

Article submitted to The Bridge magazine in January 2024

Development at Odell Road

Brampton Valley Homes have now submitted two planning applications for the proposed development of 17 dwellings at the site at Odell Road. The first was withdrawn and the second is still at the consultation stage at time of writing; the next step is for the borough council to determine whether to grant planning permission. The site is located just to the north west of the junction at Little Odell and forms part of the Harrold Neighbourhood Development Plan; adopted by residents through a referendum process in November 2021. The site is registered with an Odell address but sits within the boundary of the parish of Harrold and is outlined for 11 market and 6 affordable units. In total, Harrold was directed by the borough council to accept a minimum of 25 dwellings in the parish and the choice of the site on Odell Road was chosen through various public consultations. You can read the parish council's full response to the latest planning application in the February minutes on our website, or by going to the borough council's planning portal and searching for application reference 24/00243/MAF. In summary:

Highways issues: Whilst the council supports development on this site through its inclusion in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), this is not to be at the expense of safety, and the council supports the response from the Highways Officer for the applicant to provide the required length of visibility splay for an access junction on this road, or to demonstrate that the speeds are low enough to comply with a shorter splay. The council notes the results of the submitted speed survey, but has concerns that the recording device was placed near to the Odell Road/High St junction where traffic is naturally slower. Despite the location choice, it appears that the required speeds that would allow a shorter visibility splay have not been achieved. It's observed that a longer splay might only be achieved by removing the hedge and some of the frontage trees; however, there are Tree Preservation Orders in place and the NDP policy also requires retention of these protected trees. The council is concerned about the use of an unmanned crossing and requests a Zebra Crossing be installed and also requests confirmation that signage will be provided to alert oncoming vehicles to pedestrians in the road.

Design: The council also commented on design issues, including: the overly-linear arrangement of the dwellings with minimal stepping, the choice of bin storage at the front of the properties, concerns over manoeuvrability of fire appliances, the retained access into the field in the centre of the plot making the layout cramped, and also requested a larger amenity/open space.

Flood risk: The council is concerned about the plan for surplus run-off to discharge into the lake south of the development; the lake is already a catchment for the flood channel that runs west to east across the top of Harrold and the lake water level is near the brim during extended periods of heavy rain. The council requests that provision is made for all of the site water catchment to be held on-site, for example by the creation of an attenuation pond, and to not discharge into the lake.

Affordable housing: The council requests that a local affordable housing provider is used, rather than one from further afield. That the affordable units have a restriction so they are offered to residents of Harrold Parish in the first instance, before opening it up to people from further away.

Smaller items of note

The parish council has decided to keep the festoon lighting on The Green turned on between October and March, but off overnight. The lights are considered to be aesthetically pleasing and lift

the village. Also, during the winter months the centre of the village can be quite dark for those out and about early and for those opening up businesses.

Harrold Parish Council Facebook page

If you would like updates on parish council activity then please follow the Harrold Parish Council Facebook page or view our new “.gov” website.

David Brough, Clerk and Proper Officer, Harrold Parish Council.

clerk@harroldparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.harroldparishcouncil.gov.uk

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The next council meeting dates are: 10th April 2024, and the “Annual Parish Council” meeting and the “Annual Parish” meeting are on 8th May 2024, in the Harrold Centre at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend – there is a public open session at the start of every meeting.