

P/23/1235/2 Outline planning application for the residential development of up to 160 dwellings alongside associated site infrastructure, open space and landscaping (all matters reserved except for access and landscaping). Land at Melton Road Queniborough Leicestershire LE7 3FL

The Parish Council strongly objects to this proposal for the following reasons:

Draft Local Plan. The Draft Local Plan includes allocations of 125 houses at Queniborough Lodge (HA4), Land off Three Ways Farm 160 houses (HA64) and Land off Melton Road 99 houses (HA65) which is a total of **384** houses. However taking into account recent developments totalling 1,627 comprising of 176 houses at Barley Fields, Barkby Road, 101 houses at Millstone Lane and the recently approved Land off Boonton Meadow Way for a further 50 houses, potential the increase in housing to Queniborough will be 1,300 – 2,011 which is a rise of 54%.

Equally worrying is the impact of development in the surrounding villages of East Goscote and Rearsby and the neighbouring town of Syston;

- HA1 – Land South East of Syston 960 houses
- HA2 – Barkby Road, Syston 251 houses (P/22/0354/2)
- HA3 – Land north of Barkby Road, Syston 195 houses (P/23/1294/2)
- HA6 – Brook Street, Syston 15
- HA60 – Land of Melton Road, East Goscote 258 houses (P/22/2279/2)
- HA66 – Land off Melton Road Rearsby, 56 Houses (P/23/1383/2)

That would mean a proposed increase of further 1735 houses in the surrounding areas which would have significant impact on the local infrastructure.

Traffic. The Council has been concerned about traffic in the village for some time. This application would, together with developments at Queniborough Lodge, Land of Melton Road and The Millstones, add further pressure on the roundabout at Syston, which is already at capacity and the junction of the Melton Road and Syston Road. The Council is especially worried about the increase in traffic on the Melton Road, in addition to the general increase of traffic, Melton Road has pupils travelling to Wreake Valley Academy from the direction of Queniborough and East Goscote, a cycle way, and with this development increasing pupils travelling to Queniborough Primary School. At peak times, with traffic travelling in these different directions, the mix of cars, pupils walking and cyclists, and the close proximity of the junction of this development, The Millstones, Queniborough Lodge and Three Ways Farm, there is a real danger of an increase in accidents in the area. In addition, traffic turning in and out of Branstons Garage close to the development and the Laurels Nursery only adds to the hazard created by this development. In Queniborough itself, traffic is already a problem at school start and end at Queniborough Primary School, with complaints from residents in the area, an increase in traffic has been noticeable since the beginning of the 22/23 Academic Year due to Queniborough residents failing to secure a place at the school, meaning more pupils from Syston and East Goscote have been travelling to the village during school drop off times and Queniborough residents have likewise been travelling to Syston and East Goscote adding to the additional traffic congestion.

The Council views the access proposed for this development of one junction to be completely inadequate for an estate of this size, especially given the complexity of the local traffic situation sited above. It has the real potential of future hazard in that an incident near the entrance to the development would block access by emergency vehicles.

Apart from the shop at Branstons Garage, there are no facilities within easy walking distance from the proposed development. The shape of the development means that even to access this shop residents would be likely to use a car. The need to use a car to get to any facilities makes the development unsustainable and any mitigation put in place to reduce this would in real terms have minimal impact.

Area of separation and character of the village. The development at Millstone Lane has reduced the green space surrounding the built environment of Queniborough village on the Syston side. This will be further eroded when Queniborough Lodge is completed. This application along with Land off Melton Road will further reduce this green space. It is a current policy of the Charnwood Local Plan to maintain the area of separation around the current built environment of Queniborough village. This is a major concern raised by residents and included in the Queniborough Neighbourhood Plan. In effect if this development and Three Ways Farm is agreed there will remain little green space between Queniborough and Syston.

Amenities. The Council has great concerns about the ability of the local amenities to cope with this level of increase in dwellings. Queniborough Primary School is at capacity and the Council understands that the school wishes to remain at its current size. Schools in East Goscote, Barkby and Syston are also at capacity. There is increasing pressure on health and other services in the area. There are increasing waiting times at the Syston Health Centre and the Centre has informed the Council that it can no longer absorb any additional patients. Parking in Syston is inadequate to meet current demands as it is at the Thurmaston shopping centre, especially at peak times. The Draft Local Plan defines Queniborough as an “other settlement” which is not capable of sustaining large scale developments as it does not have the amenities to support this. It is clear to the Council that neither does the service centre in Syston and the surrounding villages.

Ecology and environment. Natural England’s MAGIC map shows that the site is known to support lapwings, yellow wagtails and tree sparrows; and is in area that is “a High Priority for Countryside Stewardship”.

Flooding. The Council has very real concerns about flooding caused by this development. The flood risk submitted by Hollins Strategic Land puts the risk between 25% - 50% of ground water flooding, however the Council’s concerns are not so much with the effects of flooding on the proposed site, although it has flooded on a number of occasions, but the increased likelihood of flooding on the whole village further down the water courses. The assessment does not take into account the full impact of the current development of 172 houses at Barley Fields, Barkby Road, Queniborough, with a further 50 houses soon to be built; the proposed development at Queniborough Lodge; and the proposed development of 99 houses at Land off Melton Road, Queniborough. All these developments will feed through the culvert in the village into the same area of open water and have a cumulative effect on the flood plain. Part of this development is on the flood plain which would be affected by the cumulative effect of the developments in the area. Water draining off the land will have to find its way in to the lower water courses rather than being substantially absorbed by the land at the proposed site, increasing the risk of flooding.

Conclusion. The Parish Council would like Charnwood’s Planning Officers to take into account the impact of this proposed development on the local infrastructure and services not only in Queniborough but the surrounding villages e.g. East Goscote, Rearsby and the neighbouring town of Syston.

For the reasons stated the Parish Council objects to this application. It is not a sustainable development, which will have a disproportionate impact on traffic and safety, the environment and the character of the village.

The Parish Council would wish to emphasise the following;

- This proposed development is not supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.
- This is the third application in the two years which has not been included in the Queniborough Neighbourhood Plan.
- As the Planning Authority is aware Queniborough has already taken substantial housing growth at The Millstones and Barley Fields where an additional 50 houses were approved in February 2022 (P/20/2349/2).

- Queniborough Neighbourhood Plan **does** allocate a site for future housing at Queniborough Lodge (HA4).

The Local Plan recognises the position of Queniborough and the contribution it should make to Charnwood's housing supply and the Parish Council ask the Planning Committee to take into account the large number already agreed to be taken by the village when deciding on this application.

Queniborough is classed as an 'other settlement – not capable of large scale development' within the Local Plan. With relation to the Appeal Ref: APP/X2410/W/21/3287864 Land East of Cossington Road, Sileby, Queniborough Parish Council would emphasise that there are differences in the details of the this application and the Sileby site, not least the fact that Queniborough is an 'other settlement' and Sileby a 'service centre'.

Finally the Parish Council is very concerned over the timing of this application. Although the designation for development of land Land off Three Ways Farm is included in the Draft Local Plan, the government inspector has yet to pronounce on this and the examination in public has not taken place. The inspectors have already raised concerns over Highways infrastructure and it is also possible that Charnwood councillors could vote against its adoption. As this process could well take many months, it is the Parish Councils opinion that this application is reliant on the lack of a five year housing supply putting pressure on the plans committee to grant the application.

For these reasons the Parish Council strongly object to this application and proposes that it should be rejected.

Rachel Barlow-Skinner
Clerk

August 2023