

Chelmondiston Parish Council

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7.b Planning Application

Full Planning Application – Erection pf phases development of 22 no. dwellings, creation of cycle path links to Holbrook and Chelmondiston, improvements to Berners Hall car park, provision of public open space and landscape enhancements.

Sites and Cycle Paths Woolverstone to Holbrook, Woolverstone to Chelmondiston, Main Road, Woolverstone. Suffolk.

Notes for Members:

The response from the planning committee is in relation to the cycle path from Chelmondiston to Woolverstone rather than the full planning application.

There are 89 documents in relation to the planning application. However, document 1418-26 contains a map of the proposed cycle paths.

The link to view the application is listed below.

<https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QEHTV4SHG1300>

The closing date for comments is Friday the 25th of September.

The Application will go to Committee Decision at BDC as one of the reasons being that the application does not comply with planning legislation as the developer/landowner is only offering 2 dwellings as Affordable Housing but does offer other benefits to the community (cycle paths).

There are two proposed cycle paths in the planning application and they do not connect to one another.

Anyone moving from one to another would need to negotiate 885m of the B1456 with the increasingly heavy traffic load as well as through a "pinch point" where the road is just 5.3 meters in width. And, in some cases, the pavement width is less than a metre. There is no footpath between the proposed Woolverstone to Chelmondiston cycle path.

Upgrading the footpaths to bridleways does not form part of the application. While they remain permissive rights of way they do not protect the use of these in perpetuity.

The inclusion of the Sustrans report, "Woolverstone to Chelmondiston – Route assessment report" as "Transport Statement 7515459" in the suite of documents for the above application could be a cause of great confusion because it tries to obfuscate the reality. While there are two cycle path routes that are part of the application, the "Transport Statement 7515459" describes other routes need to be upgraded to bridleways if they are to be used as cycle paths.

Who owns the land for the proposed cycle paths, that is not established in the planning application.

The proposed Cycle Paths linking the villages and existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) footpaths are very positive and welcomed by SCC.

It could encourage modal shift from the private car and improve health and well-being to all of the community.

The PROW Team's response included concerns on how the new routes interact with the existing PROW network 'There is great merit in developing new and strategic cycle routes. However, we have serious concerns as the route of the proposed cycle path appears to be on a combination of an existing bridleway (which carries rights for cycling), a series of footpaths (which do not carry rights for cycling), and on permissive paths (which lack long term permanency)'.

Please see below the Shotley Peninsula Cycling Campaigns response:

'Shotley Peninsula Cycling Campaign (SPCC) generally welcomes the attention given to cycling and sustainable transport in the application. However, the SPCC is strongly of the view that before any planning permission could be contemplated the following drawbacks need to be addressed and overcome:

1. The two separate sections of the proposed cycle path need to be joined up through the middle of the village;
2. The Holbrook-bound cycle path needs to link more conveniently with the B.1456 on the western edge of the village;
3. Clarity and certainty needs to be established over the ownership of the proposed cycle paths to ensure that they can actually be delivered in a timely manner.

Detailed Comments We, the Shotley Peninsula Cycling Campaign, wish to submit comments on the above planning application. Please note that our comments are only directed at the impact that these proposals may have on cyclists and pedestrians. We pass no comment on the wider merits of this application or, indeed, whether it should, or should not, be granted planning permission. Therefore, the SPCC is strongly of the opinion that if Babergh District Council is minded to approve the application then the following comments on the proposed cycle path should be taken into account, and addressed, before any planning permission is issued. Firstly, I should say that the SPCC very much welcomes the attention given to cycling and sustainable transport in the application. Today, more than ever, this is extremely important, and we applaud the involvement of Sustrans in this application. However, SPCC does think that the cycle path proposals as currently presented have significant drawbacks, and feels that these need addressing and overcoming before any planning permission can be granted. Lack of continuity The cycle path as currently drafted falls into two distinct sections. However, the two sections are not connected, leaving a gap with no safe cycling for about 750 metres in the very centre of the village, where it is arguably most needed. This would mean that those in the east of the Woolverstone could not safely access the proposed cycle path to Holbrook, while those in the west of the village could not safely access the proposed cycle path to Chelmondiston. Furthermore, and

somewhat bizarrely, housing sites 1, 2 and to a lesser extent site 3, have no direct or safe access onto the proposed new cycle paths. Sites 1 and 2 are particularly poorly served in that cyclists from these developments would have a busy and dangerous section of the B1456 to negotiate, whether they are bound for Chelmondiston or Holbrook. The applicant's declared objective is that the new cycle paths should provide the village, and the 22 proposed new homes, with a genuine and easy alternative way of travelling to Chelmondiston and Holbrook, to access the services and facilities in these much larger villages. As currently drafted, the cycle path proposals fall well short of delivering this. To overcome these shortcomings, SPCC would suggest two additional sections of new cycle path: a. A new section, from the B1456 at the western edge of the village adjacent to site 1, going due south along the existing farm track to connect with the proposed path to Holbrook. This would be very easy to achieve as the track already has a good surface suitable for cycling and is within the ownership of the applicant.

Indeed, its use as a cycle path was supported in the accompanying Sustrans report and also in the SPCC's Ipswich to Shotley Community Path report commissioned from Suffolk County Council in 2011, so it is not clear why it has not already been included within the application. b. A second, longer, new section is needed to link the two sections of cycle path together in the middle of the village. In broad terms this could follow one of three alignments: I. North of the B1456 using Mannings Lane, then the current footpath going east from where the road ends through to Woolverstone Church and then across land in the ownership of the High School, as per the proposal in the SPCC's 2011 Ipswich to Shotley Community Path report. II. South of the B1456 behind the houses fronting this road. III. Beside the B1456 using a widened and shared footway at the western end, and an onroad, traffic calmed section at the eastern end, as reported upon in the Sustrans report accompanying this application. The Planning Statement, the Transport Statement and Sustrans Report , which all accompany and support the application, place considerable emphasis on both the Suffolk County Council/SPCC Community Path Report (2011), and the Sustrans Feasibility Study, with their recommendations for new cycle paths in the Woolverstone area. However, the Planning Application itself then fails to replicate those proposals, thus considerably reducing the integrity and beneficial impact of the proposed cycle paths.

Land Ownership The SPCC also has concerns about the extent to which the applicant has control over the land to be given over to the proposed cycle paths. The application and supporting documentation is not clear. On the one hand the blue ownership boundaries on the Site Location Plan indicates that the applicant does not own any of the tracks/paths/land over which the two sections of cycle path are being proposed. On the other hand, the Planning Statement suggests (2.10, 2.13 and 2.32) that the applicant and landowner are one and the same. If the former is the case, then there may be doubt over the applicant's ability to deliver even the less than complete cycle path proposals currently included in the application, and SPCC would ask the Council to confirm that the applicant does have sufficient control over the necessary land to both deliver, and then maintain in perpetuity, their cycle path proposals. '