

Therfield Parish Council



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Chairman Andy Osbourne

**MINUTES OF PLANNING REFERENCE 23/02417/FP
Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7.30pm at Therfield Chapel.**

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Councillors Present: Cllr Andy Osbourne (Chair), Cllr Julia Duncan, Cllr Tim Jeffries, Cllr Linda Laing, Cllr David Whitby, Cllr Sally Whitby.

In attendance: Sarah Wylie - Clerk to the Council, Cllr Gerald Morris, Robert Law, Conservator of Therfield Heath and Greens.

Seventeen members of the Public.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Steve Jarvis

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Presentation on behalf of the Applicants by Peter Biggs - Planning Consultant

Existing house (Tussocks) would be retained.

Heritage Consultant, tree surveyors and ecologists have been involved.

Ecology - have in the past been pre application movements, and this one should be better and more prudent. Great Crested Newts have been found - pond is being left untouched but biodiversity report has been prepared to address any surrounding habitat concerns.

Biodiversity net gain... retaining existing trees and planting new ones.

Asbestos on Hillcrest part of the site - Applicants are aware of this - this would be dealt with in accordance with all relevant regulations.

A courtyard feel to the Hillcrest part of the proposal. Sympathetic with the environment.

Design of the properties and the materials that will be used will be of high quality - including slate and red brick.

Access - to the new development as well as the existing house. Parking has raised numerous questions - 2 car spaces per house has been allocated. Will consider visitor parking...

There is a mix of sizes ranging from 2 bedroom up to one 5 bedroom .

Members of the Public - traffic assessments through the village - will increase the flow of traffic - 4 vehicles per hour at peak times.

Tim Jeffries - Highways have approved the traffic assessments and movements but what is the real picture?

Concerns with traffic building back up the Causeway. Footpath? Would it be handy for people to travel to school?

GM - Not a selected site in the Local Plan. It will go to the Planning Control Committee (because of the number of houses being applied for)

Sewerage - a real problem - already over capacity. Would there be a solution for this? A draining strategy has been submitted with the application All surface water would be discharged into the existing drainage system.

Many people (including those who support) still think the density of housing in the Hillcrest part of the development is a problem.

There were also comments about the lack of a footpath along that side of the Causeway. It was felt that a footpath should be provided if the development was to go ahead.

Is there actually a "need" for yet more housing? Especially another large 5 bed roomed one?

If this is agreed, what about the other planning applications that have been objected to? Will it open the flood gates?

Feedback from the Public - amongst the public present at the meeting, as per those already spoken to, there were some who were supportive and some who were opposed.

Council members - again, differing opinions as to the suitability of the Application.

Full details of the Council submission to North Herts Planning will be publicly available on the website.