

PEASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

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18th November 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

This is a Stage 1 Complaint from Peasehall Parish Council against East Suffolk Council.

Peasehall Parish Council is complaining that Site 12.59/60 was included in East Suffolk Council's Adopted Local Plan despite being aware that the site was not available for development, and was not in any case deliverable on a range of grounds.

We do so primarily on two grounds:

1. There are national implications over the validity of the Plan given that the site is not deliverable.
2. The entire process is flawed given the failure to undertake any proper risk or site assessments nor consider viable and more suitable alternative sites in the village.

In 2016, when looking for allocated sites for the local plan, the ESC advanced 12 potential sites for possible inclusion, including land east of Newlands in Mill Road, the Causeway and the land adjacent to Farthings in Sibton Road which later became known as 12.59/60.

Peasehall Parish Council responded to those 12 sites on 26/10/17, rejecting 8 of them including 12.59/60, and approving the remaining 4 including the Causeway.

In the event, ESC removed all 12 sites from the list after receipt of the PPC responses, including our response dated 06/09/18 to the first draft plan (July 2018). Subsequently however, ESC then brought back 12.59/60 as the sole site for allocation seemingly out of nowhere, and without reference to the parish council.

The subsequent work on compliance with the sequential test confirmed a worrying trend. ESC rejected development of the Causeway site even though they had also already granted planning permission for it. Clearly, at ESC, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

12.59/60 is a field owned by a local charity, the Church Lands Trust. During the draft planning phase the site was offered for development by persons unknown, whose names have been redacted in the planning department's files. The proposal to develop this greenfield site is contrary to the wishes and intentions of the Trust, which set out its position in a letter to ESC dated 20/07/20. The letter confirms that that they do not want to, nor intend to, sell or develop the site.

The fact that ESC knew when adopting the Plan that 12.59/60 was not available nor deliverable is a matter of national concern. If principal planning authorities are able to include any plot of land they please in local plans without regard to the views of the parish council or the landowners, then England's planning laws and the consultative processes are rendered a waste of time.

We are only taking the unusual step of making a formal complaint because as a parish council we have not received satisfactory responses from ESC as to why the site was included in the first place and why it remained on the schedule of sites for development. Our district and county councillor, Cllr. Stephen Burroughes has been similarly thwarted.

All the relevant documents, including our continual representations against the inclusion of the 12.59/60 site, are already within the ESC's possession.

We would welcome a full response to our complaint within one month of receipt, including details of all documents relied upon in support and confirmation that site 12.59/60 will be removed from the Adopted Plan.

Yours faithfully

Sharon Smith
Clerk to Peasenhall Parish Council