

Grundisburgh & Culpho Parish Council  
John Ager  
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Grundisburgh  
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Members of East Suffolk Council  
East Suffolk House  
Riduna Park  
Melton  
Woodbridge

2nd November 2021

**Re: Planning applications DC/20/3362/FUL and DC/20/3284/FUL - Land West of Chapel Road, Grundisburgh.**

Dear Councillor,

We write in the hope that you may use your influence to prevent a grave planning mistake being made, which could lead to a significant worsening of highway conditions in an already congested village, and an increased risk of serious injury or death on our roads.

We trust you are aware of the applications stated above (one live, and one headed for appeal later this month) and the attached document forms the Parish Council's latest, and possibly last, response on the matter. If you take time to read our comments you will see there remain many serious deficiencies with the proposals, particularly around highways provisions, and the applicant's latest submissions should not be taken as the last word on the matter, nor should the views and comments of Officers. There is plentiful evidence that the applications have been poorly managed by East Suffolk Council, despite many opportunities for Officers to correct course and ultimately restore faith in the process.

At the last planning committee meeting, a year since the application was submitted, the Council again failed to reach a majority in favour of approval from Members, despite significant pressure, and it took the casting vote of the Chairman to achieve the 'interim' approval. We say 'interim' since the matter was heard whilst a public consultation period for the application was still open, and this needs to conclude before an official approval notice can be issued.

We describe a number of material considerations that have not yet been presented to the Planning Committee and we implore you to do whatever you can to see that these are brought back to Members to review, rather than allow the application to proceed at the discretion of Officers under delegated authority. In this event, Members are allowed the option to (and we believe should) decline to determine the planning application under the powers in section 70B of the 1990 Planning Act.

The residents of Grundisburgh, who we are representing in this matter, have grave concerns about the performance and impartiality of Planning Officers and the only way that our

community can have confidence in any outcome is if the Planning Inspectorate is allowed to make the final decision, ensuring an impartial verdict based on an assessment of all the facts. We care not if East Suffolk Council choose to defend the appeal or not, if the risk of costs remains a concern.

Although the Parish Council have every confidence in the judgement of Members, we feel that we could not achieve this same outcome through the Planning Committee since Officers have shown themselves incapable or unwilling to critically assess the proposals and present a balanced picture to the committee that matches the common sense judgement one makes when visiting the site. Several Members said as much in the last committee, yet Officers continue to ignore this feedback.

**To approve this application, Members need to have absolute certainty that the development will be safe, and the mere lack of objection from statutory consultees is in no way sufficient to achieve this certainty. It requires an emphatic, evidence-based and unwavering show of positive support from Highways and Planning Officers, which you will note this proposal has never really had.**

Ask yourselves this - would you honestly allow your children or grandchildren to cycle down Lower Road or Park Road alone after this development? If not, please do what you can to help ensure that a sound decision is made.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Willetts  
Chair, Grundisburgh & Culpho Parish Council