

# 33 Acre nearby residents views

Please find below a list of issues with the proposed 33 Acre project that residents who live nearby have raised. We had a meeting with Councillor Austin Davies to air these views and he has agreed that we should make them public by sending them to the Parish Council.

1. Quality of life. For the nearby residents their quality of life will be seriously compromised particularly in the case of those immediately adjacent to the area, some of whom have very short gardens. This is particularly relevant because the majority of the residents are elderly and many, if not all, chose to move there because it was a quiet location. There has been no consideration given to this development and its close proximity to a demographic area of predominantly elderly people. A new residential care home and sheltered accommodation is to be built in Heath Road. There are no obvious benefits for this elderly population in the development apart, possibly, from dog walking and the observation has also been made that it will be a young-male dominated environment.
2. Noise. The biggest concern of the residents was the certainty of intrusive levels of noise. There will be harsh noises from the skateboards, metal rails and ramps and the shouts of participants. At the recent consultation meeting, the scout leaders said that the scouts are encouraged to be noisy and let off steam. Also they expect to have overnight camps and fires. The main noise pollution will come from football matches which are planned for Saturdays and Sundays, both mornings and afternoons, as well as evenings in the summer, training sessions and competitions. Noise from players and spectators and the referees' whistles are unavoidable facts of life wherever football is concerned. Cheering, clapping, shouting and swearing are all an integral part of football life and will inevitably be inflicted upon residents. Although the noise pollution will greatly affect Genesta Drive and Heather Close residents, with a prevailing westerly wind, the noise level will impact many other roads in the village.
3. Infrastructure. The two relevant district councils previously agreed that there should be a clear buffer zone between them, free from development. If this project goes ahead with a club house and scout hut, electricity, water and sewerage, there will be no logical reason to stop further developments of housing or other structures. Roads in the area have been deemed sub-standard even prior to recent housing developments. The amount of traffic coming in and out of the village will be increased significantly through cars and coaches of visiting teams and parents driving children to matches and training. Roads, junctions and other pinch points are already at near saturation at peak times. Although Heath Road is now no longer the proposed access for cars, the dog facilities close to that road will attract significant volumes of parking. This will be problematic for the residents and also for the official cycle route users. Overspill is very likely to happen in Genesta Drive and the adjacent green.
4. Security. The development, unfenced as proposed, will encourage a wide range of visitors, sporting and otherwise – all with open access to people's garden fences. In view of the open access at both ends and absence of fencing or entry barriers, there is a high chance of anti-social behaviour developing and becoming entrenched. This could include car meets, “county lines” drug dealers, unauthorised caravan parking, drinking sessions, opportunistic thieves. There will be a high risk of littering of all types, plus dog mess and the clear possibility of syringes and gas canisters. The proposed development is unfortunately situated at the furthest point of both Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk police services. At the recent 33 Acres consultation the issue of the

lack of security was raised by a resident, the representative suggested that the residents would have to “police it themselves.”

5. Management. In spite of two plans and two consultation meetings to date, there has been a marked lack of any signs of a business plan, management plan, maintenance plan nor has there been any legal liability acknowledgement. Even assuming that the football pitches will be well maintained, nothing tangible has been proposed about maintenance of the rest of the site. Neither has there been any proposal regarding supervision for any of the activities apart from football and scouts.
6. Finance. No information about finances was mentioned at either of the two consultation meetings. Concerns were expressed about funding for this multi-million pound development. We have been advised that because the development is a private enterprise there is no obligation to share financial details.
7. Boundary changes. The land is in Great Barton parish, remote from its centre and also remote from the centre of West Suffolk district council. Suggestions have been made that it would make sense to change the boundary so that the land could be incorporated into Thurston parish and Mid Suffolk. It was claimed that Jo Churchill had approved this idea and intimated that it would not be difficult to accomplish. Thurston and Great Barton's parish councils have appointed members who favour the scheme to help further this project. There was a strong feeling at the meeting that any opponents to the scheme had not been consulted or included.
8. Wrong location. This development does not appear in the Neighbourhood Plan. Its large size and characteristics lends itself to an environment much more remote from dwellings, for example towards the Suffolk Business park where there would be lower environmental impact and significantly better road access. There is plenty of new housing being built in the village, mainly for families who would benefit from the new facilities. However, those new developments are mainly on the opposite side of the village. This proposed site is in the wrong place for the users of the facility.
9. Wrong size. The Charity initially wanted a skate park. This has somehow developed into an industrial scale multi-sport enterprise more fitting for a large urban environment. In the event that the proposed development starts and then subsequently fails, the green buffer zone will not apply. It will be designated a brown-field zone and housing or other developments could theoretically take place.
10. Flawed Surveys. The Charity's repeated claim that “the village is in favour of the scheme” has come from the first consultation meeting when a small survey was carried out by the proposers of the scheme. The figures were 102 in favour (of which 18 were non-residents) and 54 against. It was an amateur and flawed survey and the total number interviewed represented less than 4% of the village's population.
11. Wrong gift. The feeling of the meeting was that, just because an unexpected opportunity suddenly presents itself, and because the cause is felt to be worthy, it does not follow that it should automatically proceed in a way which creates a harmful impact for local residents and causes disharmony and negativity.