

Notes of the Parish Meeting on Monday 10th February

The Parish Council thank everyone who attended the meeting.

At the meeting Michael Clark (Chair) explained the current situation in relation to the plans for the North Taunton Development in Staplegrove.

In 2017 outline planning permission was given for the building of a 'spine' road between Staplegrove Road (A358) and Kingston Road and for the building of 1500 houses. In December 2019, Redrow submitted 'the reserved matters' (the detail) planning applications for the 'spine' road 34/19/0035 and the first phase (1A) of the housing. 34/19/0036

The Parish Council have submitted 5 objections/comments on these plans and these were explained by Michael Clark and questions and answers followed each explanation. The comments can also be viewed on this website. These comments can be used to help people submit their own comments.

Please send in your own comments by clicking [here](#) to visit the Somerset West and Taunton website using the following application numbers (34/19/0035 and 34/19/0036)

PETITION – if you have not signed the petition set up by the Parish Council you can do so by clicking on 'petition' on this website.

It was suggested at the meeting that people should comment on the Somerset West and Taunton Local Plan 2040 as this is an opportunity to shape places and spaces in the future. You can find the consultation at yoursay.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

ROSAG were present at the meeting and we are grateful to the notes they have produced which includes an aide memoire of points people might want to use if they submit comments to the Somerset West and Taunton planners.

Hello everyone

As agreed at the excellently attended public meeting on Monday Feb 10th I am sending out the comments which Chris and myself made . The Parish Council will also be sending out notes of the meeting via their website.

The meeting was to discuss planning applications 34/19/0035 [spine road] and 34/19/0036 [phase 1a]

The purpose is to get as many residents as possible to write in to the planning department to make their views known and to let both the planning committee and more importantly the developers , Redrow, know that we have not gone away and we will at every stage throughout each and every phase of the whole development aim to get the best deal for Staplegrove

These notes are intended as an aide memoire for you to write your own letter should you wish.

Writing your representations

As a reminder any comments are recorded in a sort of tick box for the officer's report. So the more people who write in on a particular aspect the more priorities it gets in the officer's report to the planning committee A letter sent in from a " couple" is one

representation but individuals at the same address can send in separate letters with each letter counting as a representation

Bullet points can be effective or several representations on separate issues can also be as effective as one longer all embracing comment.

The issues we feel are most important:

A. The spine road

1. As has been stated many , many times, Michael Clark has put forward sensible and possible cost saving proposals to have the spine road connect to the current Silk Mills roundabout rather than create a new signalised junction 100m further down on Staplegrave road near the phone box in the lay-by.

The original SADMP TAU2 stipulated that the spine road access at the western end should be at the Silk Mills roundabout !

Redrow have planning permission for the lay-by junction but this does not make sense to those of us who know the local traffic !

To change this planning permission will cost Redrow in the region of £15,000 and take about 4 months

We are told they do not wish to apply for an additional planning application. But it is worth trying to influence this for the benefit of those who use this stretch of road

We know that Somerset Ecology Service [Jan 15 on 34/19/0036] have flagged up the presence of dormice in the hedgerow which the developers wish to remove to make access for the Corkscrew Lane Drop Down Road [DDR]. Somerset Ecology Service require the Local Planning Authority complies with its legal duty of strict protection of European protected species as required by the Habitats Regulation 2017. Basically this restricts the times when the hedgerow can be removed

So the £15k and the 4 months could if Redrow so chose be a] more than funded by savings in costs as per Michael Clark's proposal already shared with them and b] before the required period to meet the law re dormice

Any comments on the above points can be posted on both 34/19/0035 and 34/19/0036

B. Phase 1a 34/19/0036

1. Concerns re water drainage / flooding ?
The Local lead Flood Authority SCC external consultee [Jan 15] met with Redrow and Banners Gate before the application was submitted and discussed their requirements to ensure adequate water drainage . This has not been addressed in the application. Redrow need to review this aspect of their application
2. Issues re security of existing properties' boundaries . Redrow's Planning Statement documentation Section 5.8 Safety and Security : Side and rear boundaries quotes providing walls or 1.8m high fencing There is no mention

of similar for existing properties which adjoin the site eg Lawn Road gardens - The latter currently have a poor quality farm hedge which a] currently has had the added protection of an electric fence on the farm side and b] has not adjoined public land !

3. Redrow's Affordable housing Policy of 15% is not acceptable. It was strongly intimated in Oct 2017 that Govt funding to build the spine road would enhance the viability of the site thus allowing Developers to increase the percentage of Affordable Housing !
4. The position of the kick about area / youth pitch in "Central Park" should be elsewhere rather than immediately adjoining the existing football pitch at Staplegrove Sports Club . This part of the Central park should be replaced with a wildlife / attenuation pond which could enhance the quality of outdoor recreation of more residents
5. 3G pitches –[Central park kick around area] are totally unsuitable for public areas. They are suited to supervised club sites due to the frequent and costly maintenance they require to ensure the rubber pellet surface is able to drain away rainwater [like grass] and not create flooding problems

In addition they pose a grave risk to the health of youngsters and many countries have banned their use in public areas. The rubber pellets from old car tyres used to make these are known to be carcinogenic [containing cadmium, arsenic, mercury , lead etc etc]. FIFA and others recommend although these surfaces are known to pose a cancer risk this can be minimised by those playing on them if they wash their hands after play / avoid mouth contact when diving for a ball /remove boots and kit before going home and thoroughly cleanse any cuts / grazes. The latter precautions are unlikely to be adhered to other than in carefully supervised clubs

6. It is noted that direct access from properties facing the spine road are incorporated into the design This is not best practice as it conflicts with pedestrians / cyclists. It was suggested that there should be pull-in bays for visiting contractors' and delivery vehicles. The latter do not seem to be provided in the proposed application.
Phase 1 a shows several properties with their parking spaces directly facing onto the spine road Children playing in these spaces face grave danger running out inadvertently onto the spine road to retrieve balls etc
Access onto the spine road from multiple houses and contractors / delivery vehicles parking on the spine road will cause disruption to traffic flow and discourage the use of the spine road as an alternative to Manor Road / Corkscrew Lane
7. The additional access to a site office off Corkscrew Lane . This " new addition" was not approved as an access point back in Oct 2016. It would need to satisfy a Highways safety audit as it is close to a blind bend and should not be approved

Thank you for persevering to the end of this !!
We look forward to seeing your comments on the SW&T planning website. Any queries please do get back to us
Kind regards and thanks for your continuing support to get the best for Staplegrove
Jackie and Chris
Pp RoSAG