

From: Village Concerns villageconcerns2016@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: regarding: Planning Application WD/2022/0341/MAJ
Date: 3 October 2022 at 08:00
To: Jonathan Walker jonathan.walker42@icloud.com



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From: Village Concerns <villageconcerns2016@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 26, 2022 at 6:44 PM
Subject: regarding: Planning Application WD/2022/0341/MAJ
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Monday September 26th 2022

Response to new documents. Reconsultation. Objection 15

Redrow Homes Hesmonds Stud Detailed

Please note that our previous 14 objections to this application still stand.

These objections can be viewed on our website <https://villageconcerns.co.uk/>

This reconsultation has raised several issues regarding procedure and practice.

1) In July 2022 Village Concerns asked for a new consultation period. **Village Concerns Objection 8.** 28 new documents had been added. None of the documents were for minor amendments and none of the changes had been signposted. Several documents were extremely lengthy. It was essential that all Consultees and members of the public were reconsulted before the application came before the Planning Committee.

No reconsultation was instigated.

2) The Application came before the Planning meeting on August 11th 2022 and was deferred. Documents dated Aug 9th appeared on the website after this meeting. The public should have had sight of these documents before the Planning meeting. It is not acceptable or democratic to withhold them. The fact that the application was deferred is immaterial.

3) A few Notices dated Sept 6th 2022 re the application appeared in the village stating that amendments and updated information had been added and the public could make representations.

a) We fail to see why previous objectors could not have been informed by email. It would be good practice for Wealden to do this to encourage a spirit of openness

and transparency and to encourage engagement with the public.

b) We fail to see why these additional documents have not triggered a reconsultation after the Planning meeting when our original request was turned down.

c) The only Consultees approached are the Parish Council and Cllr Draper. Many other Consultees had raised valid points and objections which needed answers. Surely, for the removal of doubt and clarity, the written responses of all Consultees should be added to the application. Their response should be to the 28 documents previously added and these more recent ones. Their responses need to be in the public domain.

d) The Consultation period was extended to September 23rd but the online facility was removed before this date.

4) **Village Concerns Objection 10** Officers Report rebuttal

The new documents do not address our concerns raised in the rebuttal. In particular we highlight the following issues:

a) Housing. A proposed housing tenure mix has apparently been agreed with Redrow but the new documents do not address this or give any information. Is it compliant with WDC policy? There has been no change in the layout of the Social Housing as requested by WDC Housing. A public response from WDC housing is required on this vital issue.

b) Long Pond. There is still no specific plan for use of Long Pond. There is no policy regarding protection/ mitigation for the Newt population of Long Pond. Are the Newts to remain there or be moved? The new document on management of Long Pond ignores the Newt and Wildlife issue. How can a licence be issued until this fundamental matter is resolved? See below additional Biodiversity issues.

c) More information is still required re Heat Pumps and Electric Charging Points. Document listing the Renewable Energy System and the Electric Vehicle Charging Point are listed for Plot nos 1-139.

For these homes, it is welcome to see they will be furnished with the Electric Heat Pump System and not fossil fuels.

However, this is curious as the site is meant to have 205 homes.

Perhaps, there has been a much-anticipated change of heart which has certainly been

requested by the Village to reduce the numbers on the site and that is why this list stops at 139.

Officer's Report Otherwise, what other explanation could be given for this list to stop at that number?

What are the other missing homes going to be heated with?

The information is still too vague and incomplete for a full planning application. Condition 25 needs to be far more stringent otherwise the developer will be able to reduce and minimise any contribution to the Climate Emergency.

5) Southern Water

Southern water has submitted a response 21/09/2022

SW state that the additional foul flows will not increase the risk of flooding. There is absolutely **no detail to support this statement**. This is contrary to the Council's motion to request more information. SW have not even reiterated the information

submitted for the deemed inadequate on August 11th 2022, the reason for deferral. What level of sewer storm overflow spills does SW deem acceptable?

2020 East Hoathly Storm overflow spilled 41 times for a total of 416 hours.

2021 East Hoathly Storm overflow spilled 46 times for a total of 593 hours.

55 houses in South St already have planning permission. This application is for 205 more.

Coupled with the inadequate pipework one can only assume more overflow spills.

The application should be refused or deferred for this reason alone.

Further details re sewage system on our website: <https://villageconcerns.co.uk>

6) Access on London Road. Oak Tree T1

In the Officers Update "Following discussions with the applicant they have confirmed T1 will actually be retained. This follows a review of this tree by the developer's

T1 will actually be retained. This follows a review of this tree by the developer's technical team, highways and tree consultant that the crossing point can be provided in the same place without the need for this tree to be removed."

However comparing the latest Tree Protection Plan Sheet 2 of 2 PO3 with the previous plan PO1 the revised plan shows T1 being retained, as stated although part of G2 adjacent is still to be removed.

The proposed highway works will still affect these trees and the plan notes that a Method Statement will be required. The MS should detail the proposed construction make up and how they will complete it without damaging the tree's roots.

The Tree Protection Plan indicates that the road layout has changed. The filter lane appears to be shorter and has moved away from tree T1 and is no longer opposite the War Memorial Playing Fields entrance.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact changes but the GTA Transport Assessment which was re-issued on the 9th August 2022 shows that the The Highway Improvement and Access Plan within this assessment has not been revised to reflect the changes on the Tree Protection Plan. The last update was in fact P2 which was issued on the 26th October 2021.

If the access arrangements have changed then they should be detailed within the GTA Transport Assessment. The Tree Protection Plan should then show the proposed changes.

If the access arrangements are changed, as they have been then a new Road safety Audit (RSA) should be carried out.

In short the current access documents conflict so the Planning Application, in its current form should be rejected.

7) Biodiversity Net Gain

The applicant submitted Biodiversity Net gain report in June 2022 and a further report dated August 10th 2022 (Note the latter was not on the website for the Planning meeting.)

We have submitted a detailed **Village Concerns objection number 9** to the first report. The report in August 2022 appears to only differ Para 1, 11 and 1,12 regarding Oak tree T1 and a hedgerow calculation. Hence our objections still stand.

We note that after 6 years WDC Biodiversity has finally submitted a report on 16/9/2022. A more critical approach to the reports submitted by the applicant would be welcome, addressing our objections rather than accepting the report at face value.

8) Community Consultation

Response to Communications Potential letter regarding community involvement, dated, 31/08/22. This letter gives the impression that not only has the consultation with the Village been thorough, but it has been welcome. It has been neither. From the Village Concerns perspective that is equally true. We did not meet with Redrow and for very valid reasons. One we were in the middle of a Judicial Review when they approached us and that would have been incorrect but above all, we were set up as a group to fight over development in the Village and we have well over 200 + supporters - how would that look to them if we met with the house builders set to destroy our Village. We attended the event mentioned, to put questions to Redrow to fight this

development not to support the event the development as your letter gives the impression. The interest was / is a negative interest, certainly not a positive one. These houses are not welcome here and never will be.

We expect an apology from Communications Potential for using our name and our group in vain. Redrow's public consultation event had no designs and only a general site layout that was deeply flawed and heavily criticised. There have been no subsequent workshops or public engagement with Redrow nor with Wealden. Redrow have made no contact with the Neighbourhood Plan team, the Community Land Trust or neighbouring landowners. Village Concerns knows this as some members of our Steering Committee are also members of the NP team and the CLT team.

It is fair to say that the general public are deeply cynical regarding these Consultations regarding them as a box ticking exercise not actual engagement with the public to see and respond to what the public want.

In **Village Concerns Objection 13** submitted after the Planning meeting presented the following information

Para 9 9. Village Concerns noted the comments of the Chair at the end of the discussion. These comments could have significant impact on the determination of this application:

a. The first comment of the Chair was: "and it gives our planning department the chance to go back to Redrow, who will hopefully have the opportunity to clarify some of the concerns that have been raised". We welcome any discussion that the planning department have with Redrow, particularly in relation to reducing the "up to figure of 205" and "quite considerably". If this is a discussion with a positive result then a revised housing figure and revised layout must be the subject of a new period of public consultation.

b. The second comment of the Chair seemed to be put out to the general audience but is thought to have been intended for the Redrow representatives: "And I would personally say, if you haven't had a public meeting I would advise you to do so". Village Concerns would engage positively with any public meeting, as would many members of our community. However, you need to take on board that whilst Redrow would be sensible in organising a public meeting, this is not a Redrow responsibility.

The NPPF Paragraph 133 is very clear: "Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels".

The NPPF 133 exemplifies good practice for meaning full engagement with the public.

Conclusion

Despite the amendments and new documents our objections still stand. Please view objections 1 to 14 on our website <https://villageconcerns.co.uk/>

Katherine Gutkind and Kathryn Richardson

Co Chairs of Village Concerns