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## Soham Town Council

### 19/00717/OUM – Broad Piece Soham. Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Under PL 06/20i Soham Town Council's Planning Committee noted again its objections and concerns in the strongest terms to current proposal to develop land at Broad Piece. Soham Town Council's Planning Committee would support the Planning Authority's delegated Planning Committee in refusing this development proposal on the following grounds:

- The site is not in the Local Plan 2015
- The site is outside the development area/envelope of Soham
- The site resides totally within Water Treatment Works Safeguarding Area and Water Recycling Area (WRA) and whilst Anglian Water has been consulted on odour there is no report from Cambridgeshire County Council as Relevant Authority in CRA'S to WRA's.
- Fails to provide 30% housing as outlined in Policy HOU 3
- Measures provided for surface water drainage to Southern end of site (Drainage feasibility layout schematic) of 'shallow depression to be created for exceedance conditions and new cut-off drainage depressed area created to protect local residents from potential overland flow planted to retard any overland flow'

The Schematic does not provide quantal data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the 'shallow depression'. Under this concern STC's Planning Committee considered specifically the inclusion of this 'shallow depression'

- a) Does not demonstrate how it will aid in an overall flood risk reduction (Policy 8)
  - b) Whether it could conceivably intensify the risk of flooding during the lifetime of the development ie regarding current surface drainage issues that are detrimentally affecting existing residents living on Broad Piece
  - c) Whether it takes into any account future climate change allowances, unless other more effective and suitable flood management and mitigation measures need to be agreed now and implemented during the lifetime of the development.
  - d) The Developer fails to indicate how and who will be responsible for maintenance of this depression or the attenuation pond feature at the North end of the proposal.
- Concerns were heightened regarding the known drainage issues as the proposals indicates the necessity to 'In fill of ditch' to provide an emergency access into the development. Notwithstanding the exacerbation to the known surface water issues at this site (see exceedance concerns above) members were concerned that whilst the adoptable standards for CCC Highways might have been met on a practical level the Refuse Collecting Authority (in this case ECDC) on internal feeder roads rather than in allocated parking bays to insist communal collection points be established and due preference for communal parking bays and residents parking preferentially on internal roads and near their properties.

- Concerns were raised by the membership regarding the roads within this proposal noting that there is a presumption in favour of providing this amenity using communal car parking areas. Practical demonstration that however prefer to have direct parking at their properties and will for convenience and in its absence of such often park, double park and obstruct residential roads. Whilst the committee noted the Developer's confirmation that these roads will be of adoptable standards for Highways compliance and purpose the committee raised concerns that these residential roads must also be of an adoptable standard for refuse (amenity) collection servicing to access.
- Outside of site-specific concerns and objections members again raised the issues to those widespread and known insufficiencies to Soham town's current foul water drainage network. Members conceded that in theory foul water network connection to properties from this particular development would be relatively simple to achieve being located in close proximity to the WTW. The practical demonstration will no doubt be a far less appealing experience for residents here as it is currently for existing residents on Board Piece. Currently Anglian Water (AW) has adopted a strategy of introducing interceptor tanks to increase overall foul water (sewage) network capacity in Soham. The interceptor tank arrangement at Broad Piece is the last in a long line and chain of these tanks that are being agreed by AW and with Developers in planning applications to 'solve' (mitigate) immediate network sewage connections (a legal requirement). The receptor tank at Broad Piece is currently the last in this arrangement. When the foul water/sewage capacity is challenged in times of high water/flood/need/use AW has placed flap valves on this tank (and on others) to properties at Broad Piece to stop raw sewage back flowing into homes. The most recent failure occurred on the night of December 20<sup>th</sup> 2019 when **25mm** of rain falling on saturated ground precipitated this network wide shut down. This resulted in homeowners on Broad Piece being unable to flush their toilets for 24hrs until the WTA could cope with excess capacities. This problem was mirrored upstream and in this particular instance residents on Que Fen were unable to flush their toilets for more than 48 hours. The direct connection of another 175 houses proposed at development under PA 19/00717/OUM will add further stress to the current 'solve' being applied by AW to the deficiencies in sewage capacity in Soham (a matter that was highlighted in table page 285 of the Local Plan 2015 namely *Capacity in the STW is limited until the upgrades are completed Development proposals in this period will need to be supported by Anglian Water*). The upgrade was expected in 2013 and is still to be not only planned and agreed but financially committed to and implemented. In the absence of true 'resolution' to what is a basic amenity and human right to 'flush the toilet' The Planning Authority's Planning Committee should be considerate that Soham's WTA network serves also Wicken and Fordham's sewage demands and so all housing developments now and those representing growth, irrespective of whether this growth is in Soham Wick or Fordham is subject to these same inconvenient amenity deficiency truths. To date these AW's 'improvements' may well be solving the issues of individual sewage connections at individual developments but not resolves the inherent incapacities of the entire system.

In summary whilst Soham Town Council's planning committee accepts that the emergent Local Plan 2017 has now been withdrawn it respectfully reminds the Planning Authority's Planning Committee of the criteria which would be applied to this particular site (document proposed Submission November 2017) which had been agreed by all Relevant Parties and Statutory Consultees at that time namely:

SOH.H10 Land off Kingfisher Drive:

- 100 dwellings (Maximum figure in order to address above matters and enable a low density scheme in this edge of settlement location)
- Access only onto Kingfisher Drive
- Extensive buffering/landscaping scheme to the North and West the tent of which must be agreed by Anglia Water.
- An odour mitigation scheme agreed with Anglian Water.

STC Planning Committee considers all issues herein remain pertinent and material considerations to a planning application within an area currently described in the Local Plan 2015 as being forward 'spatial strategies and locations' to Soham to be considered in any future local plan reviews (page 31, 32). The land and application under **19/00717/OUM – Broad Piece** is now is projected to be 'windfall' and being outside the development envelope, the planning committee members here trust that it will be subject to '[there will be] a strict policy of control over development' (para 3.3.7 LP 2015)