

## Appendix B UCPC Notes for 001kc Hearing Statement Landscape and Visual Assessment

For the sake of clarity, the PP and Section Numbers referred to are those in document GM/P17-2923/R001V2. Each of the points below refers to the page (PP...) and Paragraph/Section of the document provided by Pegasus Group under 001kc – Landscape and Visual Assessment.

They provide the perspective of Utkinton and Cotebrook Parish Council (UCPC) after extensive discussion with: Residents, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the 'Utkinton Green Space Action Group'.

1. **PP5 2.6** This does not include reference to the two additional layouts that were proposed and withdrawn prior to submission for planning – Muir Housing and Plus Dane Housing
2. **PP5 2.6 a** Withdrawn due to a high degree of conflict with their own Housing Needs Survey – Compiled by Arc4, it that was found to be statistically flawed and the numbers of affordable homes substantially at odds with Parish Council HNS.
3. **PP5 2.7** This 'mitigation plan' has been supplied following a request by UCPC to the Inspector for documents not originally submitted to CWaC but referred to in some that had. It shows the same basic layout but with some alterations to the layout of gardens on the west side (John street), the addition of a 'play area' and native hedging to the boundary with Rose Farm Shop et al.
4. **PP6 2.8** In essence UCPC believe that the Appellant is hoping to get the refusal overturned and then to revert to the original layout – the mitigation plan could be seen as 'window dressing'. Much depends on what they mean by 'settlement' – if this intends to relate to the village settlement boundary, it is a very narrow definition of Utkinton as a community and whilst it contains around 50% of the village housing, much of this is post war and the largest element (the 'estate' immediately to the north of the site, was built in the late 1970s. The wider community covers a larger area and is characterised by rolling hills, narrow lanes, historic buildings, a Historic England 'Bowl Barrow' (High Billinge) sandstone walls and a profusion of mature, native hedgerows.
5. **PP6 2.9** At the time the refusal was determined, the Appellant had made no approaches to the residents, Rose Farm or the Parish Council to discuss any 'mitigation strategy'. There had been no attempt at consultation.
6. **PP7 3.1** It would be appreciated if the landscape consultant could identify which comments she has considered as relevant?
7. **PP7 3.4** This is the consultant's view but no consideration has been given to those help by the residents of the village who will be most affected. Therefore we consider the consultant's views as less relevant to the arguments.
8. **PP8 3.5 c** It is the view of the Parish Council, residents and other groups that this development can neither enhance, nor protect the character of the ASCV. If the development were to go ahead it would render the vistas available to receptors who visit rose farm null and void.
9. **PP9 3.9** The Mitigation Plan (Appendix 5) makes no reference to the proposed paved footpath down the south side of Northgate, only to the made opening and sandstone being reused. This is at odds with the application as submitted.

10. **PP10 3.13 a** It is deemed unsustainable by UCPC and in previous planning applications refused by CWaC (12/04211/OUT – Rowley House, Utkinton) was referred to as ‘unsustainable and a hamlet’ by members of the planning committee due to the paucity of access to public transport
11. **PP10 3.13 b** This is true, and whilst some reference is made on the Mitigation Plan (appendix 5) to a play area no such area has been discussed with the community or UCPC and, on the ‘mitigation plan’ it is suggested that this will exit onto John Street – where there is no pavement and it is a through road with an almost ‘blind summit’ immediately to the south on John Street’. This would prove a danger to children, parents and motorists.
12. **PP10 3.13 c** See above remark ref opening and paved footpath. If this wall is removed the village will lose a non-designated historic asset that adds to the intrinsic value of the views from John Street.
13. **PP10 3.13 e** We (UCPC) commented on this previously – the development will not add to the environment – physically or visually, neither will it provide any benefit to the village from an employment or well-being perspective.
14. **PP11 3.16** All of the items below are strongly felt by the residents of the village.
15. **PP12 4.3** This boundary sits atop an existing and longstanding sandstone wall and above that a number of mature trees and native hedge and vegetation. Immediately to the west of this boundary there is a steep incline from the boundary to the flat(ish) surface of the site. This steep bank surrounds the west and northern boundaries from the entrance to Rose Farm Shop to the boundary with Bumblebee Hall on Northgate.
16. **PP12 4.5** Both ROW footpaths (FP15 and FP17) are regularly used by walkers and meet with ‘The Steps’ and Quarry Bank to the north and, eventually, Smithy Lane to the South. The closer of these offers walkers a panoramic view over the field and toward the Clwydian range and the Peckforton/Beeston hills.
17. **PP13 4.6** Bumblebee hall is Grade II listed as noted in the RAMD Heritage Report
18. **PP13 4.7** The apposite phrase is ‘... Special County Value’
19. **PP14 4.10** Is this in addition to the ‘Play Area’ adjacent to the entrance to Rose Farm Shop off John Street? Is off road parking to be provided, if so where? This is considered as a prerequisite for any childrens’/toddlers’ play area to allow parents to bring and collect children. None is shown on the original application nor on the mitigation plan. On the mitigation plan it describes a ‘non dig’ footpath between these two ‘public’ spaces and the proposed play area to the SW corner of the site. Is this the only access to one or the other? No outline (apart from a footprint) has been made available by way of consultation. The question of how either of these areas would be funded is also a moot point.
20. **PP14 4.12** No consultation has been had as to the scope, scale or location of this – specifically who it is designed for and what design. There is also a question as to the applicant’s contribution towards S106 to pay for this – what impact might that have on the overall viability of the site and would it change the mix of property proposed.
21. **PP16 4.15** This is visibly untrue. Any visual receptor at the Rose Farm complex would lose any vista to the NNW as these views would be obscured totally by the proposed dwellings. Any receptor looking from either the footpaths (15 & 17), from Northbrook Road, John street and Rowlands view would have visibility of the landscape views totally obscured by this development which will ‘tower’ some 11m

above the surroundings (the 'plain' of Northgate field @ 3 – 4m and 8m of building plus roof of up to 3m.)

- a. The Parish Council has prepared a number of slides that show how the 'lines of sight' currently enjoyed by the community will be interrupted, obscured or obliterated. This presentation is included with these representations.)
22. **PP17 5.5** This is discussed in more detail in the Parish Council comments related to the Appellant's Statement but it is worth rehearsing here. Utkinton has been proposed as a LSC in CWaC LP2 that is currently in inspection phase and the designation and process is being queried by the Inspector reviewing the process.
  - a. And this is NOT 100% Affordable, it is 50% affordable, 8.5% Intermediate and 42.5% Market – the PC does not consider this a small proportion of the total development. If this is considered as total footprint then the market housing element would equate to c.65%! The most recent (sponsored by CWaC) HNS demonstrated, given a similar response rate to previous HNS, that three out of 10 families might be described as eligible for Affordable Housing, yet upon closer examination none meet the qualifying criteria for 'West Cheshire Housing – Housing List'. However there is already a Registered Housing Provider – Weaver Vale Housing Trust – who manage 22 properties in Utkinton and this represents approximately 11% of the Housing stock and, by their admission, they have a resident 'churn' of approximately 1,5 pa, meaning that half the perceived 'need' could be satisfied from existing stocks.
23. **PP 18 5.7** UCPC is not sure what the consultant means by 'some adverse' ... this needs to be explained as any 'adverse' is to the detriment of landscape distinctiveness.
24. **PP18 5.9** The nearest Key Service Centre (Tarpoley) has had significant development, particularly of affordable housing and it is believed that the proposal for affordable dwellings Utkinton could be accommodated there, leaving the landscape and its amenity unscathed and available for all to enjoy.
25. **PP19 5.11** Again, please explain what is meant by 'some adverse'
26. **PP20 5.13 a** This proposal does not meet this criterion
27. **PP20 5.13 b** The development would tower (it is above its surroundings and at between 8m and 11m high would dominate the landscape) above its surroundings and if, as with other local developments, the developer chooses to utilise the roof space to reduce footprint and accommodate bedrooms on a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, then this roofline could reach 12 – 12.5m above the already heightened field levels.
28. **PP20 5.14** Clearly this is not the case, one cannot see through buildings
29. **PP21 5.16** It is not the surroundings of Utkinton, rather this development that sits on the edge of the village and would dominate the lower surroundings.
30. **PP21 5.17** Yet the supplied Appendix 4 does not refer to Delamere/Utkinton ASCV, rather it refers to Beeston / Peckforton.
31. **PP21 5.18** UCPC is at a loss to understand how this development will 'preserve or enhance the character or features' – it is setting 12 properties whose roof lines will be visible from the ASCV, the surrounding properties and at least two ROW immediately to the North of Utkinton.
32. **PP22 5.19** As above
33. **PP22 5.22** Which this proposal clearly does not deliver – one cannot protect the

character and appearance of open landscape if you build upon it.

34. **PP23 5.26** One issue that UCPC has is that this development will only be made 'sustainable' if it has true access to public transport, and the range of services not available to residents without access to private car – the elderly, less mobile and the less financially well off.
  - a. Across the three applications and the two unofficial sets of plans the applicant has not put forward proposals that will meet this criterion.
35. **PP23 5.27 a** Whilst this is a laudable goal, this development will not contribute to a competitive economy as the only real employment is at Rose Farm and that may be under threat from building on a landscape that is valued by villagers and visitors alike. This proposed development does not achieve the stated aim of '... contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, '.
36. **PP23 5.27 b** How will this be achieved?
37. **PP24 5.29** It is unclear how this proposal will meet this definition and nothing has been said or written in the application to meet it.
38. **PP25 5.32 b** Without labouring the point, this development does not take this into account and will not support a thriving community.
39. **PP26 5.34** Yet the trees that bound the Western boundary of the site are recognised under TPO and are seen by the residents of the community as providing an integral feature of the landscape. It has to be recognised that these trees, under a TPO, could suffer through root deprivation should this development be successful in its appeal.
40. **PP27 6.4** So, from its lowest point (the NW corner) to its highest the field exhibits a 13m height differential. This might be seen as an indication that the largest of the properties (Plot 7) might truly tower above the existing properties to the West and North of the site.
41. **PP26 6.5** Why just relate this to the site itself, when one looks from above there is a plethora of natural features within half a mile of the site – ponds, quarries, woodland, ancient hedges, listed and historic buildings – much that is deemed 'precious' by the residents of the community.
42. **PP28 6.6** As previously, why just focus on the site itself?
43. **PP28 6.7** For remodelling read demolition, moving back (South) by 2m to accommodate a paved footpath, and rebuilt into the steep gradient.
44. **PP28 6.8** In time this will grow (estimated by the UCPC Landscape Consultant at around 5 -10 years), or be allowed to grow by any residents in the properties immediately bounding the SE boundary and may even be backed by close-boarded fencing. Whose responsibility will it be to maintain this hedgerow. As it reaches maturity it will block any views from Rose Farm et al.
45. **PP29 6.9** But a large degradation of visual receptor views.
46. **PP30 6.12** As no one has seen any proposals for design it is difficult to say, but many of the surrounding properties range in architectural style and it is possible that these dwellings (if they mirror those on the applicant's web site and those constructed in Duddon) would stick out like the proverbial 'sore thumb'.)
47. **PP30 6.13** This was, in all probability to enable the surroundings to be cleared prior to laying of paving etc for a seating area to the NE of the café.
48. **PP30 6.14** Please define 'moderate'.
49. **PP32 6.19** It has to be said that the level of traffic of all types (agricultural, delivery

- and cars) has been there for around 20 years and has not exerted an 'urban influence' over village life and has not impinged on the level of perceived tranquility.
50. **PP32 6.20** One has to ask whether the (various) consultant reports have considered that the overarching tree and vegetation cover is, mainly, seasonal and for around 50% of the year there are clear views.
  51. **PP33 6.23** In fact, Appendix 4 refers specifically to 'Beeston / Peckforton / Bolesworth ASCV' and has no relevance to the Delamere/Utkinton ASCH
  52. **PP36 6.25** Is this their true and honest view? If so why are the (various) consultants continuing to play down any impact on the character of the site and the impact it will have on the community as a whole?
  53. **PP 37 6.26** To be honest, it would be hard for anyone looking toward the village from, say, the A49 as their views would be blocked by the hill that forms the highest parts of the village – High Billinge and Quarry Bank – both of which are at the southern end of this part of the Sandstone Ridge.
  54. **PP38 6.30** In fact the village can be viewed from the A54/51 just south of Tarvin, from the west as you progress down the A54 and the road to Utkinton from Duddon and from Wood Lane in the west the village is viewed from the first property on Rowlands View to half way along Tirley Lane.
  55. **PP39 6.32** This is a view from the consultant's perspective, not from those who use the ROW network.
  56. **PP39 6.33** The Mitigation Diagram suggests an entry/exit from a proposed play area direct on to John Street – at a point where there is no footpath and the road is narrow and busy from through traffic and that entering and leaving Rose Farm. This UCPC considers as highly dangerous. Also there is no off road parking or paved footway from the propose play area down John street and up Northgate to the entrance to the site.
  57. **PP 40 6.35** From an historical perspective the field was used to support the village Fete (by permission of the, then, owners) and as the local football team used Bumblebee Hall as a point to rendezvous and change, there is some anecdotal evidence that field may have been used for football prior to relocating to a field off Wood Lane.
  58. **PP 40 6.39** 'Tranquillity' is in the ear of the listener and a recent consultation in the preparation for the Utkinton and Cotebrook Neighbourhood plan the numbers of residents (of all ages) who expressed a positive towards, Rurality, Peace, tranquillity equated to almost 40%
  59. **PP41 6.38** It is a fair point but, often, walkers on the Sandstone Trail and the various ROW through the village attend Rose Farm Café and have exceptional visual receptor.
  60. **PP 41 6.40** In the eye of the beholder
  61. **PP41 6.41** To the contrary, it would add c. 18 cars, associated delivery and collection vehicles, the skyline would be much higher than its surroundings due to the height of the buildings proposed and the lanes could become more congested.
  62. **PP41 6.42** A very personal perspective, if the consultants are not residents, their views would be framed by the vista and panoramas on any one specific day – the villagers enjoy the views 365 days a year.
  63. **PP42 6.43** So, it (this development) would neither enhance nor preserve the character of the ASCV.

64. **PP43 7.2** Completely irrelevant!
65. **PP43 7.3** UCPC will submit its own visuals depicting how the 'lines of sight' would be obscured by the erection of these 12 dwellings from a number of vantage points around the field.
66. **PP44 7.5** We will show that the views will be dominated by the skyline
67. **PP44 7.7** Not true as, when the road is cut through and the wall/hedgerow removed this will provide open access to views of the field and the houses on the site from the main corridor that is Northbrook Road and, to an extent by the properties from 'Bramble Bank' to No 13 Rowlands View. See their comment below. No mention of the existing sandstone wall or pavement.
68. **PP45 7.8** Walkers and ramblers tread a well-worn pathway across these two fields and their route is fairly well evident.
69. **PP45 7.12** This bench is a memorial bench to a young lad who lost his life on Utkinton Road and from it residents and walkers can obtain a good view of the field and its environs. Should this development be allowed that that view will be of trees and hedgerows backed by buildings.
70. **PP46 7.15** Also from Wood Lane heading West.
71. **PP 46 7.16** This far understates the value that the visitors to the Café and other enterprises (estimated from the average number of café transactions at c. 90 – 100 per day) obtain from the views. This statement suggests that the interspersing of hedgerow and 'high quality residential scheme' would counter what is already there to enjoy as an amenity.
72. **PP47 7.17** The envelope in terms of footprint rather than volume. The overall height would be between 6 and 12 m above the floor of the café and car park of Rose farm.
73. **PP47 7.18** Agreed but please see 'Lines of Sight' slides. That the majority of the village (is this gauged in numbers of houses, population or area of the community of Utkinton) cannot actually see the proposed development assumes that residents have little to do with the existing landscape and its distinctiveness. In fact we would argue that the majority of the residents of the community pass by, view or use the facilities of Rose Farm by road, foot, cycle and horseback, at some time during the week.
74. **PP48 8.2** This is contradictory and confusing. If it is only the sandstone retaining walls that form 'local distinctiveness' then why do the applicants seek to mirror it. Again this is highly confusing as elements of this statement suggest it will be removed and others say it may be replaced. Highly judgmental
75. **PP48 8.3** Confusing statement as much of the area will be built for housing, paved over for roads and foot paths and only a small amount (according to the plan) left for 'public space. The developers cannot enforce the improvement of any grassed areas owned by potential residents to be 'species rich'.
76. **PP48 8.4** The two key communities in this ASCV (Delamere & Utkinton) represent 1300 and 500 population respectively, so to characterise Utkinton as 'relatively large in this statement – against what?

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12 September 2018