

PT17/5810/RM – Crest Nicholson (CN) Planning Application at Harry Stoke

Whilst the Harry Stoke residents are still reviewing the enormous numbers of plans and documents and the latest CN revisions in March, the following are the collective views of the residents of Harry Stoke Hamlet from what has been reviewed so far (note some further changes, on affordable housing, appear to have been uploaded today).

We hope the Parish Council will incorporate the following points in their consultation input to South Gloucestershire planning department –

- 1) Whilst the recent plans are an improvement, dwellings fronting onto Harry Stoke Road South are still not sympathetic to retaining the rural edge. In particular, deviating from the CN design statement 2006.
- 2) Whilst changes have been made to the heights of the buildings along Harry Stoke Road South, it remains mainly terraced dwellings, a coach house and maisonettes with a few semi-detached. There are no detached dwellings (and some properties do not face the lane). This is at odds with the Design Code which requires predominantly detached and semi-detached 2-storey dwellings. Indeed, there are many areas where CN are not compliant with the Design Code as detailed in Mr Robert Forsey's objection submitted 11 Apr 19 (see attached). This also contrasts with 14 detached and 6 semi-detached (no terraced) in the rural edge at the northern end of the site.
- 3) Many of the houses contain significant render (which, of the modern type, does not weather well) and with insufficient stonework to adequately blend-in with the cottage vernacular and historic feel of Harry Stoke Hamlet. Note there are no fewer than 7 locally listed buildings existing in the Hamlet. See Dr Christopher Payne's objection published 10 Apr 19 for more detailed information. However, an extract is below:

The importance of this is emphasised in the Local List Supplementary Planning Document <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/pte070152.pdf> which states

"New buildings in the grounds of buildings on the Local List, or in close proximity, should ensure that the setting of Locally Listed Buildings is not compromised. New developments should preserve positive settings, and enhance settings which are poor. This should be achieved through appropriate positioning, layout, design and landscaping.

Elements which are likely to contribute to positive setting of buildings are: - The historic arrangement and layout of buildings

- Attractive views in to, from and through sites

- The relative levels of enclosure or openness of a site

- The use of landscape features to frame or enhance buildings or as a method of screening poor quality structures.

Careful consideration should be given to the landscape treatment surrounding buildings on the Local List. Historic boundary treatments and surfacing contribute to the setting and to the wider landscape and should be preserved. The loss of areas of open greenness and trees can cause significant harm to the character of an area and the setting of historic buildings."

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- 4) The 3 & 4 storey buildings at the southern-end, whilst having been moved somewhat, remain over-bearing, out of character with the area and at variance with the Design Code.
- 5) CN appear to be seeking to argue they can deviate from the Design Code due to development on the UWE campus. However, the Design Code for the CN site in 2012 came after the UWE campus developments. Hence the CN argument is a red-herring (as the approval for the UWE developments near to the A4174 pre-dates the Harry Stoke Design Code and are on the opposite-site of a dual-carriageway) and the proposed 3 & 4 storey apartment & maisonettes are in contravention of this Code. The only UWE developments since 2012 are at the far southern end of the UWE campus, well away from Harry Stoke, and are built for an entirely different purpose than family housing is. Thus, they are not relevant to this application.
- 6) The overall layout appears unimaginative, too urban near to Harry Stoke Road South, and with little green space, play or other open areas. More imagination and effort is required by CN to create a tasteful, harmonious development and better manage the transition between the new development and the historic hamlet.
- 7) It is noted that the Rural Edge across from Sloe Way (already-built Highbrook Park) at the northern end of the site is planned (plots 146-165) with 14 detached properties and 6 semi-detached, fully-owned apart from 4 affordable shared-ownership semi-detached (plots 154-157). There are no affordable rentals within these plots 146-165. The Harry Stoke South Rural Edge should be similar. Instead, there are 8 semi-detached (including plots 504 & 541), 2 maisonettes, 1 coach-house and 2 rows of 3 terraces. Of the 17 properties currently planned along Harry Stoke Road South Rural Edge, 9 are designated as Affordable Rentals and 1 Affordable Shared-ownership (plot 510). The comparison between the two Rural Edges is stark. The Sloe Way Rural Edge is far more in tune with the Character Area designated in the Design Code and the Harry Stoke Road South Rural Edge an incredibly poor design, which is not compliant with the Rural Edge designated Character Area in the Design Code. Note there are a further 8 Affordable Rental properties close to the locally-listed detached 'The Yews', all of which are semi-detached. This seems disproportionate and out of keeping.
- 8) Many people have written in requesting the historic, stone-walled moat or fishpond is preserved. It is recognized (by experts) as having historic value (see Adrian Kearton's information) and it should be possible to be retained, as part of the overall development, with modifications to the 'local centre' car park. Additionally;
 - i. It takes water from the local, privately-owned large great crested newt pond
 - ii. Newts have been found there in the past
 - iii. It is a natural drainage attenuation feature
 - iv. It would provide a unique educational feature and add distinctiveness
- 9) There are health concerns regarding the new electricity pylon electromagnetic fields causing cancer etc. Siting it further from dwellings, possibly between the Ring Road and bus lane should be considered. Also regarding air quality.

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- 10) There is not provision for a Doctor's or Dental Surgery within the plans, or other facilities to support a village feel to the development.
- 11) There is no visibility of the proposed revised rights of way. These need to be put out for public consultation before the application is determined.

In summary, whilst the latest plans contain some improvements, this planning application still contravenes the Design Codes in several clear respects. (Mr Robert Forsey's objections submitted 11 Apr 19 sets out in more detail where CN are not compliant). It is too urban near to Harry Stoke Road, does not respect the hamlet and existing houses and insufficient effort has been made to transition between the existing and the new properties. Nor does it respect the environment and heritage of the area with a historic stone-walled moat / fishpond (with important drainage and great crested newt habitat features). It has insufficient provision for green spaces and key facilities and it does not show how the existing public rights of way / footpaths are to be re-routed. Thus, the application is still not ready for determination.

Additionally, if and when the application is ready to proceed, there are other matters which need addressing as conditions (in order to keep construction traffic off Harry Stoke Road, the nearby road network clean of mud and for general safety for other road users) –

1. No development to take place until the new 'Haul Road' is built.
2. The wheel-washing facility needs to be adjacent the haul road, not the new road off Westfield Lane.
3. A 'no access to construction site' sign at the entrance to Harry Stoke road is required.
4. Impact to cyclists travelling along Harry Stoke Road (a designated cycle route) needs consideration

Harry Stoke Residents

23rd April 2019