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Development Management Committee
South Norfolk Council
South Norfolk House
Cygnet Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

03rd May 2020

Dear Committee Member,

Re: Application Referenced 2019/2566

Firstly, thank you for finding alternative ways to make these decisions in such challenging circumstances. We are anxious that our application is the first to be considered in this amended format and we do have concerns that you are not in a position to ask any questions of us, as applicants, that you may have.

Following sight of the Case Officer's report, I wanted to write and offer some clarification on a few points.

This application is a Self Build in the truest sense. I have lived in Brooke my entire life, 40 years this year. I want to build a home for the benefit of my family and I and live in it for the foreseeable future.

The Case Officer sets out four reasons for recommendation for refusal. I would like to, briefly, counter each reason;

1. No Overriding Benefit

Residents of Brooke have been incredibly vocal with regard to some recent planning applications. The fact that this application, for new build homes, has received no objections whatsoever over the four months that it has been active and has received many letters of support could imply that it is seen to provide an overriding benefit. Three well built, well presented family homes would surely improve the impact to the form and character of the area in lieu of the collection of different buildings and containers that are currently present? The immediate neighbour, over two letters, have made it clear that it offers an overriding benefit to them.

2. Loss of Employment Site

We would not consider advertising the site. We have owned it for ten years and if we are not afforded the opportunity to build new homes for ourselves, we certainly would not want to provide a potential opportunity for others to do so in the future.

I recognise that the site is categorised as an Employment Site. We have, though, made it abundantly clear that no employment relies on the site and all businesses are unaffected by this application. On the contrary, if approved more employment (understood in the short term) would be created by approving the application.

3. Unsustainable Location

Brooke has many amenities and facilities. However it does not have a shop that serves a typical family's needs. Having lived in Brooke for so long, one simply adapts to this by doing the food shop on the way home from work for example. Our children bike everywhere and the reality is our lives would be as they are but would involve driving to one part of the village over the other that we currently do. The bus stop is only a short walk from the site and our children would catch the same school bus as they do now.

4. Failure to Pass the Sequential and Exception Tests

In ten years of ownership there has not been so much as a puddle on the site which is all currently hard standing. Extensive work has established that any proposed or future flood risk can be mitigated.

In summary I want you to know that this application is not about developing land and making money or adding to a land bank. As well as living in Brooke for nearly 40 years I am actively involved in the village. I am a Parish Councillor for Brooke and have been on the Brooke Village Hall Committee for many years. I went to Brooke School, my children went to Brooke School. I have built a small business based in Brooke that is well used by Brooke Residents.

I would not do anything to the detriment of the village and genuinely believe this application offers improvement to Brooke as well as providing a very pleasant home for my family and I.

Yours sincerely



Martin Tobin