



Thurlaston Parish Council  
Thurlaston  
Rugby

16<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Paul Varnish (Posted by email to paul.varnish@rugby.gov.uk)  
Planning Department  
Rugby Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Rugby  
CV21 2RR

Dear Mr Varnish,

**Re: Planning Application R21/0477**  
**THE MALTHOUSE, MAIN STREET, THURLASTON, RUGBY, CV23 9JS**  
**For: Erection of 6 (no) dwellings.**

This document is Thurlaston Parish Council's (TPC) submission with regard to planning application R21/0477.

TPC considers this application is well thought out and individual private dwellings could nestle sympathetically within the Thurlaston Conservation Area. TPC accepts that the proposed extant buildings which would be removed in the three Zones (two barns and shed in Zone 1 and lock-up garages in Zone 2) are of little architectural merit. TPC is not against the development of new houses within the Conservation Area providing their design and fabrication is sympathetic to the area and that any negative consequential issues can be appropriately mitigated.

TPC's recommendation is that full planning approval should be granted only if a number of material considerations described in this report are satisfactorily resolved.

Our observations are lodged under the following areas:

- The Conservation Area – an holistic assessment of the proposals;
- Appraisal of proposed developments within each of the three Zones - 1, 2, 3;
- Environmental considerations.

#### **The Conservation Area**

The application is for six modern dwellings with garages and parking located at the heart of the Thurlaston Conservation Area (Areas B1 and B2).

Where new developments are proposed they should preserve the character and appearance of the area and be sympathetic to its context (References 1 & 2)<sup>F</sup>. Tacit with this there is a requirement to ensure that any implications to the village infrastructure, especially highways, traffic and vehicle parking are considered and do not unduly harm the nature of the Conservation Area. Implicit with

this is a requirement to appraise the impact on the village scene, landscape, and nature conservation.

The proposed development will result in increased street parking along Main Street, where there are already significant parking pressures, to accommodate residents and visitors. We question whether the close proximity of several road junctions (Main St, Church Walk, Biggin Hall Lane, Malt House Zone 1 and 3 access/egress points, Thurlaston Meadows Care Home) will have a detrimental impact on highway safety where significant public space is shared by pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and vehicles. The scheme would result in loss of parking on Main Street and generally contribute nuisance to residents.

TPC supports the treatment of a disused Well located in Zone 3 as a heritage asset and should be conserved in compliance with RBC Policy SDC3. In doing so the applicant confirms that the Well and part of the existing stone wall, will be used to create stepped gardens to maintain the existing character of the site with the stone and vegetation.

Should Zone 3 be opened up to provide an access/egress point then we question whether for safety reasons WCC Highways would require extant close proximity road-side trees to be removed?

### **Zone 1**

The applicant has proposed dwellings which present modern designs. Whilst TPC wishes to encourage the use of modern sustainable materials this must be undertaken in the context of their settings. The properties proposed for Zone 1 are generally set back from Main Street and will visually have little impact on the street scene. The proposed architectural designs are deemed acceptable.

In consultation with local residents the owners of property known as Mill House on the southern side of Zone 1 have raised an issue of their house north-side wall being part of the boundary of Zone 1. This may not be a material planning consideration; however Mill House householders would like to protect their interest in being able to maintain their property wall and roof as and when considered necessary. To do this access from Zone 1 would be required. Mill House residents are therefore seeking to protect their interests possibly by an easement to ensure future access.

We note that West and North House each have two parking spaces and a garage but East House has a garage and only one parking space. The garages are not large enough to provide storage and house a vehicle so in practice East House only has space for one vehicle and this vehicle would have to be reversed out of the development as there is inadequate vehicle manoeuvring space to turn around. This is considered unsatisfactory and potentially unsafe.

We stress that the four dwellings in Zone 1 (Malt House plus the three new properties) will put significant pressure on parking that will inevitably spill on to Main Street. We advise that more consideration is required concerning site parking, delivery vehicles and general vehicle manoeuvrability to mitigate further congestion on Main street.

### **Zone 2**

Zone 2, is accessed from Church Walk, and will consist of two traditional design dwellings which will nestle sympathetically with the extant housing stock in the immediate area. Behind the properties five garages are proposed.

We have concerns about vehicular access/egress to the properties and garages from Church Walk, a single track highway leading to the village farm. At the front of the properties there are two parking spaces. Access to the rear is also shared with users of leased garages. We question the proposed layout which has very little space to turn vehicles / access the garages and in practice we expect visitors and occupants will park on Main Street, adding to existing parking pressures and highway safety concerns. The nature of Church Walk, a single track road used occasionally for farm machinery, must be kept open and viable at all times.

We expect householders will be encouraged to store their Wheelie bins at the rear of their properties and in doing so would be required to manoeuvre them along the side of the houses to Church Walk roadside. We have not checked whether this would fall within the 25m local authority guidance rule.

### **Zone 3**

Zone 3 is more contentious. This land has previously been used for arable purposes albeit has been left fallow for many years. Therefore by its nature the proposal will be a new build, rather than the redevelopment of extant buildings, such as proposed for Zones 1 and 2.

The proposed property is located near the front of the site in close proximity to Main Street. The applicant proposes that the extant 5 bar gate should be brought back into service (the gate has remained closed in excess of 50 years); in order to do this the public pavement will require the kerb dropped to provide vehicle access from Main Street. To a considerable degree this will have a negative impact on the street scene – namely an extra junction in a congested area at the heart of the Conservation Area. There will also be a consequential impact from the loss of street parking of probably 3 or 4 spaces, and a possible requirement to remove street-side trees.

The applicant has provided an outline plan which shows the main features of the reworked site. However Zone 3 is also adjacent to Main Street and in full public view. It is important that the developed site is visually protected and sympathetic to the Conservation Area. We therefore seek details of land elevations especially with regard to which areas will be visible from Main Street.

The property has two parking spaces and no garage. Vehicles will have to reverse onto a gravel permeable parking area to turn around, we question whether this is the applicant's intention? It is not clear whether the gate would actually impede access to the Zone 3 parking space? The property has no outside storage so it seems inevitable that future owners will seek permission to erect a garage beside the Well which may detract and visually harm the current scheme (layout and density of building). We request details for storage locations for items such as three Wheelie bins and garden paraphernalia. It is expected that visitors will have to park on Main Street and the overall parking situation along Main Street will be exacerbated. We wish to ensure these ancillary matters are considered now and that arrangements are incorporated to protect the beauty of the Conservation Area.

There is a mature apple tree (T6) which will be removed – please see 'Tree Protection' considerations below.

## **Environmental Considerations**

### **Tree Protection**

The Tree Root Protection Zone Plan shows a clash between Root Protection Zone of T11, a large Leyland Cypress which at 10.8m high is the most prominent tree on the site, and the proposed location of 'East House'. A garage and parking space are proposed to be sited under the T11's canopy and it is likely that if the development goes ahead as planned future residents would seek to remove the tree or lift the canopy to protect their vehicles and property. This is an undesirable position and a risk to the sustainability of the proposed scheme.

T11 and T12 should be retained as planned and protected against root damage / compaction both during any initial build or future works.

T11 is frequently used as a roost for large murmurations of starlings in the winter months (residents have watched them swarming into the tree which is considered a most impressive sight). The removal or significant alteration of the tree would result in a loss of habitat for the starlings which are red listed<sup>1</sup> as a bird of high conservation concern.

We question whether the removal of trees T4 (4.8m Aspen) and T6 (4.2m Apple) is acceptable to the RBC's arboricultural officer?

### **Property Heating**

The six properties are designed as low energy, highly insulated buildings. The proposed primary heat source for each dwelling will be by use of Air Source Heat Pumps. We question whether noise pollution, such as from compressors and fans, has been considered? The proposed Heat Pumps can be noisy and if so they must be adapted or contained to noise levels within acceptable limits to neighbours.

### **Construction**

The applicant proposes a phased development of the three Zones. This is an acceptable approach. However it will not totally mitigate disruption and nuisance to local residents. We request an outline project plan for the development of the three Zones, and for each an indication of the impact on local roads and residents. Where possible mitigation arrangements to reduce resident inconvenience should be presented. We ask that particular considerations are required with regard to:

- Implementation of Infrastructure / utility services which may need to be undertaken en masse as a preparatory phase to the whole scheme;
- Church Walk is a very constrained single track highway (used for domestic vehicles and agricultural machinery) which will present a number of challenging constraints. The lane is a no-through road with no provision to turn and is too narrow to allow vehicles to pass each other. The delivery of materials and general construction traffic is likely to severely impact on residents and the movement of farm vehicles.

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<sup>1</sup>RSPB reference: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/starling/population-trends-conservation/>

## Conclusion

TPC is impressed by the proposed scheme which demonstrates considerable thought and is well presented. TPC appreciates the opportunities it has had to discuss the applicant's proposals prior to the submission of R21/0477.

There is considerable merit in the proposals across all three Zones. However it is TPC's recommendation that full planning permission should only be approved when the issues described in this document are considered and satisfactorily resolved.

Fundamentality TPC considers a number of issues could be readily mitigated if the three Zones were less congested – for example the reduction in the number of dwellings would offer particular benefits such as:

- Provision of adequate space for on-site car parking, vehicle manoeuvres, and garages for property storage. To protect Main Street we request that parking is considered holistically, that is to address the cumulative effect of five properties across Zones 1 and 3 which all require access from and egress to Main Street.
- Provide increased on-site parking for visitors to the new dwellings;
- Help reduce traffic and on-street parking concerns;
- Less impact on trees (and root protection requirements) and their removal;
- Potentially relax noise constraints associated with Air Source Heat Pumps.

We respectfully request that you acknowledge our submission, and in the meantime we would be grateful if you would keep us informed of any new information supplied by the Applicant.

Yours sincerely,

CLlr Keith Boardman  
Chairman, Planning Subcommittee

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<sup>F</sup> (i) The Thurlaston Conversation Area Appraisal - [https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Documents/Thurlaston\\_Character\\_Appraisal.pdf](https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Documents/Thurlaston_Character_Appraisal.pdf)

(ii) Thurlaston Village Design Statement - [https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Documents/TPC\\_village\\_design\\_statement\\_2016.pdf](https://www.thurlaston-pc.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Documents/TPC_village_design_statement_2016.pdf)