

Consultation by developers on proposals for a South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood

Resolution adopted by Saxmundham Town Council, 14th December 2020

Saxmundham Town Council

- Takes note of the consultation exercise being conducted by Pigeon Investment Management Ltd in relation to their proposals for a South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood;
- Recalls its consistent view that while reasonable growth in the town is beneficial and necessary, the proposal for a new 800 dwelling 'Garden Neighbourhood' to the south was excessive and the location not the best one;
- Records however that the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, adopted less than 3 months ago by the local planning authority (East Suffolk district) in September 2020 includes the 'South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood', and also identifies the site and the policy for the development of the site, with reservation of all the land east of the railway – including The Layers - for open space and SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) purposes;
- Considers that, following the Local Plan's formal adoption, it is in the interests of Saxmundham's residents that we aim to engage constructively with developers and the planning authority to secure that
 - (a) the 'Garden Neighbourhood' is successful and well-designed in its own terms, and links and contributes positively to our town's life,
 - (b) any development is in line with the defined Policy and the Site as identified in the Local Plan, and
 - (c) appropriate provision or contribution is made by the developer to new community facilities and infrastructure, both on-site and in the town;
- Expresses serious concern that the site now put forward by Pigeons in the present consultation exercise differs in some fundamental and damaging respects from the site and uses identified and so recently approved in the Local Plan;
- Is concerned in particular that:
 - The site now proposed by Pigeons includes, to the west of the A12, a large lorry park and service station, immediately opposite the likely housing area on a site which was never put forward or justified as part of the Local Plan process, does not form any part of the Local Plan's Garden Neighbourhood site, and is likely to be detrimental to the overall development;
 - the area proposed for public open space and SANG is far too small, does not include The Layers which (as a key part of the town's heritage) should become a special public open space, and fails to compensate for the loss of valued, much-used walking routes by existing residents within what is currently a rural setting;
 - the site as now proposed is not properly connected to or integrated with the town of Saxmundham, and fails to deal with the pedestrian, cycle and motor linkages that are fundamental to the development's policy basis;
- Resolves to inform Pigeons and the public of the matters and concerns set out in this resolution, and to draw up a more detailed policy response to the consultation for consideration by the Council at its January meeting.