

Calne Without Parish Council

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Andrea Kellegher
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16th July 2020

By email andrea.kellegher@turley.co.uk

Dear Andrea,

Proposed Development of Land South of Chilvester Hill, Calne

Thank you for engaging with the Parish Council as part of the pre application consultation on this development proposal and for the presentation from yourself and the project team on 8th July 2020.

The following are the Parish Council's initial thoughts about the development proposal and a continuing dialogue with you if the proposal is progressed would be welcomed.

The Parish Council has worked with Calne Town Council to produce the Calne Area Neighbourhood Plan and has ensured that Calne has more than played its part in meeting the areas housing needs. The Parish Council has been engaged with Wiltshire Council and Calne Town Council to begin the review of the Neighbourhood Plan in order to give the community its opportunity to plan for the future growth of the area up to 2036. It is therefore very disappointed that this development is being brought forward outside the development plan process.

As detailed in The Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Feb 2020 the Calne Area has provided well in excess of the 1605 dwellings that were required in the plan period to 2026. Completions 2006 – 2017 are 1130 with developable commitments 2017 to 2026 given as 1018, a total of 2148, 543 above the requirement set. The area will be accommodating over a third more dwellings than required to 2026 so the Parish Council does not consider that the Calne area has a housing need that should override the community's agreed and set out plans.

The Parish Council is very concerned that the additional housing growth that the Calne area has seen has not been matched by employment growth which has led to a continuance of the unsustainable out commuting identified in the Neighbourhood planning process. Out commuting is running at a level of 80% much of this going beyond the County boundary. This will be at the forefront of the Council's approach to the review of the Neighbourhood Plan to 2036.

The Parish Council notes that land can be brought forward for consideration at any time and the Neighbourhood Plan set the development boundaries for Calne and indicated that windfall sites outside these would not be permitted unless they met the criteria of other policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The effect on the relevance of the Neighbourhood Plan of the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 in cases when a 5-year land supply cannot be demonstrated is noted. This matter is being taken up with both Wiltshire Council and local MPs as it undermines the principles of Localism behind the Neighbourhood Planning process and lets down the communities that have put time and resources into producing the Plans.

Notwithstanding the above objection to the principle of the development the Council has the following detailed concerns:

1. Access

The access proposed is the minimum acceptable level in highways terms and local knowledge indicates that this would be likely to lead to accidents and injury. The Council believe that the access should be taken off the roundabout, if that is proven not to be achievable then consideration should be given to alternative designs for the access including consideration of a reduction in speed limit and use of islands, turning lanes and carriageway realignment. The Council would welcome involvement in discussions on alternative access arrangements and their impact on the traffic in the area including the impact on the A4 /A3102 roundabout, the turning to Ratford and the access for the surrounding properties.

2. Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to the town amenities and the bus stops on the A4 will be required. The presentation indicated that a path and crossing would be put in place to the east of the site to join with Meadowsweet Drive. This will not provide safe access to the bus stops nearest to the site. There is no indication of a safe cycle route to and from the site.

3. Listed Buildings

Berhill Farm House and The Stable Range to the north of Berhill Farm House are both Grade 2 listed buildings and the setting of these has not been given any consideration other than to screen them from the development. The opportunity to enhance the setting of these buildings through good design has not been addressed. The setting of the buildings as seen from across the valley should also be considered.

4. Footpath CALW12

The right of way CALW12 crosses the site. This is at present part of a rural network of footpaths linking to the A4, footpath CALW11 which crosses fields to the Calne to Chippenham cycle path and CALN1 which links into Church Walk. The current plan incorporates this path into the main road access for the development significantly changing its current character from rural to suburban.

5. Existing Development

There has been no thought given to the overlooking of the bungalows at Walter Sutton Close with the plans showing two storey houses would be placed opposite the existing

bungalows. The proposed bungalows are to be placed on the western side of the site at the highest point which will be at odds with the adjacent building, Berhill Cottages.

6. Play Area

The siting of a children's play area next to the A4 is a concern in terms of safety and pollution and the Council is pleased that the developer is looking at alternatives to this.

7. Design

This site will form the entrance to Calne on the A4 and an important transition from the rural River Marden valley. The site if developed would require a bespoke design, well related to its surroundings.

8. Sustainable Homes

The Council was pleased to note that the developer was aware of Wiltshire Council's policy on sustainable homes and would encourage developers to exceed the minimum standards required and be aspirational and distinctive in their contribution to energy conservation.

Councillors hope that you find these comments useful and should you decide to continue to promote this development outside the Development Plan process the Council will be content to invite the development team to present the findings of the consultation process and possible alternatives to the access issue to a meeting of the Parish Council in due course.

Yours sincerely,

S Glen

S Glen
Clerk