

GREAT CASTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from a Public Meeting held on Wednesday 18th. January 2023 held in the Church Hall at 7.00pm

Attending: The Parish Council, County Councillor David Wilby and 50 residents.

Stancliffe Homes Planning application – College Close ref. 2022-1476-FULL.

The Chairman welcomed all present, and expressed his thanks to so many parishioners for attending. He outlined the main details of the proposals contained in this application, explained the background of Stancliffe Homes as a developer, mainly of similar-sized developments adjacent to small towns. He detailed the Parish Council's main objections to the proposals, which centred on the difficult access to the site and the additional pressures it would bring to an already congested cross-roads within the village. With 50 proposed new homes, it would be the largest single development to date in Great Casterton, and totally inappropriate bearing in mind the proposals being put forward on the Quarry Farm site less than a mile away, not to mention the 1200 homes suggested for the North Stamford expansion. A previous similar application was submitted more than 20 years ago, which was declined after appeal to the Secretary of State, who had stated that the development was outside the development area for the village and that access to the site was inadequate. He had apparently indicated that the land should not be built on. This application does not appear on the Planning website – a resident quoted a reference 2614/55/R/PB/ALN relating to this, and the Clerk will make enquiries of Planning regarding this.

The meeting was opened for comments and questions, and there was lengthy, lively debate on the various issues of concern to residents. The main details being:

How can residents object – a residents are encouraged to lodge comments on the Planning website, with photos, etc attached, where these are available and relevant.

Land ownership – The developers apparently do own the piece of land.

Access to site – the developers expect to be able to access the site through the piece of land known as Ransoms Strip, the ownership of which is unclear – it is unregistered land, on which the owner of the adjacent property is currently taking legal steps to claim adverse possession of it.

Local Plan – does the fact that RCC no longer has a Local Plan make a difference? David Wilby explained that in spite of initial fears, the RCC requirement for housing within the county over the next five years had already been exceeded, with pressure on the County alleviated.

Cumulative effect of local developments – David Wilby said that it is important to stress the effect all the local proposals (St. Georges, Quarry Farm, North Stamford) will have on local infrastructure – access to all of these are along narrow roads, creating excess pressure on already congested roads.

Archaeological considerations – The Leics. CC County Archaeologist had already lodged a requirement for full archaeological investigation of the site, rather than the usual desk-top survey. This will be an expensive and long-drawn out process.

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Education facilities – both Primary School and the College Are already working at capacity already, so that places for new resident pupils will not necessarily be available. Local catchment places are understood to the 4th. Priority for the Primary School. It will mean that these pupils will have to go to other schools in the locality, adding additional traffic problems at rush-hour times.

Traffic considerations – College Close is already very congested at school times, and access through to and from the proposed site would be very difficult at these times especially. Stancliffe Homes' traffic survey quoted in their application was taken during half-term, rendering it irrelevant. The average number of vehicles per household in the village is close to 2, meaning up to 100 additional cars will be adding to the already very congested access along College Close. It can also be difficult at times exiting the close, as the view to the left up Ryhall Road is restricted.

Traffic along Ryhall Road and at the Crossroads is already very congested at peak periods, and will only get worse if the development is approved. Children using the 'safe route to school' are at great risk at these times, and there have been three accidents at the crossroads within the past month.

Emergency services and utility services access – Access along College Close is already difficult for ambulances, fire tenders and delivery vehicles, again, will only get worse if these further homes are built. College Close is virtually impassable at school times, particularly in the afternoon when parents park along there to await their children.

Environmental considerations – protected grass verges within the village are already suffering from vehicular damage, and there are grave doubts about the sustainability of the utility infrastructure and sewage drainage in the area.

Shops and recreational facilities – there are no shops within the village, which means that all have to travel outside the villager to shop, necessarily creating more traffic from both residents and supermarket delivery vehicles. The same applies with the lack of recreational facilities in the village – residents must find these outside the village, with resultant extra traffic movement.

The meeting finished at 8.15pm