

From:
To: South Norfolk Village Clusters Allocations Plan: Objection
Subject: 31 July 2021 14:11:18
Date:

FAO Principal Planning Officer

South Norfolk Village Clusters Allocations Plan: SN0405 Seething

I object to the proposal for a high-density housing development on the SN0405 site on the following grounds.

1 The SN0405 proposal would have an exceptionally undermining effect upon the integrity of the Seething Conservation Area due to its adjacency to its boundary at its narrowest point.

In SNDC's own document *Seething: Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines (December 2019)* the authors have commented or referenced, "It is now recognised that development plan policies...can best be achieved when there is a sound understanding of the special interest of the conservation area...[and that] it is a duty...to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

National agencies such as English Heritage and Historic England are unequivocal about the pivotal importance of Conservation Areas and their role in protecting heritage assets.

I suggest that any of SNDC's own provisos concerning the management of traditional style of buildings in the Conservation Area or the need to specifically avoid the 'urbanising of the rural character' is non sequitur to any proposal that prefers the building of twenty or more new houses in an area so directly adjacent to the Area, in a position where the development is at its most prominent and visible to the main entrance to the village.

I also note that 'The Cart Shed' site north of Church Farm is not considered suitable for allocation, because it falls within the Conservation Area. This is historically accidental. It is not logically supportable to claim that The Cart Shed site "contributes significantly to this rural approach to the village" (as stated in your own consultation document) when SN0405, a much larger, more visible site closer to the village's heritage assets, does not.

Therefore I propose that **the development is not consistent with the rural, edge of village location, particularly with its proximity to the Conservation Area.**

2 The proposal is specifically out of character with the linear street village layout at Seething, with its currently and historically defined density and distribution almost entirely limited to one plot depth along its length. A development of twenty new houses at the SN0405 site represents a growth in buildings development of the village similar to an extension of the linear street from Church Farm to the War Memorial end of School Road. Comparably, it is a very large development - and its layout bears no resemblance to that which SNDC has already identified as Seething's 'historic grain'.

In this regard I suggest that by preferring this site, SNDC is not observing its own duty of care **to protect the character of villages and their settings and will do harm to the area's open and rural appearance.**

3 Since the current dwellings on Brooke Road are not on the mains drainage supply, I am unsure how the proposal could be facilitated to the basic modern standard of mains drainage without a highly interventionist plan for supplying it. Therefore I am concerned that the proposal does not meet the provisos of **mains water constraints.**

4 I note that the NCC Highways Department has expressed specific concerns regarding traffic and highway safety, and I support these observations.

SN0405 would be located on the particularly disadvantages stretch of narrow road forming a difficult and dangerous extended S-bend. It would require an access road to the proposed site and another access somewhere proximate to the S-bend if a second car parking facility were offered to Seething and Mundham Primary School as part of the scheme. I suggest that this is not possible safely on a road that is already dangerous, particularly during times of sharply increased traffic flow, twice a day at rush hours and up to four times a day during school drop-off and pick-up times, where street parking and congestion already cause significant safety issues.

Therefore I object to the SN0405 proposal because it would require extensive alteration and upgrading of the layout of Brooke Road which would "urbanise its rural character" and even so would not guarantee **safe and convenient access.**

5 I have read the objections lodged by the Parish Council in regard to the proposal and I unreservedly support them. The Parish Council's opinion is key to any planning decisions taken locally and their views should not be overlooked or ignored.

I hope you will consider this growing weight of evidence against any of the perceived merits of the SN0405 proposal and reverse its

current preferred site status at the next round of the planning process.

Yours sincerely