

Whittington Parish Council

One Parish : One Community



Planning Application W/26/01787/OUT, Land At (Os 8936 5056) Pershore Road Norton Worcester

Consultation Process

The application describes its consultation as comprehensive, yet Whittington Parish Council was not informed, despite the likely effects on the parish. The application also states residents on Pershore Road were sent a leaflet, but it is understood that some residents did not receive this. Delayed Royal Mail deliveries also meant that some of the residents that did receive a leaflet were not able to respond within the very short consultation period of just two weeks. We are concerned that residents did not have a fair opportunity to hear about the proposals and comment on them and the low number of consultation responses may reflect this. The Parish Council is not satisfied that the consultation was effective and meaningful.

NPPF policies DM1(1) state that proposals for major development should be informed by early engagement with neighbours and the local community before an application is submitted, and accompanied by a planning statement setting out the outcome of that engagement. We do not believe that standard has been met in this case.

Cumulative Impact

The application presents the site as a development that can proceed in isolation. This is totally at odds with earlier clear assurances that the new town would be planned and delivered as a whole, with development coordinated alongside infrastructure. This application clearly forms part of the wider development of the proposed Wychavon New Town / Worcestershire Parkway growth area, and its impacts on local infrastructure, traffic, services and the rural character of the area should be assessed in that wider context. Allowing individual sites to come forward separately risks piecemeal growth without the necessary services and infrastructure in place. This fragmentary approach to development of the new town should be robustly challenged and resisted if the town is to achieve its stated objectives of creating a sustainable, infrastructure-led garden community.

Construction Traffic

The site will not be isolated from its neighbours as construction traffic will inevitably use Pershore Road. The proposals therefore fail to address the cumulative effects of multiple large-scale developments coming forward at the same time. The application should explain how construction vehicles will be routed and managed, and how noise, dust, pollution, lighting and congestion will be addressed. The effect of these impacts should be considered alongside other planned development as the cumulative effect of these will be considerable. Residents living closest to construction and affected roads should not be left to shoulder the impact without clear assessment, mitigation and an effective way to raise concerns.

This is contrary to SWDPR 06 (Transport) which requires development to be supported by appropriate infrastructure and safe access arrangements. Similarly NPPF policies TR4(1) and TR6(3)–(4) require safe routes for all users and assessment of cumulative transport impacts, including during construction, with unacceptable impacts avoided or mitigated.

Transport

The road is already dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists; additional measures are needed to keep these vulnerable road users safe around the railway bridge and along Pershore Road while construction traffic is travelling to and from the site.

The wider transport plans show a main bus route serving this area, but its delivery does not appear to be addressed in the application. If homes are built early, how will the planned transport links and wider infrastructure be delivered?

Access for residents to the surrounding villages must also be maintained whilst at the same time avoiding the use of local routes as 'rat runs' for what will be a significant increase in car ownership within the development area. Roads such as Walkers Lane and Church Lane in Whittington already experience an unacceptable level of displaced traffic and routes such as this need to be afforded adequate protection to ensure that communities do not suffer significant and long lasting disruption.

The SWDPR 06 (Transport) is relevant, requiring transport and land-use planning to be properly integrated and development to minimise congestion and provide appropriate transport infrastructure. Similarly NPPF policies TR1(1), TR3(1), TR4(1) and TR6(3)–(4) address early transport planning, sustainable access, safe routes for all users and the assessment and mitigation of significant or cumulative impacts on the transport network.

Essential Infrastructure

The application should explain how electricity, water, waste services and essential transport infrastructure will be ready for residents from the start. The Parish Council endorse the principle that infrastructure should be provided before, or alongside, new housing and not provided as an afterthought.

This raises concerns under SWDPR Policy 40 (Water Management) and NPPF policies W1(1)–(2), HC3(1)–(3), which address the consideration of energy, water, drainage and wastewater capacity in planning for growth, necessary public service infrastructure, and its timely delivery so that it is available when development is first occupied. The application should explain how these requirements will be met from the start.

Impact on residents

The application does not adequately address the concerns of existing residents about how they will be affected during construction and once the development is complete. The main concerns are the likely cumulative impacts from construction traffic, dust, noise, pollution and general disruption, which will have a significant effect on the quality of life of existing residents, particularly those living along the B4084 and surrounding rural roads.

SWDPR 35 (Amenity) is relevant, as it seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of existing or future residents and SWDPR 41 (Air Quality) is also relevant given the potential for additional traffic, construction activity, dust and emissions to affect local air quality. NPPF policy P3(1)–(2) requires consideration of the likely effects, including cumulative effects, of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, including air quality, noise and artificial light, and requires suitable mitigation where needed.

Existing residents feel that the effects on their lives have not been properly considered. We urge the planning authority to address these concerns and better resolve how these proposals fit with the coordinated delivery of the wider Wychavon Town.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, the Parish Council do not believe that the application has demonstrated that this development can be delivered safely and sustainably without unacceptable impacts on existing communities, local roads and essential infrastructure.

The relationship of these proposals to the wider Wychavon Town development mean that its impacts need to be considered cumulatively rather than in isolation. We therefore respectfully ask that planning application W/26/01787/OUT is refused unless and until the outstanding impacts have been properly assessed and satisfactory mitigation measures have been demonstrated.