

**Questions posed to the Care Village Development Team on Wednesday 20 May 2020.
Answers in red received on 26 May 2020.**

Answers

Access and Traffic

1. Yarmouth Road is extremely busy in normal times and leads down to an already heavily congested junction at The Street/Melton crossroads. What assessment have you made of the impact of additional traffic on the junction?

The Transport Assessment report supporting the planning application includes a trip generation assessment, which quantifies the number of trips that would be expected to be generated by the development during peak hours. The number of additional trips predicted to be generated by the development would be expected to have a negligible impact on the junction in comparison with surveyed baseline flows.

2. Bus services in Melton are sparse typically one per hour during the day on weekdays. Will the care home be providing transport or will residents need to make journeys by car to Melton or Woodbridge facilities?

The future operators of the care home propose to provide a minibus service which will take residents to Woodbridge, Melton Station, the supermarket and other key amenities as and when required.

The bus stops nearest to the site are served by the 63 and 64 bus routes, which typically provide hourly services in each direction between Ipswich (via Woodbridge) and Aldeburgh throughout the day. The existing public transport provision local to the site is considered sufficient to serve the expected patronage created by the development, and it is noted that the proposed minibus service will also meet this demand.

3. Cars often speed as they exit Melton heading up Yarmouth Road towards Ufford and as they come round the bend in the road near Melton Day nursery shortly before the proposed exit from the Care Village. How can you ensure safety here?

The proposed site access arrangement drawing illustrates that appropriate visibility splays are in accordance with Suffolk County Council's Design Guide, thereby ensuring that vehicles can safely enter and exit the proposed development.

4. Is it still your intention to widen the road near the entrance creating a ghost lane for traffic turning right into the Care Village?

The provision of a ghost island right turn lane was previously considered for the potential residential development at the site, which would have generated a higher number of vehicle trips, particularly during peak hours. Given the relatively low level of traffic predicted to be generated by the proposed care home, a right turn or a traffic refuge is not considered necessary to serve the development.

5. We have seen reference in the Design Statement {para 5.26} to the creation of a "traffic refuge", would that be on Yarmouth Road itself and where would that be in relation to the entrance? Has this proposal been discussed with Highways dept?

A traffic refuge is not considered appropriate given the relatively low level of traffic predicted to be generated by the proposals.

6. Will there be a contiguous pavement created from the Care Village down to Melton Village? If not how will elderly people be able to walk down Yarmouth road without crossing it?
7. Pedestrian access is proposed only through the main exit, therefore the walking distance to the village of Melton is more like 900 metres than the 600 mentioned in the design statement. Do you believe that significant numbers of the residents will be able to walk this distance especially given the steep incline on the return journey?

6 & 7 An informal pedestrian crossing is proposed as part of the site access arrangements to connect the site with the existing footway on the eastern side of Yarmouth Road. There are intermittent footways on the eastern or western side of the carriageway along the length of Yarmouth Road. Although pedestrians would be required to cross the road to access the centre of Melton from the site, visibility is considered sufficient at various crossing points to allow safe crossing of the carriageway. As previously noted, residents of the development will be able to use either the bus service or the dedicated minibus service, which will be provided by the future operator of the site, to reach all services and amenities.

8. Overall this may seem a less than suitable location for a Care Village. The travel plan is very optimistic about what might be reasonable walking distance, and Yarmouth Road is not the safest for either walkers or cyclists. Melton has very limited facilities and the likelihood is that most Care Village residents would want to travel into Woodbridge for a wider range of shops and cafes etc. That would imply (given the very basic bus service) that most journeys would need to be made by car. It might be considered that a development of this sort would be better located where it is at a distance of a gentle stroll from a wide range of amenities?

There is an hourly bus service which serves the site and provides connectivity between the site and the centre of Woodbridge, as well as other destinations. This will be supplemented by the minibus service proposed to be provided by the future operator of the development, which will provide transport to key services and amenities for residents as and when required.

Melton/Woodbridge is considered sustainable giving access to shops, pubs, golf courses, doctors' surgeries and bus and train services. A lot of what happens in the Care Village will be self-sufficient, but given the age of residents will be 75 plus, the provision of a mini-bus service to access local facilities and also for outings further afield will be important.

The vehicle trip generation assessment provided in the TA report takes account of the accessibility and proposed land use of the development when accounting for the expected quantum of traffic generated by the proposed development.

9. Have you considered creating a pedestrian path and access from the care village either to St Audrey's road or Jew's lane? This could provide easier access for residents to the facilities at St Audrey's Sports and Social and Cricket club.

As the majority of trip attractors, including key services and amenities, are located to the south of the proposed development, the provision of access onto Yarmouth Road and the connectivity with the existing footway network is considered to present the most appropriate means of pedestrian access to the site, but this connection will be considered.

10. In order to improve visibility you intend to rip up the hedgerow on the eastern {Yarmouth Road} side of the Care Village. The Plans seem to suggest that there will be some reinstatement of this barrier (withdrawn from the roadside). Can you explain what you are proposing to do here and in what timescale, as MPC is very anxious that development plans should wherever possible preserve hedgerows which are an important part of Suffolk's heritage and which provide valuable habitats for wildlife?

Whilst there will be some loss of hedgerow, the illustrative landscape masterplan shows new hedgerow planting along the eastern boundary of the site along Yarmouth Road.

We agree hedgerows are an important part of the local landscape and as such part of the proposals also include the introduction of new hedgerow planting along the western boundary of the site.

The set back from the road is to allow for the 'visibility splay' which is the area required to be free from vegetation to be able to see clearly from the access.

11. You have indicated that facilities on the site {Cafe, Bowling Green etc } would be available for the wider community of Melton but elsewhere you talk about “controlled access”. Could you explain how you see this working?

The concept is that older people downsize from their large family homes to the retirement chalets and that later as their health and independence deteriorates they can move into the Care home. The entire site provides safe supervised living for the elderly with close contact to the local community e.g. visits from local schoolchildren, community use of on site cafe annual fetes etc and as much independence as the individual residents can cope with at each stage.

12. In paragraph 4.5 of the Planning Statement accompanying the application you state that the site is included as a site for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan when it is not. Can you explain this?

The site is not included as a housing site in the Neighbourhood Plan.

13. Can you please explain paragraph 4.8 of the Planning Statement accompanying the application where you refer to paragraphs 5.41 and 5.42 of the final Draft Local Plan? The point you seem to be making needs further clarification.

The East Suffolk Local Plan is being reviewed currently and through that consultation it is evident that insufficient provision has been made for accommodation for the elderly within the Plan. The Government Inspector reviewing the Local Plan has asked that this aspect be reconsidered in the light of the local housing market area assessment, showing a high population growth in the over 65s during the proposed life of the Plan. Page 92 of the emerging local Plan projects an increase of 57.8% in the number of people over age 65 in East Suffolk between 2014 and 2036. The Plan suggests that an additional 1,257 sheltered housing units and 1,118 extra spaces in registered care homes will be needed in that period but the Plan as drafted does not set out how this need will be met.

Drainage

14. Suffolk County Council Flood and Water Management have submitted a “holding objection“ to the development due to concerns about the drainage proposals. Have you been able to address these concerns?

Further information with regard to the drainage strategy has been requested which has been referred to our engineers who will provide the requested information.

15. Can you reassure the nearby residents that the proposed attenuation pond will have no detrimental effects on their property?

The proposed attenuation pond will have no detrimental effects.

Errors in Design and Access Statement

16. Paragraph 3.28 of the Design and access statement appears to be referring to another development in Surrey and paragraph 5.73 to proposals in Norfolk. Are these just errors?

Apologies, these errors will be corrected.

Ecology and Wildlife

17. The ecology report refers to the presence of grass snakes on the site. What measures will be taken to identify protect and re-home such reptiles?

The Ecology Report confirms that reptiles are unlikely to be found on the site.

18. Why are some parts of the ecology report redacted?

A further copy of the Ecology Report has been provided.

Business Track record

19. Can you tell us something about the ownership and track record {in Social Care} of Woodbridge Care Homes and “Carlton Hall”?

Details were provided of the experience of Tony Prendergast in operating a similar successful facility in Lowestoft.

Future Plans for adjoining field

20. What are your plans for the remaining section of the field, that is on the western side of the Care Home Village?

There are no current plans to redevelop the adjoining field.

Impact on Local healthcare facilities

21. What proposals do you have for supplementing or paying for additional health facilities in the Melton area as part of this proposal, for example increased strain on GP and Dental practices?

Tony Prendergast indicated that since most residents were already local to the area, the Carlton Village was not adding to medical needs in the area, just concentrating them in one location allowing them to be met more efficiently. He felt the same would apply to the facility at Melton.

Most of the future residents of the Care Village would be from the local area and therefore to a significant extent those demands would occur in this area anyway. It was noted that in any event Suffolk and the UK as a whole faced the problem of the need for additional health resources for older people. The Developer anticipates that it would be required as part of this application to make financial contributions to support such services in the Melton / Woodbridge area.