

ORWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Judy Damant

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ref:4.11

Land at Hurdleditch Road, S/3190/15/OL – amended plans.

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Orwell Parish Council's response to amended plans that provide for school parking.

Orwell Parish Council's comments on the plans amended to provide for a coach set-down area and parking for the school ("school parking") are as follows:

1. The original plans for this development made little provision for school parking, despite a very strong representation made throughout the public consultation phase of the process that school parking was essential. The Village was extremely disappointed that so little regard had been paid to their concerns in respect of school parking provision in the initial outline plans. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the developers always knew they would have to give way on this provision but chose to save it up for the negotiating phase in order to evidence their preparedness to meet village expectations and be seen to be reasonable and flexible in the application. The Village sees this cynical approach to negotiation for what it is, and it would like to make the point that this approach does little to foster a helpful and positive dialogue between the two parties.
2. The Village is still of the view that the development in this location will have a detrimental impact on the continued viability of the Village primary school. The school is already limited for space and is unable to further expand should it be necessary to do so. Whilst it can take a number of additional pupils now, with the new housing proposed in Orwell and neighbouring villages its capacity will soon be reached. Unless a solution can be found to expand the recreation ground in its current location or to re-locate it completely the school's future will be at risk.
3. In respect of the modified application (now making somewhat more appropriate provision for school parking) the Village would make the following points:
 - a) Number of parking spaces. The number of car parking spaces (hard to establish from the plans but approximately 20) now more accurately reflects the number of cars that would be displaced from being able to park along Hurdleditch Road by the development, as they currently do.
 - b) Locations of parking spaces. The car parking spaces are on the North West side of the new proposed loop road. That means that children will have to cross the road at some point in order to get to the school. This increases risk from the current arrangements. Currently, children are able to walk to the school along the grass verge without having to cross the road at any point, and in this respect parents have further minimised risk by voluntarily establishing a one-way road traffic system. With the new proposed parking not only is there a risk to the children in crossing the road to get to the school but a further risk has been introduced by the fact cars will be manoeuvring into and out of the parking spaces. If school parking provision is made as shown on the plans, three things are required to minimise the risk to children:

- i. Very good street lighting. School drop off and pick up takes place in dark or semi dark for some half of the school year. Payment for additional and comprehensive lighting will put further strain on the Village's budgets, as street lighting now has to be paid for by the Village itself.
 - ii. Some form of traffic control measures at the point where the new proposed school parking area joins Hurdleditch Road.
 - iii. Make the school parking area one-way at the point the parking area begins.
- c) Coach parking/set-down/pick-up location. This is judged as sensible. Children will not have to cross any road between the school and the bus.
- d) Access road leading to this new parking loop road. There is concern that the road, as shown on the revised plans, will not be able to accommodate coaches. It is narrow and there is a very tight bend, can coaches safely navigate this route – especially if residents' vehicles are parked out on the road? The Parish Council hopes that SCDC will validate the suitability of the road for coach traffic.
- e) Street parking. The limited parking provision for each house (one within the curtilage and one outside the curtilage) suggests that cars unable to park on their driveways will either park on the road side or in the parking spaces provided for the school. In connection with cars parking on the street this will block the way for the school bus(s). In connection with the residents using the spaces provided for the school this will mean on-street parking elsewhere as parents are displaced and this will a) increase congestion, and b) add further risk to the children. This matter needs to be addressed between the developers and SCDC.
- f) Alternative arrangements. In respect of the parking area, as proposed, in the amended plans, adjust the location of the bus drop-off/pick-up point to a point closer to Hurdleditch Road and move all car parking bays to the South side of the area (Eastwards). In that way no child, being dropped-off in the parking area, would need to cross the road. This would go some way to mitigating the issues raised at (3b) above and might also be preferable to residents as otherwise car headlights will shine into the houses twice each day for six months of the year when parents park their cars morning and evening. In respect of the current parking arrangements whereby parents park informally along Hurdelditch Road, why not formalise this with a long lay-by on the East side of Hudleditch Road? This has the merit of allowing the children to get out of, and in to, their cars without having to cross the road, the one exception being the (then) single entrance to the proposed development.

We would be pleased to discuss any aspect of the comments above should that be felt helpful by SCDC.

Yours faithfully

Judy Damant
Clerk