From: Janet Heath [redacted]
Sent: 22 August 2021 10:55
To: localplans@charnwood.gov.uk
Cc: ARGAR, Edward; Cllr. James Poland
Subject: THRUSSINGTON - 90 NEW HOUSES PROPOSED BY CHARNWOOD - CONSULTATION 12 JULY TO 23 AUGUST 2021
Attachments: 91-0397-2 pg1.jpg; 91-0397-2 pg2.jpg; 91-0397-2 pg3.jpg

Dear Sirs,

[redacted] in connection with the above proposal.

In 1992 planning permission was refused on appeal for a development on the HA68 site on Old Gate Road. I enclose the Planning Inspector's letter, detailing the reasons for refusal, which are still valid today. Only the number of houses in the village is incorrect. There are now some 240 houses, owing to a number of small developments built within the village envelope over the last 60 years.

Planning permission for HA67 was also refused once and withdrawn another time. Both sites are outside the village envelope. In 2018 Charnwood Borough Council adopted the village Neighbourhood Plan, so this proposal is in direct contradiction of Charnwood's own decision.

Thrussington lies in the Wreake Valley (an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) which regularly floods during wet or wintry weather conditions. Climate change has exacerbated this in recent years. This is why there is a raised walkway alongside the Rearsby Road between Thrussington and Rearsby. There is also flooding in the village itself (when there are flash floods or prolonged periods of rain) from the water which runs off the fields on the higher ground between the A46 and the village. The soil is clay (there used to be a brickworks off the Old Gate Road in the last century) so rainwater is not easily absorbed - hence the run off problems. Added to that, the drains, despite some improvements, are still inadequate, as is the sewage system (raw sewage invades certain properties in low lying areas of the village when there are flooding issues).

Other concerns, which I believe indicate the unsuitability of the sites for development - harm to the environment, narrow roads, no bus service, increased traffic, "blind" junctions, unreliable electricity provision, poor broadband provision, limited employment opportunities, lack of services etc - are identified in Thrussington Parish Council's response.

To concrete over a large area of the fields surrounding the village would, in my opinion, add to the problems which already exist and (echoing the Inspector's comments in 1992) seriously harm the character and appearance of both the village and the surrounding countryside.

For these reasons, I agree with the Parish Council that Charnwood's proposal to build 90 new houses in Thrussington is UNSOUND and I add my name to those who object to the proposal.

Yours faithfully

Janet Heath (Mrs)

[redacted]

Enc: Planning Inspectorate Decision Letter, 14 December 1992

The Planning Inspectorate

An Executive Agency in the Department of the Environment and the Welsh Office

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Date: 14 DEC 1992

Gentlemen

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6
APPEAL BY THE CIVIL SERVICE HOUSING ASSOCIATION
APPLICATION NO: 91/0397/2

1. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine the above mentioned appeal. This is against the decision of the Charnwood Borough Council to refuse outline planning permission in respect of an application for the erection of 34 dwellings on land adjoining Old Gate House, Old Gate Lane, Thrussington. I have considered the written representations made by you and by the Council and also those made by the Thrussington Parish Council and other interested persons, including those made directly to the Council and forwarded to me. I inspected the site and the surrounding area on 23 November 1992.

2. This application was submitted for outline permission with all matters reserved except for siting and access. It was accompanied by plans showing the layout of the dwellings and details of the new access. I have considered your clients' appeal on this basis.

3. From my inspection of the site and the surrounding area and from the representations made, I consider that the main issue in this appeal is the effect that this proposal would have on the character and appearance of the village and the surrounding countryside.

4. The Council have submitted that the proposal would constitute an extension of the village into the surrounding open countryside and harm the appearance of the village and its setting and also be contrary to its rural settlement policies. You dispute this and argue that this is an infill proposal which would benefit the community and continue the viability of village amenities.

5. The policy framework comprises the approved Leicestershire County Structure Plan Alterations 1 and 2 and the Wreake Valley Local Plan. Thrussington is designated as an other village where new development is normally confined to small groups of dwellings or single plots within the village. Development outside the village in the countryside is not normally permitted unless it is essential for agriculture or other specified activities. The thrust of these policies is continued in the emerging Structure Plan Review and also the Local Plan, which identifies a development boundary for the village. I give significant weight to this underlying objective of protecting the character and appearance of the village and the surrounding countryside.

6. Thrussington is a relatively compact and attractive village containing just over 200 dwellings. It is surrounded by undulating open countryside and your clients' site comprises grazing land outside the identified village boundary on the northern side. There is limited sporadic residential development extending away from the village on Old Gate Lane, but this has frontage to the road whereas this proposal would involve development in depth.

7. The land rises from the village and I consider that any development would be prominent in views from both the village and the surrounding countryside and be seen as an extension of the village into this attractive countryside. In my view, development at this scale would be significant and would harm both the character and appearance of the village and the surrounding countryside. This would not only be contrary to the objective of the Council's policies but also to the advice expressed in Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

8. You claim that this an infill site, but this is not a small gap in a small group of houses. There is open land to the south/south west and to the north east which lies outside the identified village envelope. In addition, the dwelling to the east appears detached from the village and is reached via a gravel track, whilst land to the north west is part of the extensive garden of one of the frontage dwellings. This scheme would be at a much higher density than the existing sporadic development to the north of the village and, in my view, would significantly change this open rural character.

9. You have suggested the introduction of single storey dwellings, although the respective plots are not indicated on the layout plan. I am not convinced that this would be sufficient to render the proposal acceptable, no matter how well designed the dwellings might be. You have also suggested that some of the dwellings could be for local needs, but you have not indicated the number of dwellings proposed for this purpose or provided evidence of such a need in Thrussington. I am not, therefore, persuaded that the proposal satisfies either the Council's policies for affordable housing or the advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3.

10. Whilst you have suggested that landscaping could reduce the impact of the scheme, I do not consider that it would ameliorate the harm which I have identified or satisfactorily link the development to the village. I note that the access has been agreed with the Highway Authority, but I share the Council's concern that the road could result in the loss of trees because of the possible effect of the construction works on the tree roots and result in further harm. Although the Council have referred to precedent, I share your view that proposals should be considered on their individual merits.

11. I have considered all the other matters raised in the written representations, including the comments of the National Rivers Authority and the criticism of the village envelope. However, I find nothing which outweighs the main considerations that lead me to my decision in this case that the resultant harm to the character and appearance of both the village and the surrounding countryside would be so serious as to form a compelling reason for resisting this appeal.

12. For the above reasons, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss your clients' appeal.

I am Gentlemen
Your obedient Servant

F M CHERINGTON DipURP MRTPI ARICS MIAS
Inspector