

Barrowford & Western Parishes Committee – Update 8th June 2022

22/0197/FUL Land To The North East Of Saint Thomas Church, Wheatley Lane Road, Barrowford

Barrowford Parish Council

The Parish Council has submitted a report in objection to the development which is summarised below:

- The proposed development, in addition to the existing approved development at Trough Laithe would represent a disproportionate degree of expansion of the settlement of Barrowford.
- The development conflicts with Policies SDP2, ENV1 and ENV2 of the Core Strategy; Policies BNDP01 and BNDP08 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the requirements of the Framework to create high quality, beautiful places which make effective use of land whilst safeguarding and improving the environment
- The development contains no bungalows in conflict with Policy LIV5.
- The development would be an anomalous projection into the open countryside.
- The design is formulaic and does little to reflect its surroundings.
- The proposed development would destroy the current green field setting of both this part of the Conservation Area and the setting of Oaklands House, one of the few large Victorian mill owners houses within Barrowford.
- Whilst 'less than substantial harm' is concluded in the supporting Heritage Statement, the Parish Council does not consider that the public benefit outweighs the harm, on a Greenfield site within Barrowford in which there are other preferred housing sites in less sensitive locations.
- Sight lines to the entrance of the proposed development are very restricted by the lack of footpath to the carriageway on the site side of the road and the narrow footpath in front of Higher Causeway Farm and Barn opposite
- The close proximity to the private access road to Oaklands Lodge, House and converted dwellings in former out buildings could decrease sight lines as could the access to St. Thomas's Church car park. Access from Lupton Drive onto Church Street was recently submitted as part of an alternative route to serve the planning application for 200 dwellings proposed off Pasture Lane (21/0949/FUL) and would include a roundabout at this point.
- Church Street currently experiences large volumes of cars being part of the school run for both St Thomas School and Rushton Street Primary School. In recent years has become a rat run to circumvent large volumes of traffic along Gisburn Road through to Junction 13 of the M65.
- The road has several pinch points exacerbated by on street parking reducing the width of the carriageway to single file traffic and prohibits larger buses and HGV's. This is most prevalent in the section from Oaklands Lodge to the junction with Gisburn Road.

- The access and egress from the St Thomas side of the site would consist of traffic using Higher Causeway to the junction with Gisburn Road, or Nora Street to the junction with Gisburn Road at Newbridge, or proceeding up Wheatley Lane Road.
- Access via Higher Causeway is problematic as on street parking to both sides reduces the width of the available carriageway to single file. Higher Causeway is also the main access to St Thomas School and a secondary route to Rushton Street School each predominantly going in the opposite direction to the other. Nora Street also is an integral part of the School Run to both schools and again on road parking to both sides severely reduces the available width of the carriageway.
- Wheatley Lane Road leads to Carr Hall Road, the only suitable access to the wider area not through Barrowford village centre. The junction at the top of Carr Hall Road is narrow with very poor sight lines and the Carr Hall Road junction with the A6068 Villages By pass is notorious for the number of collisions that have taken place there in recent years.
- The applicant acknowledges that in order to achieve the correct visibility splays for the new entrance a large section of the wall is to be reduced in height. The Parish Council argues that this dilutes the importance of the wall and its contribution to the character of this part of the Conservation Area.
- The application has been supported by an Ecological Appraisal but on a site of this scale a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should have been provided by the applicant.
- While the application site may not be located in a 'valued' landscape in the context of the NPPF (paragraph 174a) the site is valued by the people of Barrowford who acknowledge that the site has a positive impact on the Conservation Area. The site lies in the countryside which is valued by the Parish and wider community and where its intrinsic character and beauty should be recognised in accordance with Paragraph 174 (b) of the NPPF.
- Development on the scale of this application would therefore compromise the landscape's rural character and in turn would have a detrimental impact on the landscape views in particular those identified within the Conservation Area. The development would be an urbanising feature, eroding the visual qualities of the current open field which make a positive and valued part of the rural landscape and Conservation Area.
- Limited availability at doctor's surgeries and dentists.
- Lack of renewable energy provision on site.
- Lack of provision for affordable housing.
- The proposed site already causes surface water runoff and flooding in the immediate vicinity with effects in the wider area. Excessive surface water runoff creates problems on Gisburn Road adjacent to Holmefield House and Lucy Street at a point where the main drainage from the site meets another surface water drain before turning into Pendle Water.
- Similarities to the recently dismissed appeal site for 67 dwellings at Foster Road, Barnoldswick.
- The application should be refused for the following reasons;

1. Development of this scale would compromise the rural character and appearance, contrary to policy ENV1 and Barrowford Neighbourhood Plan policy BNDP 08
2. The development would create an urbanising feature which would erode the visual qualities of part of the Barrowford Conservation Area contrary to ENV1.
3. Increasing pressure on the social infrastructure, which is already at capacity, including health schools and roads, contrary to Policy ENV 7
4. Detrimental impact on existing drainage systems placing increasing pressure on known drainage 'hot spot' areas contrary to policy ENV7
5. No proper consideration of the Biodiversity Net Gain which the site should be bringing forward, contrary to policy ENV2
6. A lack of any form of renewable energy considerations and designing for climate change contrary to policy ENV2
7. Unbalanced mixture of housing type, not fulfilling requirements set out in policy LIV3