

South Marston Parish Council Draft Response to S/23/1500

Draft to be discussed at the PC meeting on 20th February

1. Traffic and Sustainable Travel

This application cannot be decided without reference to the New Eastern Villages outline permission north of the railway and its grant conditions. 2,380 dwellings are to be built between 2024-2033. As part of this, a safer pedestrian/cycleway route between the new village of Rowborough and South Marston village is planned for Nightingale Lane. This will be achieved by:

- Removing significant car-borne traffic to Nightingale Wood by re-locating the access to its car park to Rowborough village
- Ensuring there is no vehicle access from the new development onto Nightingale Lane
- Creating a new safe cycleway from Rowborough which exits onto Nightingale Lane directly opposite to the proposed access to this application site
- Providing Rowborough primary school children with a safe walking route via Nightingale Lane to South Marston school before the new Rowborough school comes on stream late in the predicted 10 year build-out
- Enabling community facilities within South Marston and Rowborough to be complementary and deliver maximum choice to both communities within a reasonable walking distance.

None of these factors has been addressed within the application's Traffic Report which is based on Nightingale Lane remaining a typical single rural road with passing places. Any existing traffic count becomes irrelevant and the scale of pedestrian traffic generated in the next 10 years has been ignored. We would also point out that the current SBC Traffic report does not appear to have accessed the above information from the NEV Planning Officer. He expressed concern about the effectiveness of the access off Nightingale Lane and we would point out that any problems will, in fact, be much greater than envisaged when the cycleway from Rowborough onto Nightingale Lane is constructed.

2. Development in the hinterland of South Marston Village

Although this site is located just outside the neighbourhood plan area, it is clear that the development would detract from the plan's intentions. *'To the east of the village, the Local Plan provides an anti-coalescence strip south from Nightingale Lane to offer separation from the new village of Rowborough. Housing development in the hinterland north of Nightingale Lane would be unacceptable as it would reduce the effect of the anti-coalescence policy. In any case, road access to new housing development off Nightingale Lane is prohibited by Policy 7 of this plan, and any housing may adversely affect the setting of Church Farmhouse which is a listed building.'*

3. Flood Alleviation

We object to the surface water proposals and consider it will require alleviation work beyond that indicated. The flood risk report appears not to have included a site visit. The site is up hill from South Marston Brook, the full length of which is on the Environment Agency's surface water flood risk map. The site is only 23m from a drainage channel that the Parish Council have identified as needing to be cleared to help avoid South Marston Brook flooding houses and roads in the village. During Oct 2023's storm Babet, Nightingale Lane became impassible to normal road vehicles and the foul water drainage overflowed adjacent to the pumping station. Thames Water had to be in attendance on a regular basis.



4. Sewage Disposal

The 12 residential units will be served by a package sewage treatment plant. We are familiar with septic tanks, with or without treatment plants, and discourage their use on new build developments. All treated outflow soaks away into the ground, and, in this case would add to the surface water going downhill towards South Marston Brook as there appears to be no separate soakaway on site..

5. Public Transport

The location is poorly served by public transport. The nearest regular bus stopping point is at the end of Old Vicarage Lane, 1,600m distant (not 750m as in the D&A Statement), with no footways. Further, the road becomes single track under a railway bridge which makes it dangerous for pedestrians. The village no longer has a bus service other than a single school bus in each direction on weekdays.

6. Transit to and from the site

To transport the proposed mobile homes onto site would require low loaders exceeding the weight limit of the three access roads through South Marston. There is a 4.3m height- restricted railway bridge at the A420 junction and alternative routes involve dangerous corners on roads without footways. Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies discourage development that increases traffic around Pound Corner in particular. The small road bridge over South Marston Brook on Nightingale Lane may also be damaged by such heavy vehicles. Any collapse of this bridge would cause catastrophic flooding in the centre of the village.

7. Facilities

There is no play area or other facilities for children provided on the site, contrary to guidance. Given the current poor state of Nightingale Lane's surface and verges, we do not believe that this site will offer adequate pedestrian links to facilities, particularly not in the 10 year period until Rowborough village facilities are built.

We are also concerned with the cramped layout of the site. For what is inevitably going to be a site with dependence on car travel and with visiting caravans, we do not believe adequate car parking or turning spaces are available.