

**REYDON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024**  
**PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

**1. Planning Applications**

The Planning Working Group considered 35 Applications from May 2023 up to April 2024. Most of these were for extensions and/or adaptations to existing properties although a few were for new properties and/or replacement dwellings. Based on the Planning Group's monthly reports, the Parish Council recommended approval of 28 of these applications and rejection or further consideration of 7 applications. In almost all cases where refusal or further consideration was proposed, the reason was a negative impact on neighbouring properties or overdevelopment of the site.

In one case, we recommended refusal of an application for new houses to replace others lost to, or at risk from, coastal erosion because the application was to build these in open countryside when a brownfield option was available. East Suffolk have yet to determine this application.

A number of applications were for new houses in the garden of an existing one. In two cases we recommended refusal due to the inadequate size of the proposed plot and/or inadequate provision for parking. The trend of seeking development of garden plots is one which the Parish will want to monitor closely in the coming years.

Where appropriate, we asked for the application of policies from our Neighborhood Plan, most often RNP10 (Design Principles) and RNP4 (Principal Residence Requirement for new properties).

**2. Permission Gained (and then Refused) on Inaccurate Plans**

One troubling case from 2023, which still continues, arises from a scheme to extend a house with a small upper floor addition. Originally, the Parish Council objected to this application as it extended the property beyond the building line of the upper floor of its close neighbour. The Local Planning Authority (East Suffolk Council) nevertheless approved the scheme because the plans showed that the protrusion beyond the adjacent building was around 0.5m. As it has been built, however, the new upper floor room extends 2m beyond its neighbour, affecting the amenity, light and privacy of that dwelling. This has happened because the submitted plans showed the position of the adjacent house incorrectly. As a result, the new room when built according to the dimensions on the plans, extends 2m beyond the neighbour rather than 0.5m.

The scheme's architects tried to gain retrospective permission for what has been built but this was contested by the neighbour and it was one of the applications for which the Parish Council recommended refusal. After a site visit by the East Suffolk Planning Committee and representations at the Committee meeting from the neighbour and from the Parish Council, the Committee voted unanimously to refuse the application (overturning an officer recommendation to approve). Then calamity struck again: a Decision Notice (which is a statutory instrument) was issued to

approve the scheme. The Planning Authority had to seek a court order to revoke this notice, which was issued in error, and have just reported that a Notice to Refuse Permission has now been issued. This may not be the end of the matter as the applicant may well appeal and East Suffolk will have to defend their decision before taking any enforcement action.

However, as a Parish Council, we are also concerned about the wider implications of this case. How can a permission be allowed to stand when it is based on incorrect drawings? We rely on the plans submitted with an application to make our judgement on each scheme – as does the Planning Authority. If incorrect plans are submitted, the whole process is undermined.

### **3. Copperwheat Development.**

The biggest application for the village in 2021-22, was the final stage of the Outline Application for 220 new dwellings on the land west of Copperwheat Avenue. This was granted Outline Planning Permission in September 2021. As we reported last year a condition of the permission was the requirement of a key policy from our Neighbourhood Plan that all the new market housing will have to be occupied as principal residences. In addition, the affordable housing will all be affordable rented or shared ownership as required by our plan.

During 2023, Orbit Housing announced that they have bought the site and will come forward with a further application (Reserved Matters) to gain full planning permission. Orbit also told us that they have funding to include a further 30 of the new properties as shared ownership dwellings. As a result, of the 220 dwellings, 44 will be affordable rentals, 74 shared ownership and 102 market housing. As of April 2024, Orbit have not yet submitted the Reserved Matters application and when this is out for consultation, the Parish Council will press for some of the infrastructure pressures which will arise to be addressed as fully as possible.

### **4. St Felix Development**

By contrast, the plans for housing and replacement playing fields and new changing facilities now appear to be nearing delivery. The developer, Hill Residential, has secured full planning permission for 55 houses, of which 19 will be affordable (rented or shared ownership). The Parish Council has engaged with the developer, the school's new owners and the planning authority to explore how we can prevent further damage to the County Wildlife site through the creation of a dog walking area and widening of paths in areas where nightingales nest. Sadly, we were not fully satisfied by the way this has been addressed. Work to develop the replacement playing field is now largely completed which will allow the residential development to proceed.

Philip O'Hear, Chair of Planning (until March 2024)