaking on planning applications representations were made as detailed below:

Planning Application Number	Representations from
4963/16	Peter Robinson (Parish Council) Jonathan Masters (Objector) Darren Cogman (Agent)
5070/16	Peter Robinson (Parish Council) Rob Snowling (Applicant)
4386/16	Richard Fawcett (Parish Council) Ian Stammers (Objector) Leslie Short (Agent)
4942/16	Richard Fawcett (Parish Council) Andrew Adams (Objector) Phil Cobbold (Agent)
2797/16	Vicky Waples (Parish Council) Vicky Waples (Objector) Geoff Armstrong (Agent) Robert Eburne (Applicant)
5010/16	Vicky Waples (Parish Council) Robert Eburne (Applicant)

The Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning outlined the proposed order of proceedings as follows:

- i. Overview of the applications
- ii. Officer presentation of each case, followed by speakers case by case
- iii. Debate
- iv. Motions

He advised that the parish had requested the Secretary of State to call in the applications but the Committee should appropriately express 'minded to' resolutions regardless of whether this happened. In response to Members' questions he explained the implications of refusing one or more applications and how the cumulative impact of decisions could be considered. He confirmed that as Members were asked to make 'minded to' decisions at this meeting, final decisions would be made at a later Committee with the exception of the appeal proposal.

(i) Overview of the applications

The Senior Planning Officer gave an overview of Thurston, the development proposals and cumulative benefits. Thurston was a key service centre due to its facilities and its accessibility to Bury St Edmunds and surrounding villages and Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy was clear that the majority of development should be directed to main towns and key service centres. The County Council (SCC) had identified that the existing primary school was at capacity and incapable of being extended and there was a need for a new school to meet any future growth. Two of the schemes would provide land for a new primary school with one also providing land for use by the Community College. Safety issues with parts of the highway network had also been identified and SCC and MSDC had worked with the developers to resolve this situation. All the developers had agreed to contribute funding towards the provision of a new school and road safety and connectivity improvements throughout Thurston, together with contributions towards a travel plan and improvements to local health care, library service and the railway station.

Steve Merry, Transport Policy and Development Manager, Suffolk County Council gave a presentation outlining the work undertaken in collaboration with the five developers and the parish council. Transport assessments had been carried out and a matrix produced showing traffic flow at eleven junctions, four of which were either over capacity or would be following further development. Proposed mitigation measures had been considered for these junctions but it was noted that further work was required to investigate whether further improvements could be made.

Neil McManus, Development Contributions Manager, Suffolk County Council advised that the provision of a new primary school with early years provision was essential to underpin any development. The existing school was on a small constrained site with no possibility of expansion and the proposal to relocate the school was supported by both the diocese and the Academy. Two proposals included land reserved for a new school and wither site was suitable. Agreement had also been reached with all five developers that they would proportionally fund the cost of the new school from CIL contributions.

Members asked the Officers questions including:

- Any proposed improvement to access at the railway station / Rail network proposals
- Impact on funding for highways mitigation measures if not all schemes were approved
- Flooding on roads caused by a rising water table
- Preferred option for primary school site
- Additional funding to build the primary school if required
- Pedestrian link between proposed developments and school site
- Capacity issues at Fishwick Corner
- Safety audits on the mitigation proposals
- Developer contributions to community facilities

- Listed building designation of Manor Farm group of buildings
- Potential halt on development if the existing school capacity, including the temporary classroom, is exceeded

(ii) Officer presentation and speakers case by case

Item 1

Application Number: **4963/16**
 Proposal: Outline Planning Application sought for up to 250 new dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure, and up to 4.4ha of land for educational uses for Thurston Community College and a new Primary School site, including details of access on land west of Ixworth Road
 Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land west of Ixworth Road IP31 3PB
 Applicant: Persimmon Homes Limited

The Senior Planning Officer advised Members that the Highway Officer's consultation response had been amended to that in the tabled papers. The main changes were:

- A correction to the description of the application which was incorrect on the previous version
- Condition 5 had been altered and allowed up to 150 dwellings to be built before the emergency access from Mill Lane was completed

It was noted that the recommendation should read '... to grant **outline** planning permission ...'

Peter Robinson speaking for the Parish Council said that it was not considered the Section 106 and CIL financial provision would address the problems brought by the application. There was no proven benefit to Thurston. There was also concern that SCC Highways had not carried out their own traffic assessment and that there was no software available that could predict traffic flows on minor roads. The existing traffic flow, speeding and parking around the Community College were already a problem, all of which would be adversely impacted by the proposal. No traffic flow data was available for traffic through the village and vehicles must use a rural lane to reach Junction 46. The police had expressed concerns regarding increased traffic during peak flow times. Further concern was expressed regarding the adverse impact on the countryside.

Jonathan Masters, an objector said the application was out of character to the village and its rural setting. There were concerns regarding its size, the adverse impact on wildlife, loss of amenity to existing residents and light and noise pollution. Ixworth Road was a narrow rural road which was used by numerous HGVs accessing the Sugar Beet Factory, subject to flooding and could not cope with increased traffic. Pedestrian safety was a major concern. The proposed education land was lacking in transparency with no detail of what might happen if a school was not built on it and there was concern it might be used for additional dwellings. The western

boundary proposals needed improvement and a wildlife belt should be included.

Darren Cogman, the agent, advised that the application had been subject to considerable partnership working with Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council. The Highways Department had developed mitigation measures at a number of junctions around Thurston. This was an outline application with only access to be approved with all other matters to be determined at the Reserved Matters stage. A three metre wide foot and cycle way would be provided to improve connectivity to the Community College and Rugby Club. Following consultation land for education use was also provided which would allow both a new primary school to be built and an extension to the play area for the Community College. 35% affordable housing would be provided which was much needed locally.

Councillor Derrick Haley, Ward Member made an opening statement. He advised that Ward Members had been put in an impossible position trying to balance the views of the community with the wider corporate role. The priority of Mid Suffolk was to build houses but in the right place at the right time. Thurston over many years had seen development and a large increase in population and although not against development considered it should be on a different scale to the current proposals. He felt the infrastructure was not being put in place for any of the developments and any mitigations for highways and education did not address the underlying issues of an overall plan for Thurston. He asked the Committee to take on board both the Parish Council and community objections which were applicable to all the applications.

In relation to this application he said he could not support the use of this type of agricultural land which was in such short supply in Mid Suffolk and any loss was significant. The highways and safety issues were also of great concern as even with the proposed mitigation measures increased problems were likely. SCC Highways had previously made promises to Great Barton regarding changes to the A143 but not been able to afford to carry out the work and he considered that the applications were seen as a way to fund the improvements which would be of little benefit to Thurston.

Councillor Esther Jewson, Ward Member, also made an opening statement. She said it was a question of balance and sustainability. Houses were needed but infrastructure was a serious problem and the additional strain was not addressed adequately and she was very concerned about the collective potential harm to the community. The collective applications represented a leap from a rural village to a town and would change the face of the village without addressing the impacts. Highway impacts and safety were also a major concern

In relation to this application she said she could not support the loss of prime agricultural land which was irreplaceable and was against the NPPF, paragraph 112, and poorer land should be used for development. The lack of detail in the proposed infrastructure improvements was unacceptable. Highways issues were of great concern, traffic transference onto surrounding roads had not been looked at, speed limits were already not adhered to and any reduction was not enforceable, and no improvements were shown to Pokeridge Corner, which was a main entrance/exit to the village which was unacceptable.

Item 2

Application Number:	5070/16
Proposal:	Outline Planning Permission sought for the erection of up to 200 homes (including 9 self-build plots), primary school site together with associated access, infrastructure, landscaping and amenity space (all matters reserved except for access)
Site Location:	THURSTON – Land at Norton Road
Applicant:	Pigeon Capital Management 2 Ltd and Mr Peter Hay

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application and it was noted that the recommendation should read ‘... to grant **outline** planning permission ...’ He advised that updates to the proposal were included in the tabled papers and that within the report pages 258 and 263 were duplicates of each other and the full document was on page 263 onwards.

Peter Robinson, speaking for the Parish Council said the parish was not against development providing it was shared among the villages of Mid Suffolk. The location for this proposal was well outside the built up area and was in open countryside which would be severely impacted by the development. The proposed pedestrian footway did not link up to the public right of way from Norton Road to Church Road. The Travel Plan did not demonstrate a lack of reliance on the car. There was concern regarding water and sewage issues as there was no evidence of the necessary enquiries being made and raw sewage had been found in the stream running through the village. Anglia Water and the Environment Agency had been informed and it appeared to come from the sewage works adjacent to the Pakenham Road.

Rob Snowling, the agent, said the proposal was for a high quality, sustainable and landscaped development. A three hectare primary school site was included together with infrastructure and green space for the whole village, The scheme had been amended to meet the challenges of what the community were seeking to provide for the village. The school site met the immediate need and provided a parking and drop off area. New informal footpath links were proposed together with extensive existing footpath/cycle way enhancements to improve connectivity to the village and Community College. The proposed housing density was lower than all the other schemes and was in keeping with the surrounding area and it also provided the highest number of bungalows. The applicant was happy to accept a condition requiring that the indicative plan be put forward at Reserved Matters stage.

Councillor Esther Jewson, Ward Member said her concerns remained the same as with the other applications regarding infrastructure issues. She noted that this developer had engaged with the community and tried to take the community views into account. She asked the Committee to hold the developer to these commitments and endorsed the Historic Officer’s request for more robust boundary landscaping on the eastern boundary. She drew attention to the surface water drainage issue and asked what mitigation measures would be put in place. She asked what evidence there was that there would be increased pressure on the Ixworth Surgery as she

believed more people used the Woolpit Surgery. She also considered that traffic mitigation had not been addressed.

Councillor Derrick Haley, Ward Member said that this was the only applicant that had engaged with the Parish Council and community, attending meetings to listen to comments, and tried to take them on board. He questioned the maximum cost of £100k per acre for the school site as he believed this to be high. He pointed out that in the report the second bullet point under 'Infrastructure' should read 'Mount Farm Surgery'. He also believed that most residents used Woolpit Surgery followed by Mount Farm not Ixworth. He said that with an ever aging population strain on the health service would only get worse and there was no bus service to Ixworth.

Item 3

Application Number: **4386/16**
Proposal: Erection of 138 dwellings including the construction of a new vehicular access and provision of cycle/pedestrian link to Barton Road together with the provision of road and drainage infrastructure, landscaping and open space
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land on the west side of Barton Road IP31 3NT
Applicant: Bovis Homes Ltd

The Senior Planning Officer advised Members that there were updates in the tabled papers. A further letter had also been received from one of the original objectors stating that the majority of points raised had been addressed by the amended plans. However, they had raised two new points as follows:

- the amended plan had altered the layout so that more properties were now facing their rear garden and were now 23m distant as opposed to 25m
- the applicant is proposing to plant trees and hedging as a garden boundary which was unacceptable as they may be removed or fail to grow.

Officers considered that 23m was an acceptable distance between properties but agreed with the second point and had asked for details of hard garden boundaries to ensure privacy was maintained.

Richard Fawcett, for the Parish Council, said there was overall concern regarding the cumulative impact of the developments. Health care was a major concern as the local surgeries were almost at capacity. Also Woolpit Surgery was five miles away and Manor Farm Surgery over four miles and with an aging population a surgery in the village would be more appropriate. A management company was proposed to look after the open spaces but no funding was available and no plan if this failed. There was a lack of adventurous play area or field for unregulated sport. The location was on the approach to the village and the proposed development would have a major impact on this rural area. Highway safety was another major concern. Overall there was no improvement or benefit to Thurston village from the proposed mitigation measures.

Ian Stammers, an objector, said he represented twelve households that bordered

the development all of whom strongly objected. The proposed scheme was of an urban design not in keeping with the existing properties, 90% of which were bungalows. Little effort had been made to screen the development. Highway safety was a serious concern. Barton Road was a major access and a very busy road used by a significant amount of buses at school times with insufficient width for two large vehicles to pass each other in places. Speed checks had also shown that many vehicles travelled in excess of 70mph. Although it was intended to extend the speed limit many people would still flout it. SCC Highways had not carried out a full traffic survey while admitting the significant impact of the development. There would be increased footfall at the railway station but no funds were available to increase safety. Development needed to be sustainable and not of this magnitude.

Leslie Short, the agent said the application was for a fully detailed scheme capable of early delivery. There was a good cross section of house types well designed to Thurston and the site. It was a full application which would provide 48 affordable dwellings in the locations shown on the site plan. If Members wished a condition could be included that allocation was prioritised for local people. The impact on local infrastructure was recognised hence the full complement of CIL contributions together with additional contributions via a Section 106 obligation. It was a sustainable development. Representatives had attended two parish council meetings and a public engagement exercise had been held in the Community Centre. Following this consultation the layout had been amended to reflect comments made.

Councillor Derrick Haley, Ward Member said there was no benefit to the village whatsoever from this proposal. Any engagement with the public had been minimal and should be dismissed. He did not support the application.

Councillor Esther Jewson, Ward Member, said the proposal did significant harm and offered nothing to residents. The scheme was not in keeping with and directly contravened the principles of paragraph 109 of the NPPF. The proposed three storey flats were not keeping with the surrounding development and the rural nature of the village. The flood issues had not been resolved and there was no satisfactory mitigation to highway safety issues.

Item 4

Application Number:	4942/16
Proposal:	Residential development consisting of 64 dwellings and associated highway, car parking and public open space
Site Location:	THURSTON – Land at Meadow Lane IP31 3QG
Applicant:	Laurence Homes (Eastern) Ltd

The Senior Planning Officer advised Members that updates to the proposal were contained in the tabled papers. A further letter had also been received from one of the objectors commenting on the latest amended plans. They still had fundamental objections to the proposal but noted that the amended layout plan had gone some way to alleviating concerns about the proximity of the proposal to their garden boundary. The Parish Council had also made a late representation on the amended

plans. They raised comments in relation to residential amenities and highway safety, issues already raised and addressed in the report. Waste provision for the site had also been queried and comments made regarding bus stops on Norton Road. Regarding waste bins, the applicant had not provided the level of detail required to respond but this matter could be covered by planning condition if the application was approved. It was proposed as part of the highway infrastructure works to have new bus stops on Norton Road to improve connectivity through the village.

Richard Fawcett, representing the Parish Council said insufficient regard had been given to the aging population of Thurston and its needs. Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan had shown that more elderly would like to remain in the village and no bungalows or care home was proposed or small homes designed to life time homes standards. The overall design and density was inappropriate for the village. There was concern regarding the highway access and road safety and the boundary issue on the western side needed resolving. No sustainable employment gain or leisure/retail facilities were proposed. There was a danger the village would become a dormitory town resulting in added pressure on the roads and health care.

Andrew Adams, an objector said he was directly affected by both this application and the one on Ixworth Road. There had been no prior consultation or opportunity to make comments. The process had lacked transparency due to computer problems with documents missing from the website, policy constraints were not mentioned and national policy overrides not publicised. A detailed agricultural report had been made for some sites but not all. He believed that Officer opinion regarding land loss was wrong, the loss was in excess of 20 hectares cumulatively and Natural England had not been consulted on the cumulative effect. The report had dismissed the impact on adjacent properties when they were adversely affected. He felt the application should be dismissed pending further consultation on the missing documents and the results of the call in to the Secretary of State.

Phil Cobbold, the agent advised that the proposal provided 22 affordable homes of the size, tenure and location as agreed by the Housing Enabling Officer. It was the smallest of the five proposed schemes and the number of dwellings had been reduced during pre-application discussion as more suitable for the edge of village location and was a coherent extension of the existing settlement area. It was a full application which had been carefully designed to reflect with the surroundings and accorded with the space standards in the Suffolk Design Guide. All technical consultees found the proposal acceptable and in the absence of a five year land supply and no significant impacts to outweigh the social, economic and environmental benefits the application met policy.

Councillor Esther Jewson, Ward Member said although this was the smallest scheme it still put pressure on infrastructure. She also had concerns regarding the single access point which she felt was unrealistic for 64 houses and a density of 50 houses would be more acceptable to the community.

Councillor Derrick Haley, Ward Member said his main concern was the single access point. It was the smallest of all the proposals but still had a number of the same issues as the other applications.

Item 5

Application Number:	2797/16
Proposal:	Outline Planning Application (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 175 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping, public open space areas, allotments and vehicular access from Sandpit Lane
Site Location:	THURSTON – Land to the south of Norton Road IP31 3QH
Applicant:	Hopkins Homes

The Senior Planning Officer advised that there were updates to the proposal in the tabled papers. He went on to clarify the difference between this proposal and application 5010/16. He explained that application 5070/16, although the same proposal, was an appeal on the grounds of non-determination under the statutory time period. Under the appeal process the Inspectorate would need to know how the Authority would defend the appeal and therefore Members needed to resolve a 'minded to' decision to allow Officers to present the case in an appropriate manner.

Vicky Waples, speaking for the Parish Council, said that the cumulative figure of 830 dwellings could all come forward at the same time and no thorough assessment of the impacts of this had been undertaken. There was no strategic planning. There were serious concerns regarding the railway station around both parking and safety. Parking in the village was already a problem as there was no parking at the station and this would increase with additional use. There would also be increased use of the crossing, which was already rated a high risk category, with a severe impact on safety unless appropriately mitigated. No applicant had addressed future usage of the station and the Mid Suffolk decision to refuse Section 106 monies towards mitigation and to have this funded by a CIL bid was not satisfactory. The application was non-sympathetic to the surrounding areas, the road infrastructure could not cope with additional traffic, there was inadequate cycle provision and the single point of entry was unsatisfactory.

Vicky Waples, speaking as an objector, said the village was at an advanced stage of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which should be accorded some weight. The Neighbourhood Planning Team considered the masterplan unimaginative and more in keeping with an urban edge of the town design. Three storey buildings were not in keeping with a rural village. There was a better need for screening round the edge of the site to protect the natural environment. The majority of comments received wished to see starter homes and bungalows and none were shown in the outline application submitted. It was disappointing that the concept Masterplan did not encourage housing stock to meet the needs of current and future residents. Little mention was made of pedestrian access or bus and rail services or the impact on highway safety. The access would increase traffic volume onto a road with no pavement increasing the danger to pedestrians.

Geoff Armstrong, the agent speaking on this and application 5070/16 said work had been ongoing on this site for two years. Hopkins Homes was a locally based firm

with an excellent record in the delivery of high quality development. There had been extensive engagement with the community and a public exhibition where the majority accepted the need for more houses and the application had been amended following consultation. No technical consultees had objected. The yellow strip on the plans indicated where bungalows were intended, and allotments and open space were provided, including a kickabout area. Additional screening and housing mix could be agreed at the Reserved Matters stage. Without a five year land supply the application should be considered with the presumption of favour for sustainable development unless the impacts outweighed the benefits. Thurston was the largest of the key service centres with a good range of facilities and despite the position of the nearby town it had seen no significant housing growth in the last few years.

Councillor Derrick Haley, Ward Member, said a question must be asked regarding what would happen to the existing primary school site if a new school was built, inevitably an application would come forward for more residential development. When dealing with an application in 2004 he had raised safety issues regarding the barrier at the railway station none of which had been acknowledged by Network Rail. Now Network Rail was suggesting mitigation measures were necessary due to the increased usage. A big issue was parking as there was already insufficient and the proposed development would worsen the situation considerably. He urged the Committee to consider carefully before making any decisions because of the significant impacts on the residents of Thurston. An increase of the proposed magnitude would change Thurston forever and he could not support any of the applications.

Councillor Esther Jewson, Ward Member advised that she supported the well thought through objections from the Parish Council. The lack of a cohesive transport statement was a significant problem. There was no sustainable transport, overburdening of the road system was an issue for all the developments, there would be standstill and chaos. The necessary infrastructure must come first. Too many houses were proposed and the damaging effect on the rural village of Thurston was considerable. Development should be carried out in a sustainable manner and the Parish Council and residents should be listened to. She asked Members to consider any decision carefully.

Item 6

Application Number:	5010/16
Proposal:	Appeal for non-determination of a major planning application within the 13 week statutory timescale for Outline Planning Permission (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 175 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping public open space areas, allotments and vehicular access from Sandpit Lane (Application 2797/16 is a duplicate proposal to this one)
Site Location:	THURSTON – Land to the south of Norton Road IP31 3QH
Applicant:	Hopkins Homes

Vicky Waples, speaking for the Parish Council, said the Parish Council noted that the settlement hierarchy directed development to towns and key service centres, but to apply a 62% uplift was disproportionate if the Granary flats were included. That scale of development would leave services unable to cope. The mitigation measures for the cumulative effect had not been tested and the highways proposals in particular needed more work. There was no mechanism to mitigate if the proposed new school did not come forward and no condition that if the existing school was at capacity that development would stop. Thurston was a village and not a town.

Robert Eburne, the applicant, said that no one application was proposing 827 homes but the various developers had agreed to come together to look at infrastructure provision to try to deliver the best solution for the cumulative impact. The infrastructure benefits on this wider level should be considered carefully, there was £6.6 million arising from CIL, £7 million from New Homes Bonus in addition to £6 million Section 106 monies. This was a colossal amount of infrastructure money and it was not yet determined how it would be spent although much work had been undertaken with both Mid Suffolk and Suffolk County Council Officers.

(iii) Debate

It was considered that although the cumulative number of dwellings was very large, considering the applications together was beneficial as if looked at individually there would have been a much lesser offer of mitigation measures.

Some Members felt that there was insufficient evidence provided to evaluate the applications but it was noted that the recommendation was for a 'minded to' decision and if additional information was required this could be requested for when the application was reported back. It was further noted that the applications would be reported back 'en bloc' apart from application 5010/16. Questions were raised regarding the funding for highways mitigation measures and it was noted that funding was not apportioned against individual applications and if a scheme failed then apportionment and sustainability must be reconsidered.

Some concern was expressed regarding the Environmental Impact Screening and whether a proper consultative assessment had been carried out on priority species and habitats. Officers advised that the proper screening had been undertaken on sites both individually and cumulatively but further exploration could be requested if Members wished. It was also noted that mitigation for the loss of skylark habitat was proposed.

Further concern was expressed regarding the cumulative loss of agricultural land and the lack of consultation with Natural England on the total area, and the lack of any mechanism to deal with the impacts on the railway station. Officers advised that the total area of agricultural land was below the trigger figure for consultation with Natural England and that railway improvements were included in the CIL contribution for transport improvements.

There was also concern that no commercial facilities were proposed to bring employment to the enlarged community. It was suggested that perhaps the increase in people could bring forward commercial opportunities.

The Committee advised that greater clarification of CIL and other benefits was required when the applications were returned to Committee, together with further clarification of the cumulative ecological and land quality issues..

(iv) Motions

Item 1

Application Number: **4963/16**
Proposal: Outline Planning Application sought for up to 250 new dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure, and up to 4.4ha of land for educational uses for Thurston Community College and a new Primary School site, including details of access on land west of Ixworth Road
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land west of Ixworth Road IP31 3PB
Applicant: Persimmon Homes Limited

Some Members felt that while the site was outside the settlement boundary it was contiguous with existing development. Without a five year land supply the presumption was in favour of sustainable development and Thurston was a key service centre. The proposed infrastructure contributions would bring forward improvements, the school provision was oversubscribed and the application brought forward a new school and improved play space and there was no adverse impact on residential amenity. Affordable housing was provided increasing social sustainability. Public open space was provided helping to secure the Visually Important Open Space to the south of the site. No objections had been received from the technical consultees.

A motion to approve the recommendation was proposed.

Others felt that there was only development to the left of the site and that the proposed scheme stuck out and was too far from the village centre making it unsustainable.

There was concern that the safety issues at the railway station were a major issue and further information regarding mitigation measures was required. Highways issues were also a major concern and it was suggested that further information was needed including a traffic assessment at the primary school site, further consideration of the increased traffic through the Great Barton junction which was already heavily used by traffic from other villages travelling through and traffic calming measures on Norton Road.

It was felt that there should be no three storey elements to the development as it would be inappropriate for a village setting and that consideration should be given to layout and design at the Reserved Matters stage.

An amended motion was proposed to approve the recommendation subject to further information being brought forward regarding Highways matters and solutions, railway station safety issues and material considerations requiring further information and proposed conditions. The motion was seconded.

By 9 votes to 6

Decision – That the Authority would be minded to delegate to the Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning to grant outline planning permission as recommended subject to:

- a) Highways matters and solutions
- b) Railway station safety issues
- c) Material considerations requiring further information and proposed conditions

Item 2

Application Number: **5070/16**
Proposal: Outline Planning Permission sought for the erection of up to 200 homes (including 9 self-build plots), primary school site together with associated access, infrastructure, landscaping and amenity space (all matters reserved except for access)
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land at Norton Road
Applicant: Pigeon Capital Management 2 Ltd and Mr Peter Hay

Members commented that this application was broadly similar to 4963/16 although somewhat tenuously adjacent to existing settlement. However when looking at it in context it became more adjacent to existing development and following engagement with the community the number of dwellings had been reduced and it was low density development. The proposed enhancement to the woodland would also soften the boundary and reduce the impact. Although concern was expressed regarding the two accesses on Norton Road and the number of right hand turns this produced on balance this was felt acceptable.

A motion for approval, subject to the same additions as for the previous applications together with an additional condition that Reserved Matters accord with the housing mix proposed in this application, was proposed and seconded

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That the Authority would be minded to delegate to the Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning to grant outline planning permission as recommended subject to:

- a) Highways matters and solutions
- b) Railway station safety issues
- c) Material considerations requiring further information and proposed conditions

and additional condition:

- Reserved Matters to accord with housing mix proposed at outline stage

Item 3

Application Number: **4386/16**
Proposal: Erection of 138 dwellings including the construction of a new vehicular access and provision of cycle/pedestrian link to Barton Road together with the provision of road and drainage infrastructure, landscaping and open space
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land on the west side of Barton Road IP31 3NT
Applicant: Bovis Homes Ltd

Members generally felt that the design and layout proposed were not suitable for a rural village development, particularly the three storey element. It did not enhance or improve the area and was therefore against the NPPF. The density was considered too high and the plots small and did not fit with neighbouring properties. The site was also Grade 3 agricultural land.

Others felt that the site boundary was contiguous with the settlement boundary and concerns regarding residential amenity had been resolved and that without a five year land supply the presumption was in favour of development.

A motion that the Authority was minded to refuse the application was proposed and seconded.

By 11 votes to 4

Decision – That the Authority would be minded to refuse the application as not representing good design which would not conserve and enhance the character of the locality and would moreover develop best and most versatile agricultural land contrary to the principles of NPPF paragraphs 56, 60 and 112 and contrary to Policy FC1.1 of the Core Strategy Focused Review

and that Officers report back to Committee on infrastructure issues and matters arising from the potential refusal of the application

Item 4

Application Number: **4942/16**
Proposal: Residential development consisting of 64 dwellings and associated highway, car parking and public open space
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land at Meadow Lane IP31 3QG
Applicant: Laurence Homes (Eastern) Ltd

Members found this application acceptable as it was smaller and more spacious with a good mix of properties. The site was already surrounded on three sides by development and it was not high quality agricultural land.

A motion to approve the recommendation, subject to the previous amendments together with an additional condition that parking and garage spaces to be used for parking only, was proposed and seconded

By 14 votes to 1

Decision – That the Authority would be minded to delegate to the Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning to grant outline planning permission as recommended subject to:

- a) Highways matters and solutions
- b) Railway station safety issues
- c) Material considerations requiring further information and proposed conditions

and additional condition:

- Parking and garage spaces to be used for parking only

Item 5

Application Number: **2797/16**
Proposal: Outline Planning Application (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 175 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping, public open space areas, allotments and vehicular access from Sandpit Lane
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land to the south of Norton Road IP31 3QH
Applicant: Hopkins Homes

It was felt that this site although outside the settlement boundary was contiguous with existing development on the southern and western sides and previous comments stood regarding a presumption in favour of development. The site was also grade 3 agricultural land and therefore a much less severe loss.

Some concern was expressed regarding the single access and it was felt that further consideration should be given to a second and emergency access point to serve the development. A motion to approve the 'minded to' recommendation subject to the previous amendments and subject to an additional conditions requiring further investigation of a second access point and emergency access was proposed and seconded.

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That the Authority would be minded to delegate to the Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning to grant outline planning permission as recommended subject to:

- a) Highways matters and solutions

- b) Railway station safety issues
- c) Material considerations requiring further information and proposed conditions
- d) And subject to the further investigation and reporting back of issues associated with a second access point and the emergency access point

Item 6

Application Number: **5010/16**
Proposal: Appeal for non-determination of a major planning application within the 13 week statutory timescale for Outline Planning Permission (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for residential development of up to 175 dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping public open space areas, allotments and vehicular access from Sandpit Lane (Application 2797/16 is a duplicate proposal to this one)
Site Location: **THURSTON** – Land to the south of Norton Road IP31 3QH
Applicant: Hopkins Homes

Members agreed that comments relating to application 2797/16 were relevant and that the application was generally acceptable with the additional condition requiring further investigation of a second access point and emergency access. Further investigation of rail safety issues was also recommended as appropriate for the appeal.

A motion to approve the recommendation subject to the above was proposed and seconded.

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That Mid Suffolk District Council is minded to advise the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the non-determination appeal that [a] subject to the further investigation of a second vehicular access point and the emergency access point it would have recommended the grant of planning permission subject to [b] the completion of a Section 106 (as recommendation)

Add head of terms to Section 106:

- Subject to appropriate further investigation of railway station safety issues

Note: The meeting was adjourned for short breaks as follows:

7:04pm – 7:16pm

7:19pm – 7:27pm