



23 March 2023

Ms Sara Campbell
Parish Clerk
Scole Parish Council

Dear Ms Campbell,

Re: Hopkins Homes presentation at Scole Parish Council meeting on 6th March 2023

As requested at the above meeting please find below the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan (DDNP) steering group (SG) comments.

As your council and Hopkins Homes are well aware, South Norfolk Council (SNC) transferred the task of allocating the location, quantity and size of any new housing developments within the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area to the DDNP SG, provided the numbers specified by the local planning authorities are achieved. Sites in the NP area (including Scole) have been allocated and consulted on many times over the last five years resulting in the NP that is currently completing independent examination after successful completion of Regulation 16 consultation conducted by SNC.

At no time have any discussions taken place between the DDNP SG and Scole Playing Fields or Hopkins Homes regarding the horse trading of a parcel of land for new football pitches and a quantity of houses built in return. In fact, in December, Hopkins homes submitted a response to the NP Regulation 16 consultation that supported the current plan for 50 homes to the East of Norwich Road, Scole, referenced as DDNP11 in the DDNP. No mention was made of the goal to increase this to 110 properties.

It is also noted that in the plan presented by Hopkins to your members there are two roads internal to the development that end on the eastern edge of the proposal. It is obvious that the intention is to build further properties to the East of the current proposal, similar to the 130-property plan previously submitted (as site SN4022), and rejected, in response to an SNC call for sites in March 2020.

SNC has assessed a housing requirement for Scole of 25 properties over the next 18 years. The DDNP has allocated 81 properties to be built in Scole during the life of the DDNP, thus far exceeding the number formally required.

If Hopkins wish to build more houses than the number allocated in the current plan then a proposal along those lines should be submitted to the SG at the first review of the DDNP which is

expected to be within the next two years or so. Also, we consider that there should be no expectation of a quid pro quo between homes and new land for playing fields, especially considering that the land they are proposing "donating" for those playing fields is well outside the Settlement Boundary and thus has no intrinsic value other than as farmland. If there is to be some sort of value placed on that land it surely can only be equal to one or two housing plots.

In summary, the proposal presented by Hopkins Homes at the most recent meeting of your parish council is contrary to the aims of the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan and specifically to Policy DDNP11. We would therefore not support any application drawn up along those lines. We would, however, be prepared to assess any proposal once the DDNP has been made (adopted) and the planning of a revision is underway. However, the amalgam of seven parishes would expect to be approached with ideas at an early stage, not as an afterthought and certainly not left out discussions altogether.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David M. Burn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Burn

Chairman

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