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These are the unadopted Minutes of a Planning Committee Meeting of Crookham Village Parish Council, held at Zebon Community Centre at 7.30pm on Monday 7 January 2025. Please refer to the Planning Committee Minutes of the next meeting for any corrections.

**Present:**

**Cllr David Jackson (Chairman)**

**Cllr Philip Ashton**

**Cllr Simon Ambler**

**Cllr Julia Ambler**

**Cllr Peter Bradley**

**Ms Anna Wierzbinska (Assistant Clerk)**

**And 49 members of public**

**1. Apologies for Absence.**

None.

**2. Chairman's Announcements**

Chairman announced that he will do a brief presentation related to the planning application 24/02227/FUL before public participation.

**3. Declarations by members of interests in items on the agenda.**

None.

**4. Consider Crime & Disorder Implications.**

The Chairman reminded members of their duty to consider any crime and disorder implications that might arise from any decision that they might make at the meeting.

**5. Public Participation (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker).**

Members of public raised the following concerns about 24/02227/FUL planning application:

- Proposed plans for the SANGS and car park are on the land liable to flooding;
- The proposal will damage one of the key views of the village landscape;
- Safety of the proposed entrance and its impact on the pedestrians
- Urbanisation of the area will affect the setting of the village and some of the listed buildings;
- Impact on the wildlife - this is the last remaining area for the skylarks to nest;
- Privacy and security concerns from the residents facing the fields;
- Dog agility – no need for it, as such facilities already exist in the area;
- The plans mention phase 2, but there is no clarity what it is going to be;
- Major concerns about governance and management of the site in the future, where is the funding for it coming from;
- Volumes of traffic - any studies carried on the Crondall Road were made in off-peak times;
- The tree to the north of the proposed access was mentioned, and the fact it is in danger of being removed and proposal was made for the TPO to avoid it being removed;
- The Street could become a parking area with people who do not want to drive into Crondall Rd;
- Dogs off the lead will pose an issue as they may run across the street or potentially disturb the cattle grazing on the fields;
- Direct neighbours have not yet been notified by HDC about this application;
- Flooding in the area – report about car park seems to be lacking accurate info, floods and flows are getting more aggressive around the houses there, no consideration given to dangers in the area, especially around Stroud Lane, river Hart is often overflowing.
- Transport and environment reports produced are not sufficient and did not examine the area properly;
- Bio Net Gain was mentioned and the fact that it is separate to the SANGS, future design could be aimed only at Bio Net Gain
- The planning application is remarkably similar, if not the same as the past application for a care home in the same location;
- Road to narrow to accommodate two vehicles passing in the same time and proper measurements will need to take place;
- The Forge in the village is one of the rarest buildings in England, and this proposal will cause the overflow of flood water coming dangerously close to it, potentially putting it at risk of being damaged;
- Land erosion is filling up the ditches especially during flooding;
- Non-native planting is proposed in the plans;
- Security of the car park – potentially open to mobile homes, etc.

Cllr Ashton expressed his views and fact that this application is encouraging more traffic to the area that is already struggling with the high traffic volumes.

Cllr Julia Ambler mentioned the Crookham Village Conservation Area document. Justification for the conservation area was based on its setting, and now the view will be blocked by the proposed car park. Both, the proposed car park, and the tree which is considered to be significant are within the conservation area.

Flooding – direct contradiction of policy of NP – location of the car park is completely inappropriate as it is in the middle of the flood zone.

Cllr Simon Ambler stated that something of this nature (SANGS) is much preferred than another housing estate, but this proposal is not well thought and has flaws in the design. Car park is in the wrong location, claim of community involvement was done as a part of the previous planning application, and for this application there has been a zero community involvement. The plans do not take into account the Crookham Village Conservation Area, which is inside of this proposal, and not adjacent to it.

#### **6. Planning Application 24/02227/FUL**

**Proposal: Change of use of land to public open space for the creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), including the provision of a footpath network, landscaping and car parking and alterations to existing access together with a Biodiversity restoration project to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain**

**At: Land At, Cross Farm House, Crondall Road, Crookham Village, Fleet**

Resolution to be ratified at Planning Meeting on 20 January.

#### **RESOLVED:**

Crookham Village Parish Council considered this application at a meeting in public attended by 49 concerned local residents who would be affected by the proposal.

#### **OBJECTION**

CVPC remains very keen that the setting of Crookham Village and its southern Local Gap is sustainably protected in perpetuity against development on Cross Farm. Regrettably, this application has major flaws that the parish council, and many local residents, cannot support.

Para 1.39 of the D&A statement relies on historic consultation about a retirement village, which has no relevance to this application. Regrettably, there was a complete lack of local consultation before this application suddenly appeared during the run-up to Christmas.

It is also inappropriate that no reference is made to the Crookham Village Conservation Area Appraisal (CVCA) document re-issued in March 2024.

There are hints of a Phase 2, but no useful detail is given of plans for that area.

#### **SANG Viability**

According to Hart's SANG\_capacity\_May\_2024\_0, Hart had 7130 spare SANG spaces available in May 2024 after covering all approved developments in the area plus some for Rushmoor and Surrey Heath. The proposed Cross Farm SANG would cater for a further approx. 1750 dwellings within its approx. 6km radius catchment area, within which there is no current indication of any major new developments except possibly Winchfield New Town, for which Hart already has enough spare SANG capacity for 3,500 dwellings.

The applicant states at Para 1.4 of the D&A Statement that the proposed SANG might support Chiltern Beechwoods SAC. Not only does this not provide the firm commitment for finance required to approve this application, but it fails to acknowledge that Beechwoods is close to Aylesbury, well over an hour's drive away and that the proposed SANG therefore can never have any influence on protection of that distant site.

A viable SANG requires guaranteed long-term funding. In the absence of a clear view of a local demand for another large SANG and mention only of a management company without addressing finance or details of a s106, this project lacks proof of viability.

#### **Traffic/Parking**

There is considerable doubt as to the credibility of the quoted TRICS analysis, which projects 233 daily trips to/from the SANG car park based on mainly lunchtime traffic flows at an unspecified nature reserve.

Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) - August 2021 states: "provide a minimum of 1 parking spaces per hectare", suggesting that the proposed 24 spaces would not be sufficient.

For many potential users of this SANG, parking in the proposed car park would be far less convenient than parking along The Street, which would have serious consequences for the safe flow of traffic through the village.

There are also serious road safety concerns for Crondall Road due to extra traffic, visibility from the car park exit and the narrowing of Crondall Road in that area which already makes two-way traffic difficult for many vehicles.

Unattended car parks in the countryside attract unwelcome anti-social behaviour, which has already forced closure of the nearby Chequers Wharf car park after dark. If approved, a condition is required to manage this risk and to protect the occupants of adjacent properties.

### **Effect on Conservation Area**

The site of the proposed car park lies within the Crookham Village Conservation Area and would, with signs etc, have a significant adverse effect on the rural street scene and setting of the Conservation Area.

Para 1.32 of the D&A Statement states: "To accommodate the proposed visibility splays the tree to the north of the access will be removed, whilst vegetation and hedges within the visibility splays will also be removed. Replacement hedges and planting will be set back behind the proposed visibility splays". This tree is given special significance in para 6.4 the Crookham Village Conservation Area Appraisal (CVCA) document and should not be considered for removal, not least because it has an automatic TPO due to its location within the Conservation Area.

The Section 6 of the CVCA also emphasises the importance of the "Panorama looking east between Foxes Corner and Brookfield which enables appreciation of the rising slopes and tree copses beyond that lie to the south of The Street (View 13, page 62)". Views of this panorama would be obscured by the proposed landscaping of the car park area. The CVCA also makes special mention at para 9.3 of the surviving estate railings that would need to be removed should the car park go ahead.

### **Flooding**

A significant area, including walking routes into the site from the car park, is acknowledged to be liable to fluvial flooding, which would discourage access to the site for many months in a typical year. Mitigating boardwalks etc would further degrade the Natural element of the SANG, whilst very mucky free-running dogs would inevitably make the site less than 'Suitable'. This has the potential to further encourage unwelcome parking in The Street to gain easier and drier access via Footpaths 1 and 5.

A detailed infrastructure plan is required to address in detail the site-wide maintenance of flood-alleviating ditches etc that, when poorly maintained as now, result in flooding into gardens and areas along The Street. See also Appendix A2 of the Crookham Village Neighbourhood Plan (CVNP).

In wet weather a minor stream runs from near The Street end of Footpath 5 towards Riverside Cottage. This phenomenon has not been addressed.

Hard/hoggin pathways would detract from the open countryside setting and run counter to the 'Natural' designation.

### **Ground Nesting Birds**

Following developments at Albany Park and Hareshill, Cross Farm has become the last significant breeding area for ground-nesting skylarks, which are in the group of UK's most declining birds. Free-running dogs across their breeding ground would further decimate numbers in the wider area.

### **Dog Agility**

There are already two dog active agility facilities in close proximity to this site. No justification has been offered to justify a further dog agility facility on Cross Farm, where it would be an inappropriate infrastructure intrusion into the countryside setting which, after all, is billed as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace. With easier access to that facility via FP1, again there would be potential for further unwelcome parking on The Street. If users would be expected to provide their own equipment, the site is too remote from access by road to be a viable attraction.

## **Privacy and Security**

Householders bordering the site are very concerned at the potential loss of security and garden privacy that open access across the site would bring.

## **Preserving the Gap**

As this site is designated as a gap in the Crookham Village Neighbourhood Plan (CVNP), Crookham Village Parish Council would welcome a commitment for no development on the whole of Cross Farm in perpetuity with a preferred option for it to become part of the scheme for Biodiversity Net Gain which would allow it be preserved as natural countryside and protect ground nesting birds, whilst retaining its public rights of way and visual contribution to the setting of Crookham Village. This proposal would do more harm than good and potentially encourage unwelcome backland development on the remaining area of the farm, contrary to CVNP policies.

### **7. Planning Application 24/02414/REM**

**Proposal: Application for approval of reserved matters in respect of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 126 dwellings and 58sqm of flexible mixed-use neighbourhood store/café/co-working space pursuant to**

**24/00881/AMCON (amendment to 21/02782/OUT- Outline Planning Permission)**

**At: Land North Of Netherhouse Copse, Hitches Lane, Fleet, GU51 5EN,**

**RESOLVED:**

**OBJECTION: Applications should be determined against policies in force at the time. Pre-approval agreement = predetermination.**

**'Agreed with Hart' shortfall of 64 spaces against current Hart parking policy is unacceptable plus no provision for extra parking at store/café/co-working space.**

### **8. Availability for the next planning meeting**

Next meeting 20 January 7.45pm – Quorum confirmed.

Meeting closed at 8.52 PM.