**Response to SNC Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plans**

Earsham Parish Council met on Wednesday 28th July and discussed the documentation and plans put forward for the two sites identified by South Norfolk Council in the village of Earsham.

General comments on the proposals were as follows:-

It was felt that the village of Earsham does not realistically have the infrastructure to support any increase in the housing stock for the following reasons:-

* **Infrastructure** - Local facilities e.g. doctors and primary school, are already well used and the primary school is at full capacity. Priority for a place at the school is not given to Earsham children which means they have to be taken to the nearest school in their cluster by a vehicle, which in turn means more traffic on the roads.
* **Traffic** - There has been a substantial increase in traffic in recent years, possibly in part due to schools being out of the village with greater distances needing to be covered by parents to take children to out-of-village schools and also new businesses opening in the locality. Better traffic measures need to be in place to stop the speeding on the narrow roads, some of which have no footpaths for safe walking, unfortunately there is no deterrent for people who chose to speed.
* **Flooding** - Earsham is prone to flooding already on many of its streets. The Street, Kingsway, School Road, and Church Road to name a few. Further building in this village may potentially increase this. **The drainage system needs to be investigated throughout the area before any further developments are agreed.**

There has already been major flooding experienced in December 2020, which has prompted the formation of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance due to the significant surface water flooding in Norfolk, Earsham was one of the villages affected by this event and it would be prudent to await the outcome of the strategy currently being developed to reduce flood risk and the improvement of water management for not only this village, but all the Waveney Valley villages within the South Norfolk catchment area before any further development is considered.

* **Flood Zone 2** - Earsham sits on the edge on a Flood Plain (Flood Zone 2) mostly to the east of the village, however there are pockets of flood zones to the north and south which further limit drainage and another reason why further investigations need to be made to improve the drains and soakaways before any further development takes place. Norfolk County Council Highways are called out to the village every year to clear drains and also to try to get to the bottom of why the flooding is happening. Thus far this has not been achieved and to date Highways have done all they can within their budget, however further investigation is needed to resolve the problems.

**Specific sites comments**

**SN0218 –** In addition to the general comments above and the correcting of any issues mentioned regarding flooding and infrastructure,the Parish Council agreed with NCC Highways on their comments for access to the site, as mentioned previously, speeding is an issue in the village and the safety and welfare of residents is key, so improvement to footways and an extension of the speed limit would be required.

**EAR1 - SN0390 –** In addition to the general comments above and the correcting of any issues mentioned regarding flooding and infrastructure,the Parish Council were not in favour of this site being developed (neither preferred site or rejected site) due to all the constraints mentioned in the Site Assessment Form, the most easterly section of the site is overlapping by approximately 40% into the Flood Zone. The preferred site of some 50 dwellings, would add to the already increased traffic on School Road, which sees speeding and potentially dangerous driving on a daily basis. 50 dwellings could potentially add 100+ vehicles to that confined area and with the restricted narrow entrance, the potential is there for accidents to happen close to a primary school. If this site was to be developed, it would cause congestion on a major scale especially at school drop off and pick up times.

**Additional comments from members of the public in attendance at the Parish Council meeting who have asked for these comments to be taken into consideration -**

**Site SN0218**

* A roundabout off the main A143 to slow traffic with a petrol station (and electric charger points).
* A convenience store on the junction to serve the local community
* A Doctor’s satellite surgery and NHS Dentist to serve the locality with associated car parking and access to the preferred site.

In conclusion, the Parish Council feel that the infrastructure on all issues raised under general comments need to be addressed first before any further development is considered and would ask that the comments put forward by them in this consultation are taken seriously before any future decisions are made.

Thank you.

Earsham Parish Council

29th July 2021