Geoff Turner

Askew’s Lane

Yaxley

Cambs

PE7 3LA

Date: 24th. February 2022

My ref: 12-022-TUR

Dear Geoff,

**Land at Askew’s Lane, Yaxley, Cambs PE7 3LA.**

I refer to our recent discussions regarding the potential for additional residential development on land at the above location. Having considered a number of relevant issues which would likely be material considerations in the assessment of such a proposal, I would offer the following comments and observations, on the likelihood of planning permission being granted for another dwelling on the site at this point in time.

For the purposes of setting a realistic “baseline” for such an assessment, it would be logical to start with the following facts. Firstly, the area of land in question was once part of a larger grass paddock. It now forms part of the residential curtilage of an application plot upon which the LPA refused planning permission for a bungalow sited along the Askews Lane frontage. The main reason given by the LPA was that the principle of a residential plot in this location would be contrary to existing planning policies and those contained in the new Draft Local Plan to 2036.

The Planning Inspector when determining the subsequent appeal considered the main issue to be *“… whether the proposed development is in a suitable location in terms of the impact on the countryside…”*

Having considered all the relevant planning policies and guidance, the Appeal Inspector was of the opinion that whilst the proposed development would not comply wholly with certain policies in the Local Plan *“… due to its location outside the environment limits,…I have given substantial weight to the location of the site adjacent to existing built form and the facilities provided in Yaxley.”*

As such, the Appeal Inspector concluded: *“…Taken as a whole these benefits would outweigh the Policy conflict in this instance and for the above reasons the development would not result in harm to the rural character and appearance of the area as a result of its location or design and scale.”*

Whilst a second point of note is the planning permission granted for 9 detached dwellings (LPA ref.20/00741/FUL), on the former coal yard on the opposite side of Askews Lane has been implemented*,* this development is not however directly comparable, being a brown field site which had been allocated for residential development in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

A third point of note is the refusal of planning permission (LPA ref. 01417/FUL) on the 22nd. December 2021 for the change of use of The Lodge, to a 10 bedroom Children’s Home on the grounds that the proposal would result in the intensification and use of a substandard narrow highway with poor visibility.

A fourth point of note is the recent application (LPA ref.21/02392/FUL) for a detached dwelling and garage on land to the south of the coal yard development on the other side of Askews Lane. Although the Yaxley Parish Council have objected to the proposal on the grounds of it design and scale, the proposal is currently awaiting a decision from the LPA.

Although the recent planning history of some additional residential development being allowed in and around Askews Lane, could be seen as a positive in an assessment of whether further housing would be acceptable in principle on this land, this needs to be “balanced” against the constraint created by the proposed building plot being situated to the rear of the newly built bungalow and in further traffic accessing Askews Lane which is considered to be a substandard narrow highway with poor visibility. This arrangement could be considered to be an undesirable form of be “back land” development, out of keeping with the existing pattern of housing along Askews Lane which is comprised of mainly residential properties sited along the road frontage. An alternative point of view could argue that the new dwelling is not actually positioned “behind” the new bungalow, but is simply on land to the rear of the site with its own entrance drive using an existing vehicular access.

As such, there would appear to be a number of “planning" considerations (both for and against) to be taken into account with the creation of a second plot within the rear curtilage of the existing bungalow. As this could change with additional residential development being permitted elsewhere along Askews Lane, I would propose therefore that the current potential for an additional dwelling being permitted on this site could be as follows.

Using the format of a “top down” risk assessment to consider the principle of the land to the rear of the existing bungalow being permitted as a building plot, I would suggest such an assessment could start at 75%.This initial assessment is based on the recent planning decisions in the locality, the policies in the adopted HDC Local Plan to 2036 and the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This figure could then be lowered to 70% with the LPA able to demonstrate in the Executive Summary of their Annual Monitoring Report 2021 that they currently have a 5 year supply of housing. A further reduction would likely be required over the uncertainty of how the LPA would view a proposal for a dwelling on at the rear of the site as being either a plot along Askews Lane or “back land development” behind the existing bungalow. This uncertainty could increase the risk factor down to a 50% chance of planning permission currently being granted. Should the Local Highway Authority (LHA) also consider the additional use of the existing access would result in an intensification and use of a substandard narrow highway with poor visibility, although this would not necessarily impact on the likelihood of obtaining planning permission it would mean that there may be additional costs incurred in order to comply with any highways authorities requirement.

With regards to the remaining paddock land, a risk assessment to consider the potential for residential development being granted at this point in time would be low. The main reason for this would be the LPA maintaining their view that this land is not considered to be within the built-up frame of the village. Therefore, the use of the land for residential development would be contrary to current planning policy and as such, the chance of planning permission currently being granted would be no more than 10%.

For the purposes of clarification I would point out that the above assessments are no more than a personal opinion based on the recent planning history of planning proposals in the locality and current planning policies at this point in time. As such, they cannot be relied upon in the event of any changes to planning policies or future planning decisions for additional housing along Askews Lane.

Whilst I trust this is a correct understanding of your requirements, should you wish to discuss any matter in more detail or require clarification on any issue raised, please contact me?

Regards

Yours sincerely

Roger Sargent

Director