SUBMISSION FROM GELDESTON PARISH COUNCIL (Cluster 16)

QUESTION 56

*Do you agree with the extent of the Settlement Limit and any changes proposed? If not, please explain what further changes should be made.*

Geldeston is a small compact village (pop. 397, 2011 census) and as the representative of its residents the Parish Council is glad to see that no changes to the Settlement Limit are proposed. Geldeston’s present population and spatial organisation enable it to preserve a strong sense of community that is much valued by old residents and newcomers alike.

QUESTION 57

*Do you support or object to the allocation of the preferred site? Please add additional comments to explain your response and please specify which site(s) you are referring to.*

*If the site is allocated, do you think there are any specific requirements that should be set out in the allocation policy?*

SUMMARY

Residents of Geldeston and its Parish Council have reservations about the site for further building preferred by South Norfolk Council, “Site No. SN0437, Land off Kells Way”. Based on their concerns (see below, “Detail and Argument”) The Parish Council wishes to put forward the following requirements:

[1] NO HOUSES should be built on the preferred site until the Anglian Water pumping station below the Kells Estate has been replaced or upgraded;

[2] after requirement 1. is met, up to five -- certainly no more than 10 -- houses might be built on site No. SN0437, but only if effective measures are taken to reduce the hazards to all residents from AN INCREASED NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES passing through Kells Meadow and along Kells Way;

[3] similar proposals for densely built-up housing were made under the Local Development Framework in 2003. Our concerns at the time about THE IMPACT ON PARISH INFRASTRUCTURE of any expansion in housing were not answered.

We shall therefore send a copy of this submission to all appropriate bodies, e.g., Anglian Water (Waveney district) in Peterborough, and the Highways Department at County Hall in Norwich.

DETAIL AND ARGUMENT

We are concerned (i) about the impact of any new housing (5-10 dwellings) on existing infrastructure and (ii) the effect it might have on the community’s capacity to integrate new households as it has always done in the past.

[a] **Increased density of population and motor vehicles**

If up to 10 houses were to be shoe-horned into this relatively small piece of land (0.83 hectare) it would add 20 and possibly more cars driving through the new houses of Kells Meadow and along Kells Way, the old established lower terrace of the Kells Estate (built 1947).

[b] **Extra pressure on the existing sewage disposal system** [attention: Anglian Water]

The Anglian Water pumping station below Kells Meadow and the Kells Estate has long been due for replacement. During the 2020 Christmas floods it could not cope and for 3-4 days it was necessary for a tanker to assist it in pumping away “waste-water”.

Where is the guarantee that this system for pumping sewage up the hill to the main disposal network will cope with five new additional households, let alone 10? No new houses, please, until the pumping station has been upgraded or replaced.

[c] **More speeding cars along Kells Way?** [attention: NCC Highways Department]

It is explicitly stated that there will be no road exit from or entry to the proposed new group of houses on the Old Yarmouth Road. Indeed, the “top road” above the proposed development is already too fast and dangerous. In 2019 the Air Ambulance had to be called to the most recent potentially fatal accident there.

Since the 13 houses of Kells Meadow were built, residents of Kells Way have noted an increase in the speed with which vehicles drive along their street as they leave the village. If more motor vehicles are added to this traffic, measures should be introduced to reduce and inhibit such speeding.

[d] T**here is NO shop in Geldeston**

In the Local Planning team’s description of our amenities, it is vaguely stated that we have “a shop” in Geldeston. That is hardly an accurate description of the shop at Dunburgh Farm.

For ordinary household supplies most residents go to Beccles (Suffolk) or use the convenience store two miles away in Kirby Cane & Ellingham (see Village Cluster 22).

WE HAVE BEEN HERE ONCE BEFORE

In 2003 the **Local Development Framework** (LDF) proposed building up to 140 new houses at urban density levels on six sites throughout Geldeston. Three of those sites have been revisited during the present consultation process.

At a well-attended meeting in the Village Hall residents expressed concern about LDF proposals, among them a suggestion that 49 dwellings might be erected on the land between the West End and the Kells Estate. The present suggestion that “up to 20 new dwellings” might be built on Site No. SN0437 would bring the total there to 33 new houses. That is still too many for the existing infrastructure; it is also out of keeping with the style and density of existing housing in the West End and the Kells Estate (to the east).

In 2004 two thirds of Geldeston households answered questions in the Parish Council’s **Village Survey** about the future development of our community. Many did not want more houses in the parish. Half preferred “single dwellings in controlled locations”. Conversion of redundant buildings was another popular option. There was far less support for small groups “of less than ten houses” (see Table 5: “What types of housing development would be acceptable in Geldeston?”, 2006 ***Geldeston Parish Plan***).

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It was not clear then, and it remains unclear now, how the existing road and sewage-disposal infrastructure is expected to cope with the additional pressure of up to 5-10 more houses, let alone 20 dwellings, in the most densely populated part of Geldeston.