

THRAPSTON TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor: Cllr Craig Wheeler

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**Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Thrapston Town Council
held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7.15pm at the Town Council Office, Thrapston**

**Present: Cllr Wheeler (Chairman), Cllr Cairns, Cllr Hawkins, Cllr Latimer, Cllr McLuckie,
Cllr Storey, Cllr Wilcox, Cllr Winter, Cllr Worley**

**Stephanie Bishop, Development Director, Newlands
Ben Taylor, Planning Director, Newlands
Steve Johnstone, Traffic Consultant, Lawrence Walker
Steve Harley, Planning Consultant, Oxalis
Peter Hoy, Ecologist, FPCR**

In attendance: Linda Brodier (Clerk), Members of the Public

No.	Item	Action	By Whom
1.	Apologies for Absence Cllr McGovern had tendered his apologies which were accepted. No other apologies received.		
2.	Declaration of Interest None.		
3.	Presentation from Newlands, followed by Questions & Answer Session Newlands delivered a presentation on updates to their proposed development which covered the following topics:- Background and Context Who Newlands Are The Proposed Scheme Timeline Why This Location Warehousing & Logistics Reports DHL's Operational Need Labour Supply Analysis Highways Landscape & Visual Ecology Scheme Benefits		

	<p>Social Value Strategy What DHL will bring to Thrapston Green Infrastructure Net Zero Carbon Development (A copy of the presentation is held in the office if anyone wishes to see it). Following presentation it was then open to the floor for the Questions & Answers session, including Public Open Time, which focused primarily on the following topics:- Why they believe they meet Policy 24 Justifications based on Industry Reports Data Collection Models Statistics from the Labour Analysis Highways / Traffic Management / Pedestrian Crossing Re-purposing of other units Public Transport Cycleways S.106 Monies Biodiversity / Strategy / Timescales Monitoring of delivery of assurances Landscaping Heritage Operational Water Management Plan Community Benefits Occupation of other units Timescale of works Amenities for Drivers Habitat & Wildlife Climate / Net Zero / Solar Panels Management of Site / Monitoring</p> <p>Newlands and their consultants responded to all points raised; clarity and assurances were given. Newlands advised that they would share other reports with the Council, including the SEMLEP Report and Labour Analysis Report. Following Questions & Answers Newlands and Members of the Public left the meeting [21:00].</p>		
4.	<p>To receive and consider the following planning application and to determine the Council's response (Documents available at: https://publicaccess.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/online-applications/)</p> <p>NE/22/00151/FUL: Hybrid Planning Application: Full permission sought for the demolition of all existing buildings and structures and the re-alignment of an existing farm track; site infrastructure works, including groundworks, strategic landscaping and creation of development plateaus; and construction of a storage and distribution unit (Unit 01) (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E), including access, parking, servicing, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Outline permission sought for the construction of industrial distribution space (Use Class B8) with ancillary offices (Use Class E). All matters reserved except for site access. At: Land East of Halden's Parkway, Thrapston, Northamptonshire</p> <p>Further discussions took place regarding the proposed development and on what basis the Council might object, if this is how they chose to proceed. Following lengthy discussion it was resolved to object to the proposed development. It was agreed</p>	Draft objection response	Cllr Worley

	that Cllr Worley would draft the objections for Councillors' approval prior to submission by Officers. This can be found as attached at Appendix 1.		
	There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:25.		

Signed

Dated

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1

COMMENTS FOR SUBMISSION

Principal of development

There is agreement with the submitted Planning Statement 6.6 that 'Development of this scale is envisaged to come forward on allocated sites or within identified SUE under the adopted plan'. The proposed site is not an allocated site within the Joint Core Strategy, nor does it form part of an SUE. As such the principal of the proposed development rests on Policy 24 of the aforementioned plan, for which it is required to meet *all* criteria. There is substantial concern that the proposals do not meet all of these 7 criteria. It is further noted that the applicant also agrees that the proposals do not meet all 7 criteria (as stated on the record at a public meeting with Thrapston Council), failing specifically criteria a) and that criteria c) is contingent upon future development that is not due to be supplied until several years after the proposals become operational.

In lieu of the proposals complying with the Local Plan the applicant is relying on other material considerations and specifically the NPPF Chapter 6. This however has not been substantially demonstrated and ignores requirements in Chapter 11 which also require mix use developments.

Furthermore there is concern that Criteria f) *Provide sufficient infrastructure to mitigate highways impacts* has not been demonstrated. Although it is accepted that the proposals will increase the traffic capacity within the immediate vicinity this is not sufficient to mitigate the impact of the increased traffic resulting from the development.

In light of the above Thrapston Town Council (TTC) does not consider that the principal of the development has been demonstrated. **As such there is an in principal objection to the development.**

Ecology

The proposed 10% net biodiversity gain is the minimum required. As such this should not be taken as positive for this development. In order to provide a net benefit the biodiversity and in recognition of the importance of the surrounding ecological sites the biodiversity net gain must be 20% with the addition 10% a credits to be used on identified sites within Thrapston. **A condition must be applied to any permissions requiring 10% off-site biodiversity credits in addition to the on site BNG.**

Landscape and Visual Impact

There is agreement with the applicant that the proposals will have a substantive Landscape and Visual impact, particularly on Titchmarsh. With regard the impact upon the appreciation from Thrapston there is concern that although the proposed textualisation of the elevations will to a marginal extent reduce the landscape impact this is not substantive enough to make a material difference to the accepted impact.

If permission is granted a condition must be applied require no advertisements on any elevation that does not face inwards of the site or on to the A14.

Socio-Economic

The developer is in effect claiming that this development will solve local unemployment and reduce district unemployment by a 1/3. Considering that there is already an acute shortage of jobs on various units at Halden's parkway, an equivalent development, there is strong scepticism regarding the ability of the proposal to assuage any unsatisfied employment needs. Furthermore there is a concern that the employment supply will come from development that will not be constructed for over a decade after the site is operational. In addition there is concern that the employment numbers (which are not considered credible) are also based on making labour shortages worse in surrounding areas. This would therefore



result in further widespread labour shortages in the area, resulting in substantially increased importation of labour from long distances. This therefore contrary to point c) of Policy 24.

Heritage and Archaeology

It has been established for a considerable period of time that the impact of development on the significance of the heritage assets is from the impact upon the relationship between the proposed development site and the site of the heritage asset. As such the submitted Heritage Appraisal and Setting Assessment is fundamentally flawed in its methodology for the assessment of the impact of the development upon significance of the heritage assets due to its use of visibility as primary criteria for impact.

Furthermore it is noted that in a the council meeting the applicants conceded that the proposals are considered less than substantial harm. Despite the poor submitted heritage statement it is suggested that this harm is at the mid to upper level and must therefore be balanced against the public benefits of the scheme. These benefits rest completely upon the provision of employment land which is not even within a Local Plan allocation. There is therefore substantial concern regarding the weight that can be applied to these supposed public benefits and it is considered that these do not in fact constitute material public benefits.

Highways

The submitted highway improvements submitted to mitigate the substantial increase in traffic to site which already has capacity issues have not as yet been agreed and accepted by either National Highways nor NNC Highways. There is a substantial concern that the proposed remedies, specifically the very minor tweaks to the A14 roundabout are not sufficient to mitigate the resulting increase in traffic for the site. Additionally there is a highways safety concern regarding the proposals to east bound slip round and the potential for backing up along the A14 itself.

It was noted that in the meeting between TTC and the applicant, it was suggested that the resulting impact on the highway due to the proposed works would more than compensated for the additional traffic and therefore should be considered a net benefit of the proposals. TTC disputes this weighting and notes with scepticism the claim considering the minor changes proposed compared to level of impact that the highway statutory consultees indented previously.

A condition must be placed upon any permissions that highway works must be completed before occupation of the site.

Conclusion

As aforementioned, TTC agrees with the applicant that the proposal is not compliant with the Local Plan. Additionally it does not consider that the identified material consideration within the NPPF are relevant in this instance and if they are relevant have not been robustly demonstrated.

Irrespective of the acceptability of the principal, with regards the planning balance this is considered to be substantially detrimental to the environs of Thrapston. Specifically the combined weight of the Landscape, Heritage and Highway impact are not combined mitigate the weight of ecology and socio-economic, both of which any benefits are considered minimal.

TTC urges NNC to refuse the application on principal. If NNC thinks there is sufficient merit to base the decision on the planning balance then again TTC urges refusal for the reason argued previously.