

Briar Farm Development

Planning application 2022/0067

Town Councils response 18th March 2022

1. Design standards

The residential designs proposed in the application do not reflect in detail the local distinctiveness and character or seek to enhance its quality. Indeed, the design of the extra care apartments building appears to have an overbearing institutionalised appearance which does not respect the form, function, and character of the area. At present the designs do not appear to fully accord with the South Norfolk Design SPD and the Redenhall with Harleston Design Guidelines and Code.

2. Community infrastructure

The impact of the development on local health provision is of concern to local people. The provision of a high level of extra care accommodation in one location may also have additional impacts on those services as the occupiers of the extra care accommodation are more likely to have a regular need for health care than other occupiers. The Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System consultee has calculated that the capital costs alone of providing the commensurate health care generated by the development is £673, 631. In addition, concerns have been raised that there is no guarantee that health care will receive appropriate CIL contributions.

3. Flooding, Waste Water and Treatment plant

The application is supported by information pertaining to flood risk and water management. The appropriate statutory consultees will determine the efficacy of this information.

Concerns have been raised at the potential for surface water and drainage from the site to lead to flooding elsewhere in the town; specifically, where the proposal seeks to use existing drainage ditches that are already prone to flooding. Policy RWH22 of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of areas of localised flooding. Two of these – Lovat Close and Jay's Green are in close proximity to the north of the application site. The areas of localised flooding have been developed via public consultation and through the input of local people who have experienced issue of surface water run-off.

Concerns raised in respect of the capacity of the Harleston Treatment plant to accommodate foul sewage from the development.

This development should not exacerbate existing surface or foul water drainage problems or cause new ones within the town.

4. Traffic flow and congestion

We would like the section of Mendham Lane as it narrows to join Old Market Place to be included in the traffic monitoring programme with a view to providing measures to manage the volume of traffic which may cause congestion and traffic speed which may result in accident or injury.

5. Access from the A143

We support the inclusion of a temporary construction access from the A143 which will provide some relief for properties on Mendham Lane during the construction period. However, we would like this to become a permanent direct access into the site to alleviate traffic into the industrial estate and along Mendham Lane. We suggest traffic speed limits at the entrance point to the industrial estate.

6. Access for the lorries to the industrial estate

Concerns have been raised about access to the existing industrial estate. It is known that current lorry access to the industrial estate requires the use of both sides of the carriageway. Similar lorry access to the nearby proposed store may create bottlenecks and increase the risk of accident. We would welcome further analysis of the access point to the estate to ensure the current problems are not exacerbated.

7. Reroute town centre traffic flow to push traffic to the bypass

We would like to see consideration to measures to direct traffic from the proposed estate to the town centre from the bypass so as to not increase traffic flow through residential areas.

8. Joined up walking and cycle routes

We support the provision of pedestrian and cycle connections within the development. However, we would like to see engagement with local authorities to join the site to the town centre with specific pedestrian and cycle routes.

9. Renewable energy: solar panels and rainwater harvesting

We would like to see greater use of renewable energy that not only meets the minimum requirements of today but looks ahead to a time when vehicles are predominantly powered by electricity and homes are more energy efficient without reliance on fossil fuels. In particular: more electric car charging points with an ambition of supplies for each house, installation of solar or other electricity generating and storage, and integral rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling.

10. Impact on existing businesses

The application states that the proposed type of shopping facility does not primarily generate new business, and mainly displaces it from other locations. We are concerned about the impact on existing businesses within the town centre.

11. Low income – economy

While we welcome the inclusion of affordable housing, concerns have been raised that there may be a decline in the average per capita income of Harleston residents and composition of retail offerings in the town centre. The Council and residents are proud of the high proportion of independent shops within the town centre and are concerned about loss or decline of such attractive businesses.

12. Transport miscalculations

It is noted that calculations about the time required to walk into the town centre have been disputed by residents walking the indicated route.

Similarly, it is noted that the proposed development does not align well with current public transport. Such transport offerings are quite infrequent and limited to start and end times. We would welcome discussions and arrangements for a free shuttle bus using current providers to be available.

13. Position and access to the Community Land

Comments have been raised about the position of the community land and resulting requirement for related traffic to travel through a residential area. Furthermore, we would like access into the community land through an adopted road to form part of the design to avoid later requirements to alter developed roads.

Appendix 1 - FINAL advice provided to Redenhall with Harleston Town Council in respect of planning application 2022-0067 from Compass Point Planning & Rural Consultants

Appendix 2 – Concerns raised by residents at the Town Council meeting on the 10th of March 2022