

Your Ref:DC/21/0315/FUL
Our Ref: SCC/CON/1157/21
Date: 6 April 2021
Highways Enquiries to: Highways.DevelopmentControl@suffolk.gov.uk



All planning enquiries should be sent to the Local Planning Authority.

Email: planning.help@westsuffolk.gov.uk

The Planning Department
West Suffolk (BSE)
Development Management
West Suffolk House
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IP33 3YU

For the attention of: Penny Mills - SEBC

Dear Penny Mills - SEBC

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 CONSULTATION RETURN: DC/21/0315/FUL

PROPOSAL: Planning Application - Specialist dementia care village for up to 120 residents, including: 20 x 6 bedroom apartments provided within five buildings; central amenity building containing shop, restaurant, pub, communal hall, offices and staff accommodation; club/hobby rooms; treatment/counselling rooms; vehicle and cycle parking; landscaping proposals and associated works

Location

LOCATION: Little Court Haverhill Road Little Wratting CB9 7UD

ROAD CLASS:

Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highway Authority make the following comments which form a HOLDING OBJECTION on the grounds of highway safety:

Parking:

- If the site is taken as a Residential Care Home then 1 space per FTE staff member and 1 space per 3 beds for visitors is recommend. It should be noted that visitors includes medical and social visitors as well as relatives and friends. The level is set to acknowledge that while not all staff will drive there will be times when more than 3 residents have visitors. So this recommendation aims to provide enough parking while accepting there will be times when the car park is under-utilised. This is particularly important in locations where additional parking in public car-parks or on-street is not available.
- The application is for 120 (max) residents and the Travel Plan states 165 staff will be employed, with 55 being on site at any one time. Therefore the level of parking recommended would be 55 for staff + 40 for visitors = 95. The proposed 65 spaces is severely below the recommendations.
- The Travel Plan assumed (para 3.4.1) that the majority of staff will live locally and not drive however this is not evidenced.
- The Travel Plan refers to potential bus service improvements with the Great Wilsey Park development (para 3.3.3) however as these are an aspiration of that development and the timing and phasing is not certain, no benefit to other applications can be assumed or relied upon.
- We do however recommend the applicant considers a new bus stop by the site to help promote the use of public transport or staff and visitors. This would consist of a bus stops, with DDA kerbs, hard-standing and signs, on each side of the road with due consideration given to how pedestrians will cross to/from the northern (Bury direction) side of the A143.

- We note the potential for site-owned mini bus (noted in the Travel Plan and Transport Statement) but this must be a planning condition to be enforceable, and as Travel Plans are generally very hard to monitor and enforce and we therefore do not recommend relying on this as robust mitigation for an under-allocation of parking. If the applicant wishes for the Travel Plan to be a planning condition they must also contribute to the cost of external monitoring by Suffolk County Council.

Cycling & Walking:

- The site does not benefit from a cycle path or footway from Haverhill, or any other local town or village and therefore safe cycling and walking to the site cannot be assumed.
- We recommend the applicant provide an off-road footway and cycleway linking the site to Haverhill via the infrastructure already available or to be provided by the Great Wilsey development as part of currently approved highway improvement works. We cannot accept any sustainable links based on an assumption of infrastructure not yet delivered, regardless of planning consents, in case they do not come forward.
- Cycle storage is shown on the site layout drawing, which may be acceptable, but actual design, including racking, weatherproofing and security, must be submitted for both staff and visitors. The Travel Plan suggests many residents will have relatives that live locally and therefore good provision should be made for cycle storage for visitors suitable for both adults and children and include non standard cycles (such as trailers). The applicant should also consider provided points for charging electric cycles for staff.

Access:

The proposed access is illustrated as an appendix of the Transport Assessment, however it should be submitted as a stand alone drawing which can be directly referred to in any planning conditions.

With regard to drawing ZA921-PL-DR-001 P04 (appendix E of the TA):

- A cycleway is proposed to link to the access to Broadlands Hall which is also a Public Right of Way. While this may be an acceptable link from the Chalkstone Way and Kedington areas, it does not easily link to western side of the development.
- In any event the applicant should discuss any required PROW improvements and upgrades with Suffolk County Council PROW team. We cannot assume at this point that an upgrade of FP No. 5 to a bridleway will be acceptable.
- This proposed cycleway is very close to existing trees and the roots will be affected by the cycleway construction. The Highway Authority does not routinely adopt non-standard construction.
- The highway authority can only adopt new infrastructure which has a clear benefit for the general public. As the proposed cycleway is designed for access to this retirement/care home development only, we suggest a connection directly into the site further south away from the highway, although this will also need to be discussed with the PROW team.
- If any existing trees or hedges are to be removed to provide adequate visibility this must be clearly shown.
- An existing access to the west of the proposed access is stated as 'to be retained'. As shown this is unacceptable because it is not designed to join the new access at a suitable angle, is not sufficiently wide for 2 vehicles to pass and the path of exiting vehicles will cross the proposed pedestrian crossing point.
- The use of this 'existing access' is not clearly shown on the Traffic Impacts part of the TA. The additional vehicle movements must be fully understood.
- The design of the cycleway way shows pedestrians and cyclists (dismounted) must cross the proposed access, then immediately cross the existing access.
- The access design must pass a Road Safety Audit.

The highway authority will maintain an objection until the above concerns are suitably addressed.

Yours sincerely,

Hen Abbott

Development Management Engineer

Growth, Highways and Infrastructure