

## BARNWELL PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at The Village Hall Barnwell at 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors D Brown (Chair), C Forrest, H Hanlon, T Herring , G Wise (7.45pm),

**In attendance:** N. Phillips (Clerk), 4 x members of public

<b>22/06/413</b>	<b>To receive and approve apologies for absence</b> Cllr Soans, Cllr J De Bock
<b>22/06/414</b>	<b>Public participation session</b> Members of the public spoke about Planning Application NE/22/00665/FUL
<b>22/06/415</b>	<b>To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda.</b> None
<b>22/05/384</b>	<p><b>To consider and resolve the council's response to planning applications listed below plus any other applications advised by North Northamptonshire Council and available on its website between the circulation of this agenda and the meeting to which it pertains.</b></p> <p>NE/22/00665/FUL: Demolition of an existing conservatory and erection of a ground floor rear extension, to be similar footprint; Loft conversion with proposed front and rear dormers with a complete external redesign/overhaul</p> <p><b>Resolved: Objections – see attached report</b></p> <p>NE/22/00698/OUT: Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for the offices (Use Class E); creation of a principal estate road (including bus stop) and new access from the A605; construction and emergency access; highways improvements to Huntingdon Road and A605 roundabout and at Junction 13 of the A14; strategic green infrastructure; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks, sub-station and boundary treatment. And - Outline planning application with all matters reserved for an employment park comprising Class B2, B8 and E uses with ancillary offices; creation of a new access from Oundle Road; vehicular and cycle parking; pedestrian infrastructure; hardstanding; circulation areas; lighting infrastructure and all other ancillary, enabling and associated works including landscaping, drainage, earthworks and boundary treatment, at Land Adjacent Haldens Parkway Thrapston</p> <p><b>Resolved: Objections – see attached report</b></p>
<b>22/06/417</b>	<b>To confirm date of the next meeting of the Parish Council as 19th July 2022</b> <b>Resolved:</b> Meeting date confirmed
<b>22/06/418</b>	<b>To close the meeting</b> The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**NE/22/00665/FUL**

Barnwell Parish Council wishes to object to planning application NE/22/00665/FUL (Craigmarr), as it is submitted, on the following grounds:

There is insufficient offroad parking for the size of the proposed development of this property and it is hoped that the owners can reconsider the proposed layout to accommodate any extra vehicles and therefore avoid additional roadside parking.

Although the roof line does not appear to be being altered it is felt that the rear dormer extension is rather large and could be overbearing and that if the length of it could be reduced by 300mm on either end this would improve the appearance without compromising the provision of the additional bedrooms and would retain the lines of the existing roof as well as the dormer appearance of the roof.

There is no objection in principle to the proposed materials, however, the dark wood cladding is not used on surrounding buildings, and its use on the three side elevations, in their entirety, would be rather overpowering. Barnwell Parish Council therefore asks that consideration be given to restricting the wooden cladding on the SE elevation to the upper part of the gable end with brick/render forming the rest of this wall.

Barnwell Parish Council acknowledges that there will be some loss of privacy to neighbouring gardens from the proposed development, because of the introduction of the rear dormer roof windows, although because of the relative floor levels (Craigmarr is set at a lower level than Seton Grange) and because Craigmarr is set forward from Seton Grange, this is considered to be minimal. Mitigation measures (e.g. introduction of frosted glass to windows) are considered to be impractical for habitable spaces, however perhaps some consideration could be given to the introduction of additional planting as screening.

## **PLANNING APPLICATION: NE/22/00698/OUT | Hybrid planning application**

Barnwell Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons.

The Barnwell Parish Councillors and the community they represent, strongly object to this significant development proposed in the heart of the Nene valley, the development seems to offer almost no benefits to the local communities and will have a wide range of negative impacts that will blight the area for decades to come. Our material objections are outlined below.

### **The application contravenes local and regional planning policy.**

The application contravenes the planning policies for the areas in the development plan. Namely Policy 1,3,4,10, 11, 13, 23, 24, 25 and 29. In the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston plan, section 9.9 states "It is not considered necessary to identify major new Greenfield employment sites in the Thrapston area". The proposed development is contrary to section 15 of the NPPF Landscaping protection policies and conservation of the natural environment and Policy 3 of the Joint Core Strategy Landscape protection policy.

### **The application will destroy the landscape and visual amenity of the Nene Valley**

A development of the enormous scale outlined in this proposal, both in area and height will have an irreversible detrimental impact on the whole of the Upper Nene Valley and the surrounding countryside. The damage to the landscape character will be greatly exaggerated by its position on one of the highest points in the area overlooking the Nene Valley. Existing warehouses through the valley give a clear and factual evidence of how these structures are visible for miles in multiple directions, eroding the traditional rural character of the area. This even larger proposed development will dominate the area and the local town completely changing the landscape and setting. Not only will development undermine the long established aim to promote Northants as a tourist attraction, but more importantly will damage the tranquil nature of the area and erode North Northants as an area to live and work, ultimately damaging the local economy. The proposed development is on a hillside which overlooks the Nene valley and is at the gateway to the Market town.

### **Highways Safety**

The most significant and direct concern for Barnwell residents is the massive impact we believe this development, if permitted, will have on the local highway's infrastructure, and in particular, the A605 that connects Thrapston to Peterborough. This single carriageway road is already over capacity and residents experience tail backs and delays on a daily basis – exiting the village to join the A605 is already particularly difficult as it is a T junction, rather than a roundabout, and at peak times residents can wait for up to 10mins for a break in the traffic. There have been a number of accidents at this junction recently and this would only get worse should vehicle numbers increase. The anticipated increase in lorry movements from this development along with any cumulative effects from other proposals that have recently been granted or may be granted in future will undoubtedly cause grid lock on this road.

There are several other large developments along the A14 whose impact on that road and also on the A605 has yet to be fully realised. For example, The Symmetry Park (2.3 million sq feet) Cransley Park, Sergio (1.2 million square feet) and at Warth Park (1.3 Million sq ft) on the AA 45.

### **Noise and Disturbance**

The noise level experienced in the Barnwell from the road is significant. Many villagers complain of the invasive noise. At times you must raise your voice to be heard when outside. More traffic will produce more noise and pollution. The residents of Titchmarsh, Thrapston and Thorpe Waterville will no doubt be even more severely

affected. Some residential properties in Barnwell are located within 10m of the carriageway and the existing levels of traffic noise and pollution are intolerable.

### **Flooding**

We are concerned about significant increased risk of flooding to the town of Thrapston and beyond. Due to the nature of these businesses there is also a significant risk of contaminated water reaching the Thrapston Nature reserve and hence the river Nene. The development sits uphill of the town in wider catchment of the river Nene – covering this farmland in concrete will increase the threat of rapid run off from extreme weather events, whilst we understand that the site will include SUDs and run off ponds, with the anticipated changes in weather patterns now imminent through climate change with predicted heavy rain fall events we are not convinced that measures can fully protect residents of the town or land further downstream.

### **Loss of agricultural land**

This area is classified as good to moderate farm land. The loss of farmland when the UK is looking to increase food production makes no sense. The loss of farmland to what is mainly a speculative development is even more nonsensical.

### **Biodiversity and Nature conservation**

The developers indicate a 30% increase in biodiversity as part of this construction project, however it is important to be clear that none of this uplift is dependent on the development of the site and this application. The metrics used are baselined against a site where the current land management practices are very poor for wildlife outcomes, simple changes such as improved hedgerow management or the establishment of field margins would quickly increase the biodiversity on site and change the metric outcomes considerably. The habitat creation outlined as part of this application could easily be implemented without the construction of large warehouses whilst retaining the important open rural character of the land and ensuring the land remained in its current use as important agricultural land. New grant schemes such the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) would allow the current landowner to be paid for and get income from the creation of woodland outlined, and the new national Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMs) which will be introduced from 2024 will allow the land owner to be paid for the wetland and grassland outlined. There is also a significant opportunity to develop an enhanced species rich hay meadow from the old quarry site.

More importantly this site makes up a significant part of the wider buffer zone of the Nene valley Special Protection Area, SPA. This is an internationally important designated wildlife site, predominantly for its wetland bird species and in particular the Golden Plover. Golden Plover use and need the whole of the Nene Valley, including the surrounding farmland, as part of their life cycle, with the arable fields an intrinsic part of their requirements for resting and feeding in winter. NE have requested increased effort into Winter bird surveys for this site, and although they were inconclusive this winter, it is recognised that Waders are highly mobile and use wide areas of the landscape for winter feeding and roosting requirements. Therefore, as the precautionary principle takes precedent, it cannot be assumed that this site is not important for the sustainability of the population.

*The key issue on this site is that it has been identified as possibly 'functionally linked' to the SPA for golden plover and lapwing, and therefore wintering bird surveys are required. The status of foraging plovers around the SPA is still very unclear, and therefore the precautionary principle becomes relevant. It is expected that Natural England will want to see a robust survey effort, and that a single winter of surveys might not be enough.*

On the neighbouring proposed development at Castle Manor farm (**NE/22/00151/FUL**), winter bird surveys have evidenced the importance of the 74ha site for Golden Plover with a maximum of 60 individual's birds being recorded

on one survey, this is a considerable 1.5% entire GB population! So, there is an obvious assumption that this site will also be used by overwintering Wader populations and will make up a significant part of the wider habitat requirements of the SPA.

Natural England have required further surveys as they are concerned about the impacts of this development on the population of Golden Plover in the Nene Valley. The cumulative impacts of further loss of the open arable fields through increased warehouse development along the river corridor, that buffer and support the wetland habitats in the valley bottom will have considerable impacts on the current ecosystems the Nene supports, and particularly rare birds such as Golden Plover. We do not believe that any realistic wildlife mitigation measures could be implemented that would compensate for the cumulative loss of these important farmland habitats for Golden Plover, so the council will have no choice but to reject this application.

### **Local Employment**

We note the developers' assertions around future jobs for the area – however from local knowledge we would question and challenge their predictions. There are already more jobs created than requirement in the Joint Core Strategy and many current vacancies are not filled. In-order to operate existing warehouse unit's employees are being bussed in from towns many miles away, or reliant on students from local sixth forms. To address this lack of available workforce, warehousing is investing in significant automation, this is predicted to accelerate in coming years and these mega units may have minimal employment opportunities. Therefore, we dismiss employment as a significant benefit to the local economy.

### **Climate Emergency**

We would urge the new North Northants council to be bold and consider the wider long term picture as we face a climate emergency and biodiversity crisis, and our national ambitions to be net zero by 2050 – the further development of very large scale warehousing will generate hundreds of thousands of tonnes of carbon during the construction phase in the concrete, steel and transport, and the their long term use will generate many thousands more in unsustainable logistic and transport systems. We believe the council should be focusing on sustainable small-scale developments on brownfield sites that would bring relevant local jobs, businesses that enhance the local economy and sustainable developments that contribute to our net zero ambitions, whilst retaining the open landscape character of the Nene Valley that is so important for community wellbeing and retention of North Northants as vibrant place to live and work. Such ambitions are clearly set out in the Local Plan Part 2-which sets a vision for East Northants with regards to land use.

The use of existing warehousing or the conversion of older ones to modern requirements would equate to using brown field sites. It would also seem common sense to attempt to site warehouses near rail links if we are to cut carbon emissions from road haulage. Barnwell Parish council urge you to stand up for our local area and reject this application.

We hope our local councils will not be tempted by short term gains from Section 106 money but will act to protect our locality for future generations.