

## **Friday Furlong - 09/00247/OUT**

The Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- 1) The proposal does not represent a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site as required in policy BID.E of the Local Plan. Two significant portions of the site are excluded from the proposed development. It is understood that these areas are excluded because the applicant does not control them at the current time however the PC believes that they are an integral part of the development and if excluded would result in future problems. Being land locked the applicant would effectively control a ransom strip if this application is supported, potentially resulting in the land never being developed. If left undeveloped then the existing uses would remain in situ and therefore would be in conflict with the new residential development. Whilst the section at the front could be developed on its own accord with a separate access onto Waterloo Road, this may well conflict with the two new accesses proposed. In any event the future of this land remains uncertain. Similarly the land associated with Hill View could be accessed via Bramley Way. The District Council has previously refused a planning application (04/03013/OUT) on this site because it did not represent a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site. This application is no different.
- 2) The proposal does not facilitate a pedestrian and cycle link with The Bank as stipulated in BID.E. The result of this is a lack of connection of the site from the rest of the village, which is particularly important given the inclusion of the medical centre and equipped public open space within the development.
- 3) The proposal does not include the provision of affordable housing which is required under Policy COM.13 of the Local Plan. The PC has read with interest the viability statement submitted with the application and would object most strongly to its conclusions. The current economic climate should not be used as an excuse for a developer not providing affordable housing. There is an obligation under Policy COM.13 to provide 35% of the proposed dwellings as affordable housing. There are currently 114 people in the Parish of Bidford who represent a need for this type of housing. This need should not be ignored. If the provision of affordable housing renders the development 'uneconomical' on the basis that current house prices will not achieve the developers desire to make a 20% profit margin then perhaps the scheme should be delayed until such time as the current economic climate improves. Furthermore, the protracted legal issues surrounding the involvement of Taylor Wimpey and Cranbrook Homes is not a material planning consideration. Contractual disagreements between land owners and any costs incurred therein should not be taken into account when considering viability. The local community should not have to pay for the demise of the relationship between the two land owners. Finally, the 'costs' of developing the site we would suggest are relatively modest. There is no requirement for expensive decontamination of the site, no major infrastructure is required to make the development work, there are no significant structures that need demolition, no major drainage or flood alleviation schemes are required and there are no complicated or expensive ecological or archaeological works to undertake –

all of which would result in exceptional development costs. Significant parts of the site are effectively greenfield and undeveloped. The PC would suggest that the costs of preparing the site for development are relatively low or at most normal. The PC would insist on the viability assessment being independently checked by a suitably quality person/organisation.

- 4) Due to the lack of inclusion of the land at Hill View vehicular access to the site is solely from Waterloo Road. The PC has concerns over the capacity of Waterloo Road to serve the whole development. It was always envisaged that the site would be developed with a pedestrian/cycle access from Bramley Way.
- 5) The exclusion of a significant part of the site frontage with Waterloo Road does not address the objective of improving the visual appearance of the site, improving the street scene and creating an attractive edge of settlement development. This significant and publically prominent part of the site could remain undeveloped for an undetermined period of time to the detriment of the scheme as a whole and the character and appearance of the street scene.
- 6) The PC welcomes and wholeheartedly supports the inclusion of the Medical Centre, which is desperately needed in the village for reasons already known to the District Council however the area shown on the submitted plans is insufficient to accommodate the new facility. The area required is at least 0.5ha. The transfer of the land (fully serviced) to the PCT should be secured through the S106.

The PC appreciates the difficulty and reality of the situation with regards to the ownership of the site and remains disappointed that agreement could not be amicably reached between the two parties. However, this development fails to meet the criteria of Policy BID.E and would result in a disconnected and disjointed development which would lead to significant problems in the future with regards to the undeveloped parcels of land. It would not be in the public interest to allow this development for the reasons stated above. The proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy and should be rejected.

The PC will be commenting under separate cover on the local requirements for the S106 and will be without prejudice to the objections raised above.