

**MINUTES OF EAST LEAKE PARISH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING HELD THE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2016 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs, Gary Grayston, Donna Greggs, Ron Hetherington, Jeff Jones, Marie Males, Moira Males, Conrad Oatey (Chairman), Peter Rapley, Glennis Robinson, Mel Roper, Kevin Shaw, Carys Thomas, John Thurman,

The Clerk Lesley Bancroft, Assistant Clerk and approx. 50 members of the public were also present

**16/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Cllr Liz Taylor reasons given and approved

**16/61 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

**16/62 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**16/01881/OUT LAND NORTH OF REMPSTONE ROAD**

**OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR UP TO 235 DWELLINGS, PRIMARY SCHOOL, INFRASTRUCTURE, GREEN SPACE, ASSOCIATED SURFACE WATER ATTENUATION & LANDSCAPING**

The Chairman reported that 4 letters of objection had been received by the Parish Council and that the Borough had received 40 plus.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.02pm to allow members of the public to ask questions and observe written questions with concerns to the planning application.

The Chairman re-opened the meeting at 7.40pm for members of the council to discuss the points raised.

Following a discussion the Parish Council unanimously object to the plans on the following grounds:

- Conflict with Rushcliffe Borough Council emerging Local Plan Part 2.
- The access arrangements are inadequate, and impact on surrounding roads will be unacceptable and as yet there has been no response from Nottinghamshire County Council Highways.
- Infrastructure in East Leake will not cope with further houses
- The proposal contravenes several policies in the East Leake Neighbourhood Plan.
- This site does not constitute sustainable development

Further details are given below.

**1. The Principle of Approving Further Housing in East Leake**

The Local Plan allocates a minimum of 400 homes to East Leake for the period to 2028, and as of 2016, just 3 years into the plan period, planning permission has already been given for 800. Whilst it is understood that the 400 is a minimum figure, the approvals far exceed what was planned for. To quote from Rushcliffe Borough Council's own issues and options paper for Local Plan part 2:

*"... other than allocating these eight sites that already have planning permission, there is no need to identify any further land at East Leake for housing development over the plan period (up to 2028). To do so would put at risk the Core Strategy's focus to locate development*

*within or adjacent to the main urban area of Nottingham. There are also concerns over East Leake's capacity to support further development at this time and the affect that any further development would have on the character of the village."*

The location of East Leake is such that it does not contribute well to the requirement to provide housing for the Nottingham area, which needs to be on the edge of the urban area. Aside from the distance, public transport links between East Leake and Nottingham are not sufficiently good for East Leake to be considered a "sustainable" location for housing to serve Nottingham.

East Leake is essentially a rural village, although a large one, and further large development at this time would be a visual intrusion, having a severe negative impact on the rural setting and the whole character of the village. Residents are concerned about further loss of green fields and farm land.

There are currently questions as to whether Rushcliffe can demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing. However even if this is the case there is only a presumption in favour of **sustainable** development. This site cannot be regarded as sustainable due to the distance from the village centre and isolation from surrounding streets, the poor access arrangements and issues with road safety, and the lack of capacity in key elements of East Leake's infrastructure (schools, health centre and sewage).

## **2. Transport and Access Concerns**

As pointed out by several respondents to the current application consultation, there are concerns about the access into the proposed development, the capacity of the roads and road junctions in the immediate vicinity, and questions about the integrity of the transport assessment. East Leake Parish Council fully supports the comments made by Mr and Mrs C J Robinson, and the commentary on the Transport Assessment provided by several residents, and will not repeat the arguments in full here. However we reiterate the following key concerns:

- The Loughborough Road / Rempstone Road junction is already notoriously dangerous due to the dip in the road – increased traffic will exacerbate this problem.
- The A6006 has a high accident rate already, without the extra traffic generated by all the East Leake developments and the Stanford Hall DNRC.
- The A6006 staggered junction with Loughborough Road, being the main access from East Leake in the direction of Loughborough, is congested, difficult and dangerous with existing traffic flows, particularly at peak times. Adding further to this seems irresponsible.
- The eastern section of Rempstone road is a poorly surfaced single track road with muddy verges and a dip that floods.
- We understand that the site access junction off Rempstone road does not conform to highway design guidance
- To our knowledge no response has been provided by NCC Highways in time to be considered by us.

## **3. Assessment of this application against East Leake Neighbourhood Plan**

### **3.1 Policy H1 – Infrastructure**

Policy H1 requires various items of infrastructure to be achieved *in time* to satisfy the needs of any development over and above the minimum 400.

The application provides a site for a **primary school**, but not funds to build the school, merely providing the usual S106 contribution based on the number of homes. Contributions from this and the other developments are not sufficient to build a school and there has been no indication from NCC that funds are available from other sources to build a new school. Indeed there is no guarantee that NCC would go ahead with a move from the existing Brookside site, as expanding the school on site remains an option to deal with the housing applications already approved. Until/unless the provision of primary school places is resolved, the application cannot be regarded as conforming with policy H1.

**Health Centre** plans are even further from being realised. The developers have rumoured that a new Health Centre could be provided on the site of the existing Brookside School, but again there is no indication that funds are available for this. The site would not be released until the new school was built, so would not satisfy the requirement for a new Health Centre to be provided in time. Finally this site is regarded by many as being completely unsuitable for a Health Centre. It is not in the village centre, and the access road in the historic area of the village is narrow and potentially dangerous. The site would need to provide its own car park and pharmacy.

Research undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan revealed that the **sewage** treatment works does not have headroom to cope with the total demand of all the housing already approved plus the Stanford Hall development. No information has come our way of any plans to increase the capacity at the treatment works, and it is believed that any such work would have a long lead time. Additionally there are questions about the capacity of the pumping station in the centre of the village and very real fears about sewage being discharged into the brook and flooding the playing fields. Paragraphs 2.1.24 to 2.1.28 of the Neighbourhood Plan, plus section 5.5 of the Neighbourhood Plan’s Statement of Consultation provide further details.

### 3.2 Policies H4 and H5

H4 - Please note the requirements with respect to aircraft noise – a noise assessment and appropriate mitigation measures are required. No noise assessment has been provided with the application.

Policy H5 covers design and building standards. The applicant has provided an assessment against Building for Life as required by H5, but this appears to be a general purpose response, probably lightly edited from that of another development, cursory, and over favourable – lip service only. An independent assessment should be undertaken by Rushcliffe.

Our assessment would be as follows:

1. Connections	Red	An isolated cul de sac development with little or no integration into the neighbouring streets (see details elsewhere)
2. Facilities and services	Red	Distance from village centre as noted below
3 Public transport	Red	East Leake has poor bus service and onward public transport connections
4. Meeting housing needs	?	Not specified
5. Character	Amber	Very little in the proposal to give confidence
6. Working with site context	Red	Ignores NP requirement to keep green rim around the village.
7. Well designed streets and spaces	Amber	Undistinguished
8 Easy to find your way around	Red	Convolutted road layout is unhelpful. Straight roads are easier to find your way around.
9. Streets for all	Amber	No particular merits in this proposal
10. Car parking	Amber	Concerns about street parking in the vicinity of the school.
11. Public and private spaces	?	Unclear at this stage
12 External storage	?	Unclear at this stage

### 3.3 Policy H6

#### (a) – Walking Distance

The site is not within the required walking distance of 1.25km from the village centre for most homes on the site. The application argues that the site is within the required walking distance if FP5 is used. However para 2.5.2 of the NP states “Walking routes that allow for mobility scooters, baby buggies etc will be expected. Routes that involve steps or other obstacles would need strong justification for inclusion.” FP5 is a county footpath, largely grassed, with a long flight of steps in the connecting alley

to Burton Walk, totally unsuitable for mobility scooters and baby buggies therefore cannot be used to demonstrate compliance with H6(a).

### **(b) – Adjoining existing built envelope**

The site does not currently adjoin the built envelope of East Leake. It does not adjoin phase 1 of the Kirk Ley development. It would adjoin the remainder of the Kirk Ley site, however phases 2 and 3 have not yet submitted plans, and it is understood that remainder of the site is in fact still for sale. The site off Rempstone road under application should not be approved until/unless it is clear that the whole of the Kirk Ley site is actually being developed.

### **3.4 Policies T1 and T2**

T1 requires new development to provide good connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the village facilities. T2 deals with connectivity into neighbouring sites, and contributing to the strategic network of footpaths and cycle paths.

The site connects well into the public rights of way network for ramblers, but is less helpful for cyclists and those with mobility scooters, baby buggies etc. Improvements would be needed to FP5 to allow use by these groups and generally to ensure that FP5 could deal with potentially much greater use.

Unless adequate walking routes can be provided through the adjoining development in the direction of the village, pedestrian journeys will need to be via the main access point on Rempstone Road. There are no footpaths on Rempstone Road, Loughborough Road or the top of Castle Hill. Rempstone road is already heavily used by joggers, dog walkers etc. Ideally, given the location of this site, pavements and cycle paths along Rempstone and Loughborough Road would be provided as part of the development, to allow easy access from (and through) the site for those walking or cycling to Stanford Hall.

A cycle route would be needed in the corner of the site onto Rempstone Road where a pedestrian link is shown, and also on the other corner onto Rempstone road to reduce journey times for cyclists.

Provision needs to be made for walkers following FP5 to FP4, i.e. crossing Rempstone road at what would become a busy junction.

Permeability between this site and neighbouring sites is of paramount importance to reducing car journeys. Provision should be made for several foot and cycle path links into the Kirk Ley site (all phases). To conform with T2, such links should be adopted highway right up to the boundary, with no ransom strip. A similar link is also needed to a potential future development of the field to the east of the site – the two roads in this direction should be shown as going right up to the boundary of the site.

### **3.5 Policy E1**

Policy E1 designates ridges around the village to remain undeveloped to retain the “green rim” to the village. One of the ridges (Ridge A) runs along Rempstone road. The policy states that the heights of buildings should be limited to leave a green rim clearly visible and the proposal does not conform to this requirement. The development is also proposed well south of ridgeline C (runs along the back of Potters Lane), a ridge which Policy E1 expects to be the southern boundary of the built-up area for this part of the village.

### **3.6 Policy E3**

Policy E3 deals with green space within developments and states that green spaces should be incorporated for the benefit of wildlife. The proposal does include some green space, but the green corridor along FP5 needs to be enhanced with the specific aim of providing a green corridor for wildlife. The area of the flood attenuation basin should be planned and managed specifically for wildlife.

There could be merit in exchanging the areas designated for school playing field and attenuation basin, which would put the playing fields closer to the school and the basin on lower ground.

#### **4. Other Comments**

The comment by a neighbour about the light pollution from the new Microprop site is noted and East Leake Parish Council agrees that it is not appropriate for housing to be positioned in the vicinity of the greenhouses.

#### **5. Section 106 Contributions Requested by the Parish Council**

East Leake Parish Council strongly objects to the development, but should it go ahead requests S106 contributions for the following:

- Contribution to ongoing development of the recreation facilities in the centre of the village to increase the capacity and range of activities. Note that policy L1 requires also the provision on site of open play space and perhaps play equipment for younger children – we note that this is included in the proposal in the central green area. We would suggest a formula of £125 per house
- Contribution towards parking facilities in the village, i.e. expansion of Gotham road car park to accommodate the additional car journeys from this development. We would suggest a formula of £125 per house.
- Improved pavements and cycle routes as noted above, via appropriate contributions to NCC highways/rights of way.

The meeting closed at 8.17pm