

# RENHOLD PARISH COUNCIL

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**October 2019**

Planning Officer  
Bedford Borough Council  
Borough Hall  
Cauldwell Street  
Bedford MK42 9AP

Dear Officer,

**18/02496/MAF, Land at 27 Hookhams Lane, demolition of one dwelling and erection of 14 dwellings – revised drawings**

Renhold Parish Council continues to object to this application as the Council feels are still a significant range of issues with this application. The site continues to be a proposal at depth which is out of keeping with the surrounding area and street scene. The street scene is linear in design so if you were to accept this proposal, you would be setting an unacceptable precedent for backland development. In addition, the highways access is still a concern as Hookhams Lane is a narrow, unclassified rural road.

Understanding new requirements around site visits by the elected Members on the Planning Committee of Bedford Borough Council, the Parish Council therefore request that a site visit is done in advance of any consideration by the elected Members so they can see the site in its rural setting and witness at first hand the inadequate and unsafe proposed highways access.

In June 2019 they raised the following comments:

They note that the changes to the drainage surface run off, which continue to raise concern over the known drainage issues already identified on this site.

Expressing in June their wish to reiterate their previous comments, which again are included below.

As an over-riding comment, Renhold is not required to identify land for additional dwellings in the adopted or the emerging local plans, so any proposal for additional dwellings lies outside local plan policy. The reasons are:

- The majority of the site lies outside the Renhold : Salph End Settlement Policy Area.
- Notwithstanding the demolition of 27 Hookhams Lane the proposal represents backland development

- Design & Access Statement, para 2.1. The number of households in Renhold parish is in excess of 1,000, this number includes the 3 Norse Road estates which are not characteristic of nor attached to or serviced by Renhold village.
- Design & Access Statement para 3.2. *“A successful scheme will unite the land use, and avoid sudden contrast in character”*. Salph End is characterised by being mainly bungalows. 27 Hookhams Lane is a bungalow. The proposal is 14 2-storey dwellings, with 10 of them being 3-4 bed detached houses, which is totally out of character with Salph End.
- Design & Access Statement para 3.5. *“Existing hedgerow or tree boundaries are particularly important, and the presumption shall be that they are retained and reinforced by new planting”*. 2 public footpaths border the site, and contrary to the statement in para 3.7, para 3.7 states *“it is proposed to “open up” the site to the footpath both physically and visually”*. The rural nature of the public footpath will be lost as it is effectively taken into the housing site.
- Design & Access Statement para 3.10 identifies that layout and landscaping are reserved matters, so we cannot rely on either the number of dwellings, the layout and landscaping in the application, which subsequently, if a permission is granted, could come back as an entirely different scheme.
- Design & Access Statement para 4.4. *“The proposal includes the creation of an open space within the site with long views from the access and pedestrian link to the public footpath”*. 2 open spaces are only there because a dwelling could not be accommodated on that part of the site and neither has a usable area. The long view to the public footpath exists only because a turning head is required to provide access to the 4 units of affordable accommodation. The larger open space is required to facilitate the balancing pond and is an area likely to flood, and so not suitable for built development.
- Design & Access Statement, para 4.13. Parking would be on-plot in accordance with the Council’s adopted parking standards. Renhold’s experience is that the number of cars per dwelling is increasing to the point that many properties now rely on on-street parking. 3-4 bedroom dwellings could easily see 2 or more cars per property and there does not appear to be scope for this number of cars to be safely accommodated, and parking on the road is much too dangerous.
- Design & Access Statement, para 4.15 states that *“This statement has analysed the local character of the area”*. It hasn’t as it doesn’t once mention bungalows.
- Effects of Development, para 5.3. In simple terms Table 5.1 forecasts that in the AM and PM peaks there would be a total 8 one-way and 8 two-way, and 7 one-way and 7 two-way trips respectively, with an imperceptible impact to the local highway network. The implication is that each property would generate only one trip in each of the AM and PM peaks. Whilst this may be an engineer’s desk-top analysis experience, in reality many existing properties, smaller than those proposed, each generate at least 2 trips in the peak periods. The forecast for the site is unrealistic and unreliable.
- Effects of Development, para 5.6. Table 5.2 shows the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile road speed for Hookhams Lane, completed as a result of work for the application. The Police undertook a survey of vehicle speeds in 2 locations on Hookhams Lane, and their results are at strong variance with the consultant’s and more

accurately represent local intelligence of true vehicle speed in Hookhams Lane. The consultants identify an average 85<sup>th</sup> percentile road speed of [conveniently] 28.0mph. The Police survey identified an average 85<sup>th</sup> percentile road speed of 36mph at Home Close and 39mph further to the east. If these speeds were used to determine road safety, surely a different junction design would be necessary?

Yours sincerely

**E. Barnicoat**

Lizzie Barnicoat  
Renhold Parish Clerk