

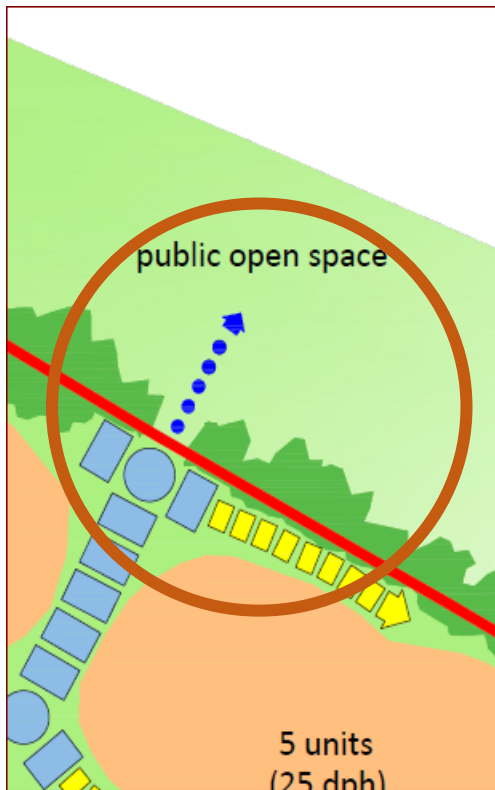
Response from Stoke Ferry Parish Council – Approved at their Ordinary Meeting on 6 March 2019

Construction of up to 70 houses on LAND ON THE SOUTH WEST SIDE OF LYNN ROAD, STOKE FERRY, NORFOLK. REF NO. 19/00274/OM

OBJECTIONS

The need for Amber REI to resubmit their Planning Application

- The legal document PLANNING_STATEMENT-4394234 contains two submission dates; January 2019 and January 2018. As such it needs to be resubmitted to the Borough Council.
- The Mill Site is a mixed site of 5.78 Hectares; part brownfield and part greenfield. These two parts are separated by public Footpath 17, a right of way, known locally as '*The Sand Path*'. This footpath is not owned by Amber REI. Hence, the outline planning application, as it exists, is not valid as a single application and should take the form of two separate applications. And, as a result, the separate, western, greenfield part of the site application will require details of a separate vehicular access. There is also concern for other footpaths within the village should the Parish Council allow Footpath 17 to be taken out of Parish ownership.
- Public Footpath 17 is owned by the Parish and the outline masterplan clearly shows two 'residential streets' crossing this Footpath. The proper procedure was not followed by Amber REI and its agents in liaising with the footpath's owners. See **Highways Issues** below.
- There is a matter of confusion and contradiction in Amber REI's Lynn Road application whereby it is coupled with their separate Application for the Furlong Road Site (FURLONG STORE, FURLONG ROAD, STOKE FERRY, KINGS LYNN. REF NO. 19/00272/OM). This is evidenced in their statement '*...affordable housing will be provided especially on the storage site.*' (CONSULTATION_REPORT-4394232, 5.6.). Either Amber REI is putting in two separate planning applications or it is putting in one. In our view it appears that they are minded to conflate their applications. This is of concern to the Parish Council who have had poor past experiences of housing developers in our village. Our concern in this instance is that the greenfield site off Lynn Road and the more easily cleared Furlong Store brownfield site would be developed first and the Main Mill buildings on Lynn Road/Buckenham Drive which would be more expensive and time consuming to for a future housing developer to remove would remain and be left as a derelict eye-sore in the heart of our village. The Parish Council would need reassurance in the form of a monetary bond from Amber REI or a 106 agreement, ensuring that the removal of the Mill buildings is completed prior to any commencement of housebuilding on the Lynn Road Greenfield Site or the Furlong Storage Site.
- A further concern and reason for re-submission is that the *Stoke Ferry Playing Field Trust* has not been formally approached by Amber REI or its agents in relation to the company's proposed access from the existing greenfield site onto the playing field to the west of the development ~ see abstract from Masterplan below.
- The playing field is misnamed, 'public open space' and is currently enclosed for community safety reasons ~ see abstract from Masterplan below.



Local Planning Policy:

- The development of the two sites must not merely be seen by our Borough Council as a ‘windfall housing site’ that delivers housing growth targets across the borough, but rather, it should be seen as an opportunity to show the rest of our county that it is possible to build a sustainable community housing development which not only enhances what currently exists but adds to the character of our village.

Pre-Application Planning Procedure: (Ref document CONSULTATION_REPORT-4394232)

The pre-application planning procedure of public consultation was flawed at each of its two *public* stages:

- 1st stage: Upon request from 2Agriculture, and at a direct cost to the residents of Stoke Ferry, an Extraordinary Meeting was called by Stoke Ferry Parish Council on Wednesday 26 September 2018. The meeting was advertised as being open to the public for a ‘Presentation from 2Agriculture Representatives Regarding Proposed Housing Development on Land at Furlong Road (Stores Area) and Land at Lynn Road (Mill)’. It was held in the Stoke Ferry Village Hall. The representatives of Amber REI, 2Agriculture and Pegasus Group also stated that, at this early stage, they wished to understand the thoughts of the Stoke Ferry Parish Council (see Stoke Ferry Parish Council Minutes, September 2018 <http://stokeferryparishcouncil.co.uk/minutes/>). However, during the proceedings, it became clear that the company’s representatives and their agents had not prepared responses to eight questions the Parish Council had previously sent to them in preparation for the consultation meeting. During the consultation meeting, Gavin Berry, the Managing Director of 2Agriculture made a statement that the company’s primary consideration for

the two housing development sites was the maximisation of return to the company's shareholders; thus, limiting the value (if any) of the consultation itself.

- 2nd Stage: A further "Public Consultation" was held at Stoke Ferry Village Hall on Wednesday, 12th December, 4pm to 7.30pm. This time organised by Amber REI and Pegasus Group. No clarity was provided by representatives of Amber REI or from the 'Project Team' as to what could be influenced by attendees in terms of an 'Outline Planning Application'. Individual residents were urged to record their responses to the planning application to 'shape the proposals'. However, the proposals that have now been submitted by Amber REI as their outline planning application do not differ in any way from the one on display on 12th December 2018. Further, no villager has received thanks or feedback for their input and there has been no feedback and no copies of the document CONSULTATION_REPORT-4394232 have been made available to the wider village community via the Parish Council or published in the local parish magazine, *The Village Pump*. This 2nd Stage Consultation should be regarded by Planning Officers as a meaningless and a purely 'tick-box' exercise by Amber REI. That Amber REI were providing only lip-service to 'consultation' is further exemplified in the document CONSULTATION_REPORT-4394232, 4.15 which states: *'In terms of being carbon neutral, there is no adopted policy which requires new houses to be carbon neutral nor does it require development to go beyond the requirements of the Building Regulations. As a consequence, the proposals would be compliant with the Council's adopted policies.'* The owner's stance on carbon-neutrality is also in conflict with the National Policy Planning Framework, 2018, paragraph 8, which contains an Environmental Policy to *'mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'*.

Highways Issues

- Access Roads: The proposed housing estate roads indicate there is to be one entrance to this development. The increased traffic flow (FINAL_TRANSPORT_PLAN-4394220) will leave and return to Stoke Ferry via Lynn Road and Furlong Road. Therefore, the majority of this traffic will pass through the village centre via the village square, which is the central focus of the village. Some of this passing traffic could be dissipated by a second access into the Main Site off Lynn Road was made entering the 'green field' to the west of the site, this would alleviate the need to have estate roads crossing over the public pathway north to south.
- The public footpath across the site is not owned by Amber REI: Footpath 17, the 'Sand Path' as the footpath is known locally, was (i) gifted to the village in the 1960's by a local businessman, Mr Waters (who at the same time gifted the village the playing fields which are featured on the Masterplan submitted with the application) (ii) was adopted by Norfolk County Council many years ago and (iii) has since been maintained and resurfaced by the Parish Council at the expense of the village taxpayers. This adoption by Norfolk County Council was done as a measure to safeguard the public pathway. Amber REI cannot arbitrarily make changes to Footpath 17. Thus, a certificate of ownership must be filled in and signed as part of the application; either Certificates A, B, C or D. The Planning Consultants, Pegasus Group completed Certificate B which requires that anyone having an interest in the site either ownership or lease/tenancy etc. is informed of the application. But Pegasus only informed Amber REI. In our opinion, they have completed the wrong certificate. In the Planning Statement the Footpath 17 is referred to as a public footpath. This seems to imply that the ownership of the path is in doubt and therefore Certificate D should have been completed which usually also requires details to be published in the local newspapers.

- The public footpath: In the document APPLICATION_FORM-4394212 the applicant states that their proposals will not require any diversions of rights of way. However, in the outline plans the existing footpath, owned, we believe, by the Parish will be crossed twice by 'residential streets'.
- The public footpath: The access to the green field part of the Mill Site should be from Lynn Road at the T-junction with Furlong Road and not assume rights of use over the footpath. There is more than enough frontage to provide a roadway for vehicular use in both directions and the junction has more than enough space for a mini-roundabout, based on others that exist in other local communities.
- The lack of pedestrian access from the proposed housing estate development to the village centre, the village hall and other village facilities is of concern to the Parish Council. The submitted plan shows only one exit route from the proposed development; i.e. via the road access onto Buckenham Drive. We see this as a severe curtailment of movement for no vehicular users.
- The document FINAL_TRANSPORT_PLAN-4394220, 3.8.6 states that 'the collision analysis indicates that there is no underlying safety issue that could be exacerbated by the proposed development on any of the surrounding highway network'. However, Buckenham Drive and Lynn Road both currently have speed limits of 30mph. These speed limits, under the proposed plans, would need to be reduced to 20mph to cope with greater traffic flows and to reduce road accident risk.
- The document, FINAL_TRANSPORT_PLAN-4394220, Local Amenities, 3.4.1, (dated 25/01/2019) incorrectly states that Stoke Ferry has a Post Office. This error is repeated in at least two other places in the planning application documents at 7.1.3. and in document PLANNING_STATEMENT-4394234, 2.3 and 4.9. The loss of the village Post Office along with the continuing closure of the village's last public house diminishes Stoke Ferry's role as a designated **Key Rural Service Area** as stated in the document PLANNING_STATEMENT-4394234. 4.5 where the owners argue that the village is thereby suitable for their approximate 20% expansion in housing stock.
- Both of the submitted documents, FINAL_TRANSPORT_PLAN-4394220 and RESIDENTIAL_TRAVEL_PLAN-4394221 base their findings and recommendations upon a development of 70 houses (plus a further 30 at the Furlong Road site). This high density of houses is not necessary for the owners and any future developers to maximise their return on investment. A lower density development of more historically and locally respectful and sought-after, housing arranged and grouped in spacious, green, mini-neighbourhoods (e.g. through use of 'custom build'), would provide a similar if not greater return. As such a suggested development (especially 'custom build') would also meet the community desire identified through the Pegasus Consultation process of inclusion of smaller, affordable homes. (See Document CONSULTATION_REPORT-4394232, 4.13).
- Such a lower density/higher specification development as outlined in the point above, would also compliment the owner's declared desire to reduce traffic impact on the village and upon the local highway as well as '*promoting healthy lifestyles and sustainable, vibrant communities*', '*encouraging community interaction*' and '*reducing noise and air pollution*'. (RESIDENTIAL_TRAVEL_PLAN-4394221, Section 9, Summary and Conclusion).

Physical infrastructure: Public drainage/water systems/sewage.

- Amber REI provide assurances that runoff of rainwater from impermeable surfaces, such as roofs, roads, driveways, patios and car parks from the development can be adequately dealt with by existing Anglian Water facilities (Document: physical infrastructure point INTERNAL_DRAINAGE_BOARD_CORRESPONDENCE-4403187) and that surface water runoff poses no flood risk (APPLICATION_FORM-4394212 11. Assessment of Flood Risk). However, whilst the brownfield site consists of impermeable surfaces and factory constructions the greenfield site does not. We are of the opinion that a more suitable solution would be the creation of ponds/reedbeds which would both retain run-off water across both sites as well as adding to local biodiversity and go some way to mitigate the loss of the underdeveloped grass land. This would also complement Norfolk County Council's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for King's Lynn and West Norfolk and also, Anglian Water's preferred method of dealing with runoff water i.e. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/developers/suds.aspx>.
- In the document APPLICATION_FORM-4394212 (part 10: Foul Sewage) the applicant states that it is 'unknown' if the new development will use the existing sewage infrastructure – while the document PLANNING_STATEMENT-4394234, 5.24 states that the sewage system in Buckenham Drive would be utilised. These are contradictory statements. Given that there are other on-going housing developments within Stoke Ferry, and one of them, opposite the Main Mill Site, has already caused sewage problems, the applicant needs to ascertain and re-submit, at this early stage explaining how they propose sewage will be handled from each of their two sites.

Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas:

- We are concerned about the harmful impact of the development on the Conservation Area of Stoke Ferry and its setting; which the Mill Site abuts and to a small extent overlaps (PLANNING_STATEMENT-4394234, 2.2)

Local Financial Considerations:

- Through the development of both sites the number of households in Stoke Ferry will increase by some 20% and its population will increase proportionately by three to four hundred and we would like it confirmed that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be applied.