

PLANNING COMMITTEE
1st April 2019

**SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE
PUBLICATION OF THE AGENDA AND ERRATA**

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Assistant Director's comments: The Legal Agreement has been received and executed on 29th March 2019. The additional time requested to complete the S106 is therefore no longer required, & there is no longer any need for the Committee to consider the item on the agenda.

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Agent: Clarification was sought on the total number of representations received and the breakdown of objections, supporting and neutral comments. Queries were also raised in relation to recommended conditions 5 and 7:

Condition 5 boundary treatments - prior to occupation "a plan shall be submitted for approval indicating the positions, heights, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected."

We believe this information is already proposed on the landscape plans and Sections as provided by the project Landscape Architects, 219-100revC and 219-200revB ('evergreen - Quercus Ilex, hedge planting with post and wire fence) . The only part of the information missing explicitly is the height of the boundary hedges. We would be happy for a condition to note that these should not be more than 2.2m.

Condition 7 hard and soft landscaping - We assume this refers to the landscaping of all the common parts/ POS, rather than the individual plot back gardens? If so, again we believe this information is already proposed to a fairly high level of detail on the landscape plans and Sections as provided by the project Landscape Architects, 219-100revC and 219-200revB, giving types and sizes of plants etc.

Agent / Applicant: A short briefing leaflet and cover letter from the applicant has been sent out to committee members in advance of the meeting. This can be summarised as follows:

- As a brief background outline permission was granted for this scheme almost 3 years ago. I have since been working with LIVEDIN to develop what I believe to be an exemplary Custom Build scheme for the site.
- Why Custom Build? Rather than selling the site to a housebuilder, losing control of the project and most likely ending up with something disappointingly generic, I have chosen to follow a custom build route. This has allowed me to retain close control over design, the delivery of an excellent Public Open Space, but at the same time it will allow each individual home-owner/ plot buyer to put their own little bit of individuality on their home; effectively allowing the same sort of subtle variation that you get in so many of our most loved old villages, whilst having a controlled overall composition.
- Throughout the process, I have kept the Parish Council informed of developments to the scheme and invited feedback. We have also worked very closely with the planning department through an extensive pre-application process and again during the application process; responding to concerns that they or the Parish have raised. We have arrived at a point whereby we have satisfied every technical issue raised and also satisfied any concerns that were raised by the planning department, hence their recommendation for approval.
- We acknowledge that this application is not run-of-the-mill. The project team has been picked from the best designers in the region to deliver a scheme that far exceeds simple policy compliance, and should be and continue to grow into a landmark new public heart

to this village.

- What is Custom Build? Custom Build and Self Build are both about allowing new homes to be crafted to fit the homeowner's particular needs. This level of 'choice' and customization is missing from the 'standard' houses currently offered by speculative developers. For them one size fits all - and so their houses are purposefully generic and uninspiring. But aren't we all different? Of course, and that's why no two old houses or cottages are the same - they were built by their owner to fit their own needs and incorporating their own particular quirks.
- So is this a new idea? Not really - much of our housing stock was self-built like this, but now Self Build is sometimes seen as risky, expensive and sometimes extreme. The Government want to change this, and the Self and Custom Build Housing Act 2015, was conceived to resolve these issues. In this process a specialist 'enabler' helps at every stage - finding the land, getting planning, installing services and facilitating the construction process. It is not a new idea - many of our Georgian and Victorian streetscapes were developed like this - including Royal Crescent, Bath (below) - note how the backs are less uniform than the front elevations.
- Why Custom Build? Is it just about choice? Choice is a factor, but crucially it is also about building better homes and communities. Research has found that people who build their own homes put down deep roots: moving on average only once every 25 years, compared to the national average of once every 6 years. They stay because their home has been built with care; and this continuity helps form strong communities.
- Are there other benefits to the Local Community? Yes! Custom Build construction is geared towards local businesses and SMEs - the type that big house builders have squeezed out. It is also more Sustainable: Self Builders have vested long terms interests in their homes, so naturally care more about eco-credentials and tend to stay longer (reducing the waste from refurbishments). Furthermore, 50% of this site has been landscaped as a public green-space (more on this in section 5).
- Is there a demand for this? Absolutely - a Building Societies Association survey has shown that 53% of the population is interested in building their own home. Despite the Right To Build Acts demand is being underestimated and on the supply side not enough schemes like this are being brought forward.
- How will Custom Build work at Ingoldisthorpe?
Stage 1 - LANDSCAPING and infrastructure: The first stage is to install the new access roads, services and landscape the grounds.
Stage 2 - SALES: the serviced-plots are sold directly by the landowner to homebuyers. Cutting out an intermediary developer creates shared savings, both for the Landowner and for the buyer, which can be reinvested into the homes and their setting.
Stage 3 - CONSTRUCTION: Buyers are introduced to pre-selected specialist builders who will be ready to build. Custom Build buyers tend to use specialist manufacturers who build the frame off-site, lowering inconvenience for neighbours.
- What 'choice' is offered and how is this controlled? Choice is fundamental but so is getting the balance right - between making sure that all the houses work well together and with the wider village whilst protecting the amenity of neighbours. Therefore following extensive dialogue with the Local Planning Authority we have adopted a very controlled approach, resulting in the creation of a plot-specific Design Code which allows some flexibility within carefully controlled parameters. See the design code document for more information...
- We have worked very carefully to design houses that are of their PLACE and of their TIME: PLACE - ie taking design influences from traditional Norfolk vernacular buildings of the area, we have included: West Norfolk materials: clay pantiles, red brick and Carrstone; simple rectangular pitched forms with a variety of roof pitches as per local variation; raised parapet gables with brick tumbling details (a very locally distinct detail); substantial brick chimneys (as featured on many local buildings like the Village Hall and Old Hall Farm House). TIME - Whilst picking up on local features the houses should still be resolutely of their time and not ape an arbitrary choice of historic style; and so we have included: contemporary compositions - asymmetric yet balanced; and timber cladding - a natural, sympathetic and sustainable material. Most new homes in the UK

are timber frame and timber is the logical choice of cladding for practical, affordable, low energy and high performance construction.

- Is contemporary architecture really appropriate in a rural context like Ingoldisthorpe... doesn't contemporary design date really quickly? All buildings when they are built are contemporary - the key is to make them good examples of their time and place. In the same way that a simple 18th-century farmer's cottage or Sandringham, look 'dated' so we hope these houses become archetypes of their era. Good contemporary design can enhance the village's identity more than the post-war speculative housing developments of Grovelands and Ingoldale, which adjoin the site. Pastiche design is not the antidote to this.... good design is.
- Will the pond area be Public Open Space? Yes - this will be at least 50% of the site. The idea is to create a 'green' – a new public heart at the centre of the village - managed by the new homeowners - for the benefit of all.
- What will the green space look like? The idea is to make this indigenous and natural. The pond will be increased to its 19th-century size and have its biodiversity improved by removing invasive weed and introducing marginal and aquatic planting. Native trees will be planted including Oak, Scots Pine, Alder and Weeping Willow. A blackberry bush, which provides a nesting-area, will be retained as requested by the Parish Council. There is no fence around the edge but timber posts to stop uncontrolled parking, with visitor bays provided. Level and improved pathways are proposed around the edge to enhance access to the bus stop.
- Will the Local Planning Authority or Parish Council have to pay to manage this? No – the homeowners will form a management company to look after and maintain the green area for the benefit of the locality and visitors.
- Do all the houses feature Carrstone? Yes – every front elevation has a minimum amount of Carrstone (this can be increased within the terms of the proposed design code).
- How else does the design fit into Ingoldisthorpe? The architecture picks up on the local vernacular with pitched pantile roof forms, featuring raised parapet brick gable with tumbling-in detail, detached chimneys and a local palette of materials as described earlier. The green area is designed to develop a character like the local Commons to the north and south, tying it in with the local landscape.
- How does the height of the houses relate to the neighbours along Hill Road? Following feedback, the original scheme was adjusted to bring the heights in line with the Hill Road neighbours. The tallest pitch was reduced from 55° to 50° so that no house is taller than the apex of the corner house on The Drift / Lynn Road.
- What flooding precautions are you making? Surface water drainage has been considered to avoid flooding on or from the site. We aim to use soak-aways but the measure we finally adopt will depend on our over-winter monitoring tests we are currently conducting. The Local Lead Flood Authority who will over-see this as a condition for approval.
- Will there be Affordable housing? Yes - As per the LPA requirement there will be 1 affordable rent and 1 shared-equity home. They will be built and managed by a Registered Provider.
- Will the finished houses all look totally different? Not at all - the designs are such that there is a common style and themes that tie the homes together. The material specification is also limited so that the same types of bricks /tiles/ stone size is used. But beyond this level of control and uniformity – there is an intentional variation that comes with having different owners making their own decisions with their own builders. This will lead to a subtle variety that is a hallmark of the character that features in our favourite traditional villages.

Third Parties: 3 letters of SUPPORT which can be summarised as follows:

- Think it would be a real positive for Ingoldisthorpe its unsightly now as it is and it's about time the village was modernised a bit.
- We need more dwellings in the area, of any type. Luckily, instead of building further out of the village, this is a wasted piece of land in the centre of the village that could really

be put to good use.

- The buildings proposed are well thought out and in keeping with the area but still modern enough to entice new families.
- These dwellings would be ideal for local families to move into, freeing up smaller houses for first time buyers and such like.
- Having a new set of homes here will hopefully tidy up the village centre, especially since the "pond" (algae pit) has been redundant and neglected for years and very unsightly.
- This is a well-considered, designed and thoughtful application that sets a high benchmark for modern housing development in the area.
- It makes an attractive new development around a new green that will be a great addition to the village.
- The proposal is an exciting innovation in how houses can be designed and inhabited whilst reflecting the local vernacular and highlighting a healthy material variation.
- Please grant this application as a positive addition to the local built environment.

1 letter of **OBJECTION** which can be summarised as follows:

- Object to the development on terms of design.
- The development is in a central location of the village and having two new access points to the site is going to cause dangerous havoc to existing infrastructure, due to the entrances to the proposed development being extremely close to an existing road which is already difficult to get out of.
- The design of the proposed houses are not in keeping with anything that already surrounds the site, and once life moves in with 2/3 cars per household the site will end up looking like a car park.
- Whatever is built is going to be there for a long time and the materials used and the design needs to fit in with its surroundings, which the proposed currently does not.
- I am not against modern design but the centre of the village this is not the place for it, especially on such a scale.
- To reach this village green image you are trying to portray could easily be achieved by locating the access road behind the proposed properties with pedestrian access to the front, and the dwellings designed in a more traditional manner.

Norfolk Historic Environment Service: We have now received the paper and digital copies of the final archaeological report. Therefore we are able to advise that no further archaeological work will be required in connection with this case.

Assistant Director's comments:

The committee report refers to 19 objections, 1 neutral and 7 supporting comments received (i.e. 27 responses) which was the correct number at the time of writing. Since then an additional 3 letters of support and 1 letter of objection have been received which are summarised above. This brings the total number of representations to 31.

Following discussions with the agent in relation to conditions 5 and 7 it has been agreed that condition 5 will remain as recommended, however condition 7 can be removed, as there is already sufficient information submitted on landscaping with the application.

REMOVE Condition 7 and re-number remaining conditions 7-13