

PLANNING & LICENSING COMMITTEE

25/4/2024

ADDENDUM REPORT

Report no.	Item no.	Application no.	Applicant	Parish
63/2024	1	2023/0822/MAO	SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE	EDITH WESTON

Consultee comments:

A further response has been received from Edith Weston Parish Council providing comment on two of the three deferral matters.

Matter 2 – the secondary access.

The comment indicates it considers the reasoning given for not having the secondary access is weak and an agreement with the landowner to remove the tree would overcome this point. It goes on to assert that provision of an access at this point would reduce the potential housing numbers within the site.

Matter 3 – the number of dwellings.

The comment states that it is incorrect to state there is no policy justification for reducing the housing figure, citing reports on housing need commissioned to support the emerging Neighbourhood Plan where need in the range of 21-51 units was identified. The comment also notes suggested density on the site of 19-20 dwellings per hectare taking into account factors such as green space, infrastructure and character of the existing settlement, stating that it considers the illustrative scheme does not take these factors into consideration.

The comment notes that the emerging plan should carry weight at least equal to the draft local plan and that quoting densities from the draft plan should not be considered without also considering the emerging neighbourhood plan.

The comment goes on to state that design matters should be conditioned at the outline stage, and that the proposed 85 units appears to be based on the illustrative layout, which is therefore relevant to the consideration of the outline application.

The comment concludes by stating that the illustrative plan appears to take no account of the character of the existing settlement, noting that the housing figure far exceeds the identified need, and indicating that the scheme would represent a 22% increase in the size of Edith Weston.

Duplicate responses have been received to the proposal from the Forestry Officer and the Police Architectural Liaison Officer following notification of the application being presented to committee.

Officer Comments:

Whilst it is noted that agreement to remove the tree would address the visibility splay concern in relation to a secondary access, there is no guarantee that an agreement would be reached, and as noted in the main report the scale of the proposal does not justify requiring a second access to be provided.

The reports in relation to housing need are noted, however these inform the minimum requirement for provision of housing, not a cap to development, and similarly are not formal planning policy. There is no planning policy that indicates an upper limit of dwellings that would be acceptable on the site or in Edith Weston.

The weight to be given to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is set out in the main report. Planning Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy (not an emerging policy) sets out the target density of development at 30 dwellings per hectare. The development proposals represent a density of less than 22 dwellings per hectare, already therefore representing a significant reduction in density to account for the existing character of the area.

Further consideration in relation to the proposed housing numbers relates to the high proportion (85%) of 3-bed dwellings and below, a factor that increases the overall dwelling numbers and density but would not necessarily have an impact on the spaciousness of the resulting development given more typical housing mixes across a site of this nature would see a considerably greater proportion of larger properties.

Finally in respect of the illustrative plan, it is not proposed that this plan becomes an approved document in relation to the scheme. Generally an illustrative plan is developed at the outline stage to indicate how the proposed number of units could be accommodated within a site, it does not inform the proposed number of units.

Finally, whilst Officers have not assessed the quoted figure of a 22% increase in the size of Edith Weston, it is assumed this is based on the number of dwellings in the village. As a previously developed site, containing an existing residential use, the proposal does not extend the built envelope of the village, and there is no policy that restricts the growth of a particular settlement to a set proportion of its current size.