

Stannington Parish Council Statement to Castle Morpeth Local Area Council 8th February 2021

Stannington Parish Council objected to the development in July 2014. Most of the original objections have been dealt with in the intervening six years, nonetheless in 2021 there are still have some outstanding objections:

- Need for traffic calming and road marking (from 2014)
- Appropriate footpaths from the old A1/Great North Road (from 2014)
- Access arrangements for current properties and back lane left unmade (from 2014)

1. Access Arrangements 2021

Stannington Parish Council supports the current major objections of the Netherton Park Residents Association regarding access arrangements.

The original proposal for the access road included:

- Removal of the hedgerow on the northern side of the carriageway.
- Provision of a 5.5m carriageway, as required by NCC standards for an Access Road
- Provision of a 2m footway on the southern side of the carriageway
- An improved pedestrian crossing facility at the western end of the scheme to provide better pedestrian connectivity.

In the Strategic Planning Committee Report of November 3, 2015 the Planning Officer stated that NPRA concerns regarding inadequate road and pedestrian access had been largely met by inter alia, *'footpaths and pedestrian safety . . . widening of the access road to the necessary standards . . .'*

However, in 2019, NCC changed these key access arrangements and in so doing accepted they were sub-optimal. The reasons for the changes were not made clear, other than a statement that *'insufficient land was available to implement the original plans'*. Although the original application was taken to the North Area Planning Committee and then to the Strategic Planning Committee because it was a *'Large scale Major'* planning application, subsequent decisions to remove or downgrade the access arrangements were taken under delegated powers.

Stannington Parish Council questions the appropriateness of such a major change, impacting safety and access, being made by delegated powers and why the original access commitments, which met local and national guidelines, and which do not seem onerous, are not being implemented. Stannington Parish Council believe that planning approval would not have been granted in 2014 on that basis.

These changes, if introduced, compromise the safety of all road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. Irrespective of approval decisions already made, (7.50 in the Report), Stannington Parish Council asks the Committee to examine the detailed NPRA

submissions in October/November 2020 and defer the decision on the basis of safety and process, and suggest that the Senior Planning Officer and Applicant look again at the access arrangements to prevent a sub-optimal decision with serious potential consequences being implemented.

2. The Drive.

There have been a number of changes made to how this tree-lined avenue will be impacted by the development and Stannington Parish Council strongly regrets any loss of mature trees and hedges and requests that immediate TPOs be implemented as well as a request for a planning site visit. Although the reintroduction of new trees and hedges would be welcome, Councillors ask for greater detail on the process and request that residents are consulted on and included in the decision-making processes.

Stannington Parish Council share NPRA concerns regarding the access arrangements, as currently planned, at the corner of Kyloe entrance to the Drive and suggest this be looked at again as part of the wider access issues.

3. Other issues

Arrangements for the access track that skirts the west, north and east of the site (7.51 in the Report) are unclear. Road safety on this western route is an issue, with 3 blind/nearly blind exits and the prospect of new residents using it as a short cut. Bellway's solution is to leave part of the track unsurfaced as a deterrent. Ongoing maintenance of the private roads and authorised user categorisation is vague.

Stannington Parish Council ask for more consideration of:

- Why Bellway is not taking full responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the road?
- The appropriateness of leaving a small piece of road unsurfaced?
- What other measures may be implemented for new residents to prevent them from taking a short cut?
- The introduction of traffic calming and safety measures at the exits from the business centre, 1-4 Farm Cottages and the lane to access 5-8 High Farm Cottages.
- Clarity on road ownership, maintenance, and user categories.

The submission of a Construction Method Statement is welcome, but Councillors specifically ask that it address:

- The build time frame and phasing components.
- How Bellway addresses residents' concerns over noise, dirt and its potential impact on vehicles and properties

- What it proposes for the upkeep of the access road (which is already in a poor state of repair).
- How construction site traffic will be managed
- Security arrangements
- Speed restrictions during construction.

Stannington Parish Council thanks the Planning Committee for their attention and consideration in all these matters.