



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

23 February 2017

The Planning Officer
Suffolk Coastal District Council
East Suffolk House
Station Road
Melton
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 1RT

Your ref: DC/16/4770/OUT

Dear Sir / Madam,

Outline planning permission for up to 138 dwellings, a 60 bedroom nursing home with 50 assisted living apartments, car parking, open space provision with associated infrastructure and access – land off Yarmouth Road, Melton

Melton Parish Council Planning and Transport Committee, at its meeting on 22 February 2017, considered the above application and it was resolved to recommend refusal. The reasons are set out below.

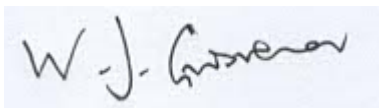
- The application site lies outside the built up area of the village and under the current Suffolk Coastal District Council Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies is classified as countryside where no development other than in necessity or special circumstances (Policy SP29) or under the exceptions set out in Policy DM3 will be allowed.
- The proposed development is out of scale with the existing settlement of Melton, and runs counter to Suffolk Coastal District Council Policies SP2 and SP19, which seek to relate the scale of development to appropriate locations. Although Melton *village* is classified as a key service centre (Policy SP27) this Policy envisages minor extensions / small scale developments either abutting or within the defined physical limits. The scale of development proposed, coupled with already approved developments, would put considerable additional strain on existing services, facilities and infrastructure
- Whilst the applicant claims that Suffolk Coastal District Council is unable to demonstrate an adequate 5 year land supply as required by Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the most up to date Suffolk Coastal Housing Land Assessment (October 2016) states that the local authority can now show a supply of 5.8 years of housing land. Therefore the above local policies should not be considered to be out of date and still apply.
- Even if the Council were unable to demonstrate the required 5 year land supply, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in Paragraph 14 of the NPPF were to be engaged, Melton Parish Council considers that the site and the proposals set out in this application do not constitute sustainable development.

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- There is poor connectivity between the application site and the built up area of the village, and also with Woodbridge. The location of the proposed development is such that it would be difficult to comply with Suffolk Coastal District Council Policy SP11 in terms of accessibility. The applicant's submitted Travel Plan seems unrealistic at best. The distance between the centre of the proposed development and Melton Station is about 1.6km. With only very limited facilities available in Melton village, it is over 2km to Woodbridge, and the Travel Plan itself acknowledges that the greatest potential to replace car journeys with walking is in respect of journeys of under 2km. Bus services from Yarmouth Road to Woodbridge are (weekdays) four per day from Framlingham and less than hourly from Aldeburgh, with only the Aldeburgh – Woodbridge service available on a Saturday. Whilst additional services are available from the bus stop outside Melton Chapel in The Street, Melton, that bus stop is about 1.4km from the development with no effective safe, continuous footpath between the two points. Invariably nearly all journeys to and from the new development would be vehicle based. The Parish Council does not in fact consider that the requirement in Paragraph 35 of the NPPF to “give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and have access to high quality public transport facilities” is capable of being met by this application because of the site location.
- The additional traffic likely to be generated by a development of this scale would have significant wider impact on the local highway network, including the A1152 Woods Lane / Wilford Bridge Road / B1438 The Street / Melton Road junction. Suffolk County Council as Highway Authority currently recommends refusal of the application unless / until a more realistic Transport Assessment / congestion forecast is supplied. Melton Parish Council is also aware that there have been a number of accidents and near misses on this section of the Yarmouth Road, including injury to a pedestrian, relating to the very narrow footway. Any significantly increased traffic levels would lead to more such instances.
- Suffolk Coastal District Council's Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan document was adopted by Suffolk Coastal District Council on 26 January 2017 and is now formally part of the District's Development Plan. Given existing permissions / build outs the plan identifies a need for a further 10 new dwellings in Melton. The identification of the site(s) for those dwellings will be made via the Melton Neighbourhood Plan. The Melton Neighbourhood Plan is currently at Submission Stage and the period for public consultation ends on 8 March 2017. Thereafter the Plan will be considered by the Independent Examiner (about to be appointed) and thence go to the referendum stage. The emerging Plan makes provision for new housing but the proposal site is not identified for development. Furthermore this proposal is contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policies MEL1 (physical limits boundaries) and MEL17 (areas to be protected). Given the current stage of the Neighbourhood Plan, although not yet adopted, its contents should be afforded some weight in the decision-making on this application.

The Parish Council wishes to add that Councillors would have liked an opportunity for an informal discussion with the applicant's representatives before considering this application, but, despite making contact on numerous occasions, it did not prove possible to arrange a meeting.

Yours faithfully,



William Grosvenor

Clerk to Melton Parish Council

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