Comments and recommendations on the proposed design of the King Alfred Way development by Cavanna Homes.

Please find below the collated comments from the open consultation held with the community on Monday 24th November and further comments received by email. These comments do not constitute a Parish Council opinion.

1. CUL DE SAC DESIGN

Some preference for the new outline plan because the surgery and car park are now further from existing houses, and there is now a green buffer above existing houses.

There are differing opinions on the cul-de-sac design. Some thought it was preferential to have the cul-de-sac as fewer cars would pass by some houses and speeds could be lower. Whilst others thought the cul-de-sac should be a loop. Eg. while the retention of the north-south hedgerow should be applauded from an environmental and wildlife view, this means that all traffic will be routed the same way. This will lead to driver frustration and even more parking problems in the turning head area. It seems highly unlikely that dormice etc. will live in the small length of hedgerow at the northern end, while being likely that an informal footpath will be forced through the hedge bank.

Parking will inevitably occur on the road (visitors, deliveries etc.). Hence the flow of traffic needs to be planned in from the start to ensure the flow of vehicles and access for emergency vehicles.

The A3052 has an average of over 11,000 vehicle movements through Newton Poppleford over a 12 hour period. Residents are concerned about the ingress and egress from KAW onto the A3052.

Significant impermeable surfaces will be placed in the development, losing significant capacity for the land to absorb water during extreme events.

Recommendations:

- A short stretch of hedge bank should be sacrificed to allow vehicle access from the north-east road into the western loop to allow the free flow of traffic.
- Sufficient turning space for large vehicles should be ensured and that this area is not subsequently used for car parking.
- Consideration of yellow lines to prevent inappropriate parking on the new estate and on KAW.
- Taking into account weather extremes and climate change, consideration should be given to improving the development design by using permeable surfaces, landscaping for excess water and using treepit rain gardens along the road to provide shade, absorb runoff and improve the local environment.
- It would be helpful to explain the design of the emergency access route off Farthings Lane in more detail and how this would be controlled.
- To minimise light pollution, it is suggested that illuminated bollards are used, rather than streetlights.

2. CAR PARKING

It seems that the open market houses all have a garage and drive space, while the social housing only has a driveway; the result appears to be that every house should have 2 parking spaces (although in reality few people ever use the garage for a car). However the road within KAC appears to be quite narrow and it was stated that Devon County Council wanted it that way, discouraging parking on the road - or at least making it difficult and potentially causing obstructions. While this layout might work OK at first, as families grow and young people living at home also acquire cars, parking will become a serious problem.

Examples of existing parking problems in Newton Pop are Badger Close where there is a mixed development (social and private housing, slightly segregated) but surplus cars and vans are parked inconsiderately and to the annoyance of other residents. In the existing King Alfred Way estate there are frequently cars parked haphazardly along the roadside. It seems likely that in the future some residents of KAW will be looking for parking in the KAC area, as access to KAC will restrict some on-road parking.

Recommendations:

- Some additional parking needs to be provided within KAC, not just for residents but also for visitors. Some possible options:
    1. Move the whole development a few metres further to the south (while staying within the development area), but perhaps reducing the length of the back gardens for the houses on the southern side, and put in a parking area alongside the buffer zone at north-western edge.
    2. Use a small amount of the open space area on the north-east side for community parking.
    3. Use of the surgery car parking by residents when the surgery is closed.
- To reduce noise pollution, use grasscrete or similar in the surgery car park.

3. FLOODING

Flooding is a real problem already for Farthings Lane and there are fears that the overbuilding on the west side of the site and the road running down the hill will funnel the water into existing properties. Surface flooding has already affected properties on Farthings Lane and may affect insurance and future property sales.

It seems that the sewage is going to join the existing sewage system which at present blocks occasionally outside front door of no.34, where it seeps out from under the manhole cover. If more sewage has to come this way, the impact of increased sewage from new houses will make the situation worse.

Building development and the introduction of impermeable surfaces onto a free-draining slope will exacerbate the run-off during extreme rainfall events. A report from the Met Office in 2010[i] states that “For winter, all [rainfall] extremes were projected to become more frequent in the future” For example projections for winter rainfall in Exeter show that a 1 in 100 year event may be as frequent as 1 in 40 years by the 2040s. The standard Environment Agency advice of 1 in a 100 year event is still used but this does not reflect the reality of increasing extreme events (see Met Office projections for winter rainfall extremes).

Recommendations:

- Design of the new development should be future proofed for increasing extreme rainfall events. Whilst it is recognised that attenuation tanks will address some storm flows for a 1 in 40 event that could become a 1 in 20 in the next few decades. Therefore, the design could go further by taking account of, for example, practices in CIRIA's 'Water sensitive urban design in the UK'[ii]. Cost effective solutions such as landscaping areas to enable them to be floodable in extreme rainfall could be employed. Treepit raingardens along the road to designate parking, provide a better environment and absorb runoff are also an improvement to the overall design.
- Explain how sewage is going to be handled and what its likely impact is going to be on the existing houses.
- 30% of household water is used for flushing the toilet. Please consider a greywater system in the house designs and generally reducing the waste water from the new properties. See the CIRIA practitioners guide.

Note:

Please would you respond directly to the letter from Judith Cullip who raises some further questions and issues concerning flooding.

4. FOOTPATH UPGRADE FOR FARTHINGS LANE

The footpath 1 is an important route for school children, access to village facilities and for recreation. It is understood that £25k has been allocated by CDE for the upgrade of Farthings Lane (Footpath 1). The funds would not cover the upgrade of the path and it seems the basis for this figure is not clear. The Parish Council will explore whether funds under the Section 106 agreement could also be used to improve the path.

Recommendation

Please clarify what the detailed plans are for the improvement of footpath 1 and how CDE and the Parish Council can work together to seek a major improvement in this route.

5. DOCTORS' SURGERY

There was concern that the Doctors' surgery may not be completed or fully kitted out to enable the doctors to use a fully functioning building. It is not clear to the community what commitment has been made by relevant medical centres to using the proposed surgery.

Recommendation

It would be helpful to see some evidence that there is a clear commitment to completing the surgery and fully kitting it out and from the Ottery Coleridge Medical Centre (and others?) that they intend to use the new surgery.

6. DEVELOPMENT NOISE AND ACCESS

During the ground testing and archaeological survey, large plant vehicles (ie a tanker and then a digger) were taken along the public footpath in order to access the further field. This caused the neighbouring houses and floors to shake, which causes great anxiety regarding subsidence. There was also some difficulty with vehicles getting stuck when trying to turn up into the second field from the footpath, and also compressing the ditch behind the bank and shaking the trees when it hit the bank.

Recommendation

- The community requests that the footpath is not used for parking for plant vehicles.
- Please can assurance be given that large vehicles will be managed and use the access in the further field through the gap which is to be made at the top of the existing hedge that divides the fields.
- It would also be helpful to engage the immediate residents in KAW before the development is due to start to discuss any issues that may arise.

7. RECREATIONAL FOOTPATH

At present people unofficially use the further field to walk their dogs, because there is nowhere else to go without driving or a long walk along the main road for people to walk their dogs in the countryside.

Footpaths on the common are also going to be reduced to mitigate for the extra people introduced in new developments, and their effect on the sensitive pebblebed heaths.

Recommendations

Residents of the new and old estate would find it beneficial to have a footpath that goes up over the hill, in order to access the countryside directly. This would dramatically improve the quality of life for existing and new residents.

8. COMMUNITY HALL

The relocation of the Doctors surgery will rule out a new community hall any time in the future, so the original / approved layout is preferred.

HAJ 15 December 2014

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[i] ofwat.gov.**uk**/sustainability/**climatechange**/rpt_com_met_**rainfall**.pdf
[ii] www.ciria.org