

Response to Planning Applications to be determined by Maldon District Council.

Response from: Woodham Walter Parish Council

Planning Application Reference: 20/01284/PIP

Location: Land South of Woodham Walter Primary School, The Street

Our views on the above application are:

Please tick the appropriate box

1. We recommend the granting of planning permission, for the reasons listed below:

*

or

2. We recommend the refusal of planning permission, for the reasons listed below:

*

Woodham Walter Parish Council resolved to recommend refusal of this PIP application at their meeting on Monday 11th January 2021.

Please see supplementary information to support our argument.

or

3i. We have no comment

3ii. We raise no objection but wish to make the following comment:

***Reasons for response (Please include the relevant policy in the Submission version of the Local Development Plan i.e. Policy D1 – Design Quality and built Environment, Policy S8 Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside)**

Signed: 

Date: 13 January 2021

Land South of Woodham Walter Primary School PIP Application 20/01284/PIP

The Woodham Walter Parish Council met on Monday 11th January to consider the above Application for Planning in Principle and make the following observations:

1. It is understood that the scope of the Planning Application in Principle application is limited to principle relative to the proposed location, land use and the amount of development of the area of the land outlined in red on the site plan. Without any technical information it is difficult to conduct a meaningful consultation.
2. Statutory consultees are able to remind the LPA of their standard recommendations and although this Parish Council is not a statutory consultee, as the Village Design Statement has been adopted by Maldon District Council as a material consideration in all Village planning matters, we wish to bring this together with the Conservation Area documentation the LPA's attention.
3. The site lies outside of the Village Defined Settlement Area and does not just lie adjacent to the Conservation Area but includes a portion of it with a number of significant trees, a building identified as being of local heritage interest to the Village, a K9 telephone kiosk all in very close proximity. The balance of the site is designated as agricultural land.
4. The description of the site location is inaccurate and misleading. It is located in the high-profile core of the Village and not to the south of the core as stated in the planning statement. As such, it plays a very important visual role in the intrinsic character, beauty and appearance of the area as well as from the Village high point at the Church and south end of the Village, Bell Meadow. Its visual loss would be a grave adverse impact and be detrimental and instrumental in destroying the intrinsic character and beauty of the Village (LDP S8).
5. The red line indicating the application extent is a small part of the overall site and encompasses the site access point from The Street. The blue line encloses the balance of the existing field but does not encompass the Old Chapel (Pre-School building) that is also in the same ownership but not outlined in blue. In addition, it is understood that the field on the south side of the site is also in the applicant's ownership but is not edged in blue. The site plan does not therefore give an accurate indication of ownership or sphere of influence.
6. The site access area is taken from The Street at the point of its junction with Top Road. Notwithstanding the lack of detail, at this point The Street is a busy road with through traffic accessing Hatfield Peverel and the A12 North as well as northern parts of the Village and from Top Road. The junction is particularly dangerous because of the existing lack of forward visibility. Intensification of traffic use in this area by the proposed number of additional dwellings, linked with the School and the Pre-School accesses would be dangerous.
7. Similarly, access during any potential construction phase would be inherently dangerous and noisy given the proximity of the road junction and the school and pre-school entrances.
8. The planning statement indicates that the application will include enabling works to the school but neither the School nor the Old Chapel are included within the application site and are therefore are not assessed in this consultation. In a written statement given during the Council meeting and minuted, the applicant stated that part of the application includes the gifting of land (not a planning issue) for the provision of additional playing field, playground and parking facilities for the school, but this is not shown or included within the application or the red line, nor is there a 'change of use application' in substantiation and therefore in the view of this Council cannot be considered as 'enabling' nor is the school outlined in red and therefore not considered.

9. The proposed extent of development does not appear to be based on a thorough housing needs survey. Such a survey would have indicated that Woodham Walter is designated as a Smaller Village (LDP S8), being a defined settlement containing few or no services and facilities, with limited access to public transport and very limited or no employment opportunities. There are currently 10 small housing units already approved in the Village at the Oak Farm Road/London Road Junction, Lodge Farm, Curling Tye Lane, West Bowers Farm and Church Corner that satisfies the perceived housing need.
10. The site is located in a rural area where development should only be supported in specific circumstances. Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that there is either a justifiable and particularly a functionable need or that the proposal would support the viability of an existing local business contrary to the Maldon District Local Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
11. The extent of the site within the red line appears small when considered in the context of the stated 9 house density with associated access roads and paths, turning and parking spaces and amenity space but without detail further observations cannot be made.
12. The diminution of the field outlined in blue by the red outlined application area would make the field agriculturally uneconomic and difficult to manage with modern machinery or even land locked.
13. This Council recommends that this Permission in Principle application be refused as follows:
 - a. The principle of a major site access taken from The Street at an already busy and dangerous junction adjacent to school and pre-school entrances is unsustainable on safety, pollution and traffic management grounds (LDP T2).
 - b. The principle of the proposed development, by reason of its location and the resultant intensification of residential development would substantially alter the intrinsic character and beauty of the area and local heritage setting and have an unacceptable visual impact on the countryside through the loss of agricultural land and the urbanisation and domestication of the site contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework's 'presumption of sustainable development'. The poor sustainability credentials of the site and its locality would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits of the proposal when assessed against the compliant policies of the Maldon District Local Development Plan including policies S1, S8, D1 and H4 and Government advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - c. The site is located in a rural area where development should only be supported in specific circumstances. Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that there is either a justifiable and functionable need or that the proposal would support the viability of an existing local business contrary to policies S1, S8, E4 and D1 of the of the Maldon District Local Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.