

ALEXANDRA COTTAGE PLANNING APPLICATION – THE PARISH COUNCIL’S REPORT

Councillors have recently been bombarded with correspondence regarding the Alexandra Cottage site long after the initial consultation process had been completed.

The PC is only a consultee in the planning process, as are ordinary members of the public, we are **not** the planning authority.

The first and second submissions of this application were discussed at open Parish Council meetings – the only members of the public that were present were the immediate neighbours, who, at the first meeting objected strongly to the style of the houses. The PC relayed these views and objections to Suffolk Coastal, and, as a result, a second application was submitted, by the developers, addressing those concerns. At the second meeting of the PC, the concerned residents were satisfied with the changes, so our response to the application was one of reluctant acceptance, with reservations. We felt that it was difficult to make realistic and sustainable objections on planning grounds. We have never expressed support as implied.

We have been unhappy with the planning process for some considerable time now, which residents would have been aware of had they attended our meetings. We as a Council feel aggrieved that certain residents think we are too willing to let unwanted development happen here – nothing could be further from the truth. We have strongly objected to recent infilling and inappropriate proposals within the village.

Anyone that has actually taken the time to visit the site since it has been cleared will notice that it is surrounded by houses. It is difficult to see how else such a potentially valuable plot could be used. Who would buy it and for what purpose? And it must not be forgotten that for many years this site was overgrown and littered with old buildings and cars.

Anyone who has had any dealings with developers would be surprised that only three houses are being proposed here; using current government guidelines, several more could have been fitted in. The proposed plot sizes are similar to those in Manor Close.

As the democratically elected body in the village, it is for the PC to act in accordance with the proper consultation process and we should not allow ourselves to be deflected by people or groups who appear to be pursuing their own agenda. If those people wish to pursue conflicts of their own making, they are perfectly entitled to do so. The PC cannot become embroiled with personal arguments against the District Council.

We would suggest that if those concerned wish to lobby the Parish Council in future they should attend our meetings at the appropriate times, and/or write with their concerns, to the Parish Clerk.

If this Council becomes highly implicated with an inordinate number of complaints against Suffolk Coastal, we could lose all credibility as a consultee in the planning process.

Walberswick Parish Council