

SITES BM2/BM4 KNARESBOROUGH ROAD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, BISHOP MONKTON

PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS AUGUST 2020

Bishop Monkton Parish Council is in receipt of the proposals for the above sites on 13th August 2020 and makes the following comments:

Building Density

The village has questioned in detail the scale of the development compared with the villages present size and the large increase in vehicles and people who use local roads and facilities. There is a strong opinion that the number of units is far too large and will change the character of our rural village.

The site is zoned for 94 units in the Harrogate District Plan yet 115 are shown on the plan. Why is this? The site layout is very tightly packed with very little room for landscaping, features and allowing a suitable set back to the adjoining Old Vicarage. The Council strongly believes that 80 units would be more appropriate for this site and would allow consideration to be given to incorporate items listed below covering features, landscaping and biodiversity.

Development Layout and Building Character

Townscape is an important part of any development design. If incorporated correctly this can enhance a development to everyone's benefit.

Bishop Monkton is a village not a suburb of Leeds, Harrogate or even Boroughbridge. Yet we seem to be getting a development generally found in these locations. A standard developers housing layout. We ask that your architects walk through our village from the church at the top down the beck to the Corn Mill at the bottom. You will see townscape features encouraging you to explore further – the church, the beck, the bridges, the ford, the Mechanics Institute, the paper mill etc. This type of design can be reproduced in your development by incorporating building features, landscape views, open areas and landscape within the site.

The village is set around green spaces not car parking and roads. The buildings vary in height and character and were initially constructed of limestone and field cobbles later in Victorian times brickwork was included with rendered buildings in places. Why cannot this varying character be included in your proposals when all we see in the proposals is 100 plus developers standard two storey brick boxes.

Look at the developments that have previously been built in the village on the Old Mill site and Keble Homes. Whilst not perfect they use materials and designs more compatible with the village.

Developments at North Stainley and Copgrove incorporate design features that help the character of the developments. A central design feature that you see when entering the site should enhance the development. This could take the form of a landscape mound, taller buildings or an open attenuation pond.

The line of 19 houses that are along the southern boundary to the Old Vicarage take no account of the importance of the building and its privacy. The buildings should be staggered and open space introduced.

The scale and height of the houses adjacent to Moor Road has been questioned by residents who occupy houses opposite the development that have had to be kept low in height.

Landscaping

One great area of concern is the lack of landscaping and new trees within the site due to its over development. Part of any new development is the requirement to improve the biodiversity of the site. With the area of tarmac, parking and building this has not taken place. Why do the roads not incorporate trees either side?

The position of the attenuation tanks and pumping station is wasted space. Why cannot this be an open water pond collection area positioned as a feature at the corner of the site or in the centre? This could incorporate further landscape features to improve the biodiversity of the site.

Landscaping can play an important part of townscape. The existing hedgerow is an important feature and is

lost in half of its length. The village centre is built around a green spine that runs along the beck. Why cannot this development use a similar feature of a green route with views through it from Knaresborough Road? It would encourage people into the site.

Other than at the western end landscaped buffer where we presume new tree planting can occur, no other areas exist. Please open up areas within the development for new tree planting.

Roads and Footpaths

Whilst we appreciate that the highways design and access is carried out in collaboration with North Yorkshire Highways Dept., the access points have been questioned. Why is the access point to Moor Road only used for emergency access? If this was opened up for general access it would allow cars which wish to go up to the A61 to go straight into Moor Road missing out the Knaresborough Road junction with its associated safety problems. Has the effect of the increase in traffic at the junction with Moor Road and the A61 been considered? The A61 is very difficult to get into or cross now. What will the effect be with the increase in cars using this route?

Also the position of the access point to Knaresborough Road has been questioned in that it is too close to the Moor Road junction and may be better moving to opposite Meadowcroft Drive with a mini roundabout. Please look into this further.

We do not understand why the main access road within the site has to be a standard tarmac road with two footpaths. It is now possible to design a development which gives priority to pedestrian and cyclist where vehicles have to move around parked cars, seating and landscaping. This must be incorporated in this development. Again, we are a rural village not an urban setting.

The number of parking spaces shown on the plan appears to be 2 per unit. Is not this excessive as we presume some properties will have garages.

One of the items we raised with you was the importance of pedestrian and cyclist routes through the site and around it on Moor Road. Public transport is becoming more important and a route up Moor Road to the main Harrogate Road with its 36 bus route is one of the Council's long term aims. The pedestrian and cyclist access stops one third up the site at the emergency access point. It must extend up to Woodgate Cottage otherwise the development gives no transport benefit it only adds over 200 cars into the small country roads of the area. Extending the footpath up to the A61 should be looked at as being one of the contributions to the wider community.

We are pleased to note that work is to be done at the junction of Moor Road and Knaresborough Road in conjunction with NY Highways. We feel further work needs to be done on this to resolve all the present safety concerns. We presume traffic calming measures along Knaresborough Road will be subject to further discussion with the Highways Dept. The speeding and safety of the road junction remain an important concern to the village.

Drainage and Flooding

When we met we raised this as one of the matters which will be of main concern to the village. Whatever Yorkshire Water state the present combine sewer is overloaded especially in rain conditions. Effluent comes out of manholes in the centre of the village. Work to the existing combined sewer will be required.

The present surface water on this site goes into the ground and water table not into a drainage system. We hope that parking and roads will be permeable to reduce surface water run off.

The solution for a large underground holding tank must be avoided. As well as an expensive solution it creates a sterile area that cannot be fully landscaped. An open oversized pond and swales as a site feature would be a much improved solution. Further consideration needs to be made as to where the surface water goes. Even with attenuation the present combined sewer cannot take it. The village needs to see action been taken on this.

Again, we mention to you that Moor Road turns into a river in heavy rain and adds to the flooding problems lower in the village. Cannot, as part of your contribution to the wider community, take some of its water into your drainage storage? Please consult directly with the Environment Agency.

Summary

The housing unit number is excessive and should be reduced to allow the inclusion of more features and landscaping.

Respect the village character in the design.

Reconsider the relationship with the Old Vicarage and houses on Moor Road.

Review the road system and access positions. A two footpath standard road is not required.

Consider views into and through the site incorporating townscape and features.

Question the drainage solutions and how the development can help with the village flooding problems.

Extend the footpath on Moor Road.

Above all create a development that we can all be proud of.

Bishop Monkton Parish Council. 25.08.20

