

Staplehurst Parish Council has made the following comments:

“It was RESOLVED nem con to recommend that this application be REFUSED.

Councillors commented: the relocation of dwellings by the applicant did not go far enough, being confined to only a few houses on the eastern edge of the development; to be consistent with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan policy H4 and to be fair to all existing residents the layout should address the relocation of proposed dwellings along the full length of the boundary;

the width, alignment and twisting of the main road through the site made it inadequate for the purposes of ‘safely taking two-way traffic between Marden Road and Lodge Road’ (Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan H4 (2)) and particularly of accommodating large vehicle movements;

a proper construction plan was required, which should include a clear description of materials movement and the phases of construction and which should take into account there would be movements and road closures associated with other large development sites in the village; a proper Lodge Road connection was essential, logically made before traffic calming measures on Marden Road itself;

Councillors’ disappointment with the scant information about planned drainage management was exacerbated by their knowledge of the well-documented drainage issues in the area and also those reported post-development on the Poppy Fields site at Charing; drainage management should be a key factor in determining the landscape of the site and therefore proper proposals for the site’s drainage, evidence of testing and responsibility for future maintenance should be made available;

due to the haste to exploit a small window available for newt-related activity, the newly submitted proposals appeared rushed and incomplete and the planning officer’s report, compiled before conclusion of the consultation period, inevitably premature – Councillors requested that MBC Planning Committee give full weight not only to the Parish Council’s comments but also to those of residents, whether made before or after the report.”

Officer Comment

The spine road allows for two-way traffic with three potential points of access to the adjoining land; a construction management plan is required under condition 12 of the outline consent; and surface water proposals have been scrutinised by KCC, the statutory consultee, and no objections have been raised.

Local Representations

Five further representations have been received raising the following (summarised) points:

- Still overlooks houses.
- Loss of privacy to rooms and garden.
- Distances quoted are from Lime Trees properties are incorrect.
- Green buffer introduced is not enough and does not benefit all houses.
- Flooding.
- Do not agree with some statements in the committee report.

- Breaking guidelines of keeping within time limits on applications.
- Lack of information.
- Neighbourhood Plan is being disregarded.
- Rest of the village should be considered.
- Impact on crossroads.
- Roundabout unnecessary.
- Allotments too small.
- Does not provide link road.
- Affordable housing is focussed in one area.
- Responsibilities under the Human Rights Act.
- Construction impacts.

Officer Comment

Most of these matters have already been raised, and either considered under the original outline consent, or in the committee reports.

The distances to the Lime Trees properties as outlined in the report at paragraph 4.1 are correct. In terms of time limits, this reserved matters application has been submitted within the necessary time limit of the outline consent. It is considered that the development adequately respects neighbouring properties and does not harm any person's private or family life, or the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions, and therefore does not breach the Human Rights Act.

Additional Condition

I wish to add the following condition to ensure the links to the Lime Trees estate are secured and maintained.

No development above slab level shall take place until details of the timing for the implementation of the pedestrian/cycle links to 'Further Field' and 'Marlfield' as shown on the approved plans has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained.

Reason: To ensure connectivity and integration in the interests of good design.

Outline Consent

The outline consent is attached for background information.

RECOMMENDATION

My recommendation remains unchanged.

Approve subject to conditions