



Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council

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For the attention of Jess Duffield
Doncaster Council

15th September 2022

Sent via email

Dear Jess,

**Planning reference: 22/01941/FUL – Land off Birch Close, Sprotbrough,
Doncaster, DN5 7LF – Erection of 5 dwellings**

Further to your letter of 24th August 2022 giving notification of the above application the Parish Council would like to make the following observations;

1. The Parish Council made detailed representations on the previous application on this site for 5 dwellings under planning reference 21/03266/FUL which was subsequently withdrawn. Whilst we can see from the documentation submitted with this new application that the applicant has sought to amend the application to take into account local residents concerns many of the observations raised in our previous response still remain.
2. The Parish Council has received correspondence from concerned residents who live adjacent to the proposed development on both Birch Close and Burghley Court.
3. The Parish Council has also been in contact with Sprotbrough ward councillor Glenn Bluff (who is also a Parish Councillor) with regard to concerns raised by local residents.
4. The Parish Council continues to **OBJECT** to this application on the grounds set out below and would request that this application is determined through the Planning Committee and not through delegated powers.

Local Plan

5. Policy 7 – Delivering the necessary range of housing.

The application does not comply with Policy 7 of the Local Plan. The application makes no reference to the need for affordable housing in line with paragraphs b and c of Policy 7. The site is within a high value housing market area and is above 0.5 ha which triggers the requirement for affordable housing in paragraph b at a level of 23%. The proposal is for five large detached dwellings at a density of approximately nine dwellings per hectare and as set out in the applicants Design and Access Statement represents a 'low-density development'.

There is also no reference to provision of a commuted sum being offered in lieu of on-site affordable housing as per paragraph c of Policy 7. A commuted sum would not be appropriate in this location as there is no identified surplus of affordable housing within Sprotbrough which would meet the policy requirements. Sprotbrough (particularly in this location) suffers from a lack of affordable housing which this development does not seek to address.

6. Policy 10 – Residential policy areas

Sprotbrough is identified within the Local Plan as a Service Town and the proposed development falls within an area identified on the proposals map as a residential policy area. In such areas development will be supported provided the three criteria set out in Policy 10 of the Local Plan are met;

- 1. the development would provide for an acceptable level of residential amenity for both new and existing residents; and*
- 2. the development would help protect and enhance the qualities of the existing area and contribute to a safe, healthy and prosperous neighbourhood; and*
- 3. the development would meet other development plan policies*

The proposed development fails to meet criteria 1 in that it would impact on the residential amenity of existing residents of both Birch Close and Burghley Court as set out in the representations received both on the application and made to the Parish Council. The site currently comprises of garden land including substantial tree coverage in the mid to lower sections which form part of a wider green network which is located to the south of the site and is allocated on the Proposals Map as an open space which should be protected in line with Policies 26 and 27 of the Local Plan. Substantial mature trees line the boundary with properties on Burghley Court providing privacy which will be lost should the application be granted.

The proposed development fails to meet criteria 2 as it will not contribute to a safe neighbourhood as it will exacerbate the current access/ parking problems already in existence on Birch Close by adding further traffic on a narrow estate road through a single width access, with no pavement, from Birch Close to the site. We also question how refuse lorries will be able to access the site safely and also emergency vehicles. The proposed access is not adequate for the development.

The proposed development fails to meet criteria 3 as it does not meet the requirements of policy 26 and 27 relating to green infrastructure and the protection of open space. The development site includes significant tree coverage which forms part of a wider green network located within the vicinity

of the site which includes several TPO's. The assertion that the loss of the trees and part of this network can be offset elsewhere by tree planting is unsatisfactory. The proposals do not meet the criteria in paragraph B of Policy 27 with regard to the proposal retaining and enhancing the visual amenity (3), nature conservation improvements being the key driver (4) and retaining green infrastructure connections (5). The proposals would result in a loss of significant tree coverage reducing the visual amenity leading to a loss in green infrastructure connections within the wider area.

In addition, the proposal to transfer the lower part of the site to Doncaster Council to maintain is also unsatisfactory as this moves the burden of maintenance to the Council which, as a Parish Council, we are acutely aware of the cost of tree maintenance which should not be passed onto the Council absolving the applicant of any future responsibility for the land.

7. Policy 44 Residential design (strategic policy)

Policy 44 of the Local Plan sets out the requirements for new housing including criteria (c) relating to back land development which states;

'.....the prevailing character of parts of Bessacarr, Sprotbrough and Thorne Road at Edenthorpe, as defined on the Policies Map, will be protected from further Backland and Tandem development.'

The location of this application is within the area described in criteria c on the policies map within Sprotbrough therefore constituting back land development in an area specifically protected from it. On this basis the application is contrary to this policy and should be refused.

Sprotbrough Neighbourhood plan (adopted 2021)

8. Policy S3 – Backland and infill residential development

Backland and Infill Development Residential development in rear gardens and other infilling will be resisted where there would be an unacceptable impact on the character of the local area in terms of loss of openness, mature trees, hedges and shrubbery, and a significant increase in the density of built form.

The supporting text to this policy sets out the position with regard to historic backland and infill development in Sprotbrough as this location has seen significant levels of backland or infill development over the past 20 years, amounting to the building of approximately 225 new homes. Some of these schemes comprise significant backland development, and others are infill. The majority (88%) of the new development has taken place in Sprotbrough Village, such as on and around Park Drive (the location of the proposed development), Melton Road and to the rear of St Mary's Church. This together with large extensions to existing properties has served to change the general appearance and character of the village. The neighbourhood plan reaffirms the position noted above in relation to the negative impact on local amenity with new housing in rear gardens of existing properties having a significant adverse impact on local character and the amenity of neighbouring residents. Large gardens are a distinctive feature of Sprotbrough and the large garden plots provide a very "green" setting, enhancing the built form and providing

habitats for local wildlife. The many large mature trees, hedgerows and other shrubbery of residential gardens are an intrinsic part of the area's local character and should be protected.

The responses to the informal public consultation on the first draft Neighbourhood Plan showed that the impacts of backland development remain a significant concern for many residents. NPPF paragraph 71 sets out that plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

9. Policy S4 Mix of Housing Types and Sizes

Policy S4 states that;

A suitable mix of housing on all allocated and windfall housing sites should be provided in line with needs identified in the most up to date evidence base. Housing mix should have an emphasis on 1 to 2-bedroom properties including some single storey dwellings, smaller units suitable for starter homes and residents wishing to downsize or resize, and some larger houses (3 to 4 bedrooms) for families

The Housing Needs Survey 2019 sets out that Sprotbrough Ward has one of the highest proportions of detached dwellings in the Borough at 44.2% of the dwelling stock. Sprotbrough Ward also has one of the highest proportions of 4 or more-bedroom properties (39.2%) and one of the lowest proportions of 1-bedroom properties (2.2%) and 2-bedroom properties (14.5%).

As set out in paragraph 3 above the proposed development does not provide a suitable mix of housing in line with the most up to date evidence base. Five large detached dwellings does not align with Policy S4 or Policy 7 of the Local Plan.

10. Policy 11 – Wildlife

Development should take into consideration the need to protect existing wildlife which may be using the site (land and buildings) as habitats. Buildings should incorporate bird nest boxes, swift bricks and roosting opportunities for bats wherever possible. Boundary treatments for gardens should include gaps to allow hedgehogs and other wildlife to travel between gardens and green spaces for foraging and other purposes.

The proposed development does not meet the criteria set out in Policy 11 regarding protection of existing wildlife which may use the site as habitats. The proposed development would result in a significant loss of habitat in the form of mature trees and hedgerow.

Conclusion

11. The site has a long planning history with similar development sought, refused, appealed and refused again previously. Development in this location is inappropriate and contrary to the policies set out in the recently adopted Local Plan and Sprotbrough Neighbourhood plan. Taking into account the

comments set out above the Parish Council **OBJECT** to the proposed development and the application should be **REFUSED**.

Kind regards,

E. Garner

Emma Garner
Clerk to the Council