

Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham Working Group

NP4Yaxham, Frogs Hall Farm, Cutthroat Lane, Yaxham NR19 1RG

12th February 2015

Dear Sirs,

Ref: 3PL/2015/1490/O

Land off Shipdham Road, Westfield Road and Westfield Lane

We are the Working Group undertaking the Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham (NP4Yaxham). As such we are developing the plan and drafting policies in response to consultation with local residents. Whilst our formal designated area for the plan is the Civil Parish of Yaxham it has rapidly become clear that there are major issues within the vicinity of the parish boundaries about which the village is very concerned. The two main issues are:

- where are the plans to provide the infrastructure (roads, sewerage, GP surgeries, primary school places etc.) to accommodate the cumulative effect of all the proposed new development, including this application for at least 291 homes; and
- secondly, the importance of the visual gap between Yaxham and Dereham as integral to maintaining the distinctive character of Yaxham as a small rural village as compared with its much larger neighbour of Dereham. Yaxham benefits by the close, but separate nature of this relationship, but does not want see the southern expansion of Dereham up to the parish boundary and in turn threatening the distinctive character of the Tud River Valley.

In the light of these concerns expressed through village consultation we therefore felt it was incumbent on us to apprise you of these concerns and to provide the attached draft emerging Strategic Green Gaps policy as it relates to the Yaxham-Dereham gap – Gap 1 in the policy. The policy is designed to discourage the coalescence of the two neighbouring settlements whilst respecting the significant characteristics of each and the Tud River Valley. We are consulting with the Dereham Town Council Neighbourhood Plan and the Whinburgh & Westfield Parish Council on this – and preliminary reactions are positive. We are also submitting this as part of our response to the current Breckland Local Plan Consultation.

You will note that the 3PL/2015/1490/O falls directly in the proposed Strategic Green Gap 1.

We therefore ask that any decision on this planning application be deferred until the results of the Breckland Local Plan Consultation are published, along with the Water Cycle Study and the Dereham Transport Study and the Dereham Neighbourhood Plan is at least at the pre-submission consultation stage. It would make a mockery of the planning process if with all the work on local planning taking place that a site such as this was granted permission when those developing policies would otherwise have caused it to be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

Magge Oechsle

Chairman, NP4Yaxham Working Group

Attached – Draft NP4Yaxham Strategic Green Gaps Policy