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To all Parish Councillors

Our Ref: VC/KA12363

Date: 28 October 2014

Dear Councillors

Re: Land at Crofts End, Sherington

Please find enclosed an illustrative layout plan for 20 dwellings and open space with regard to land at Crofts End for the Parish Council's consideration. I trust that you will include the proposed layout plan on your website alongside those submitted for High Street and Water Lane. It is clearly important that all the proposed sites are considered by the Parish Council on the same footing.

As you will be aware it was our intention to engage with the Parish Council in drawing up the scheme however we were advised that this was not possible ahead of the consultation on the Site Allocations Plan Issues and Options document which is being undertaken by Milton Keynes Council. Nevertheless, we will clearly be keen to understand the Parish Council's view of the scheme at this early stage in its development and we welcome your comments.

I notice that an outline planning application has been submitted to Milton Keynes Council in respect of the land at High Street. Evidently the landowner is seeking to force the issue and has disengaged from the consultation process. Unfortunately this may mean that in order to serve the best interests of our client we may also need to submit a planning application for consideration.

The Crofts End proposal has been sensitively designed and considered in the light of several supporting reports including a Heritage Assessment, a Phase I Ecological Report and a highway access report. One of our key considerations is to preserve and enhance the setting of the ancient monument within the site and include it as an asset to the village as a valuable part of the village heritage. The ancient monument is a Bowl barrow funerary monument dating from the Late Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age. There are over 10,000 surviving bowl barrows recorded nationally, with most examples belonging to the period 2400-1500 BC.

The design of the scheme allows for the mound to retain its visual link with the countryside through a tree-lined avenue. Access to the mound will be available through the new development and the ancient provenance of the village can be further enhanced through an interpretation board near the mound. The natural surveillance of the mound by nearby houses will serve to ensure the mound is protected as a village asset.

Chartered Surveyors and Valuers

• Property and Business Consultants

• Chartered Town Planners

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Sherington Parish Council /KA12363

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The site has excellent access to the local school (215m site entrance to school entrance) and residents of the proposed development are more likely to walk to the school than drive unlike at the proposed sites at High Street (1km site entrance to school entrance) and Water End (1km from site entrance to school entrance). Consequently the sites at High Street for 36 dwellings and Water End at 8 dwellings (to a lesser extent) will lead to further traffic congestion at peak hours at School Lane and Perry Lane.

The Crofts End site is also within easy walking distance of a bus stop which is only 150m from the entrance of the site whereas the High Street site is 300m from a bus stop and the Water Lane site 420m from a bus stop. Crofts End also has easy access to the local shop and public house.

Both Water Lane and the High Street site are very much at the periphery of the village and there is a possibility that residents will feel less engaged in the community particularly if they are using their cars to travel about. In particular the High Street site is further separated from the village by a broad landscaped edge along the High Street frontage and along its southern edge. The purpose of development at Sherington, to support the village community, is therefore lost.

The High Street proposal brings only a housing development to the village and is an 'all eggs in one basket' approach. At 36 dwellings the proposal is almost to the limit of the Parish Council's aspiration for development which is given as 40 units for the plan period to 2026. The High Street site will deliver nearly all of the Parish Council's anticipated housing growth for the next 12 years by 2016. There is also an obvious intention that the site will be expanded further eastward away from the village core as shown on the illustrative plan via the road access point. There is a suggestion of a contribution to a local shop via this development, however the extent of contribution proposed would not cover the cost of a permanent shop which would rely on additional finance from elsewhere which remains unspecified.

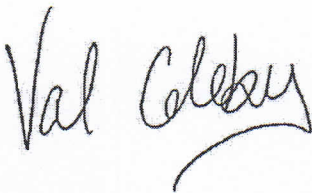
The High Street access is proposed to be shared with two farming operations and as a consequence there will be farm traffic including very large machinery travelling through the development to the fields beyond. The danger of residential and farm traffic interacting are well known with safety issues regarding children whether on foot or on bikes. In addition during harvest there will be much of activity at night likely to cause disturbance to the new residents.

The Croft End proposal by contrast provides for a modest development of 20 units which can provide a mix of unit sizes including some affordable housing. It is well located in relation to the village to support the community and village life, whilst access to facilities and public transport can be made on foot reducing the necessity to use the car. The site retains the public footpath through the site on its current alignment ensuring that residents of the village can access the countryside beyond as well as now gaining access to the mound. The site showcases the important historic burial mound a notable heritage feature of the village, providing for protection for the mound and enhancing its setting by a landscaping scheme that will mature in to a new distinctive village feature and a legacy for the future.

I hope you will take in to account our comments in your future deliberations in respect of both to the local planning process through the consultation on the Site Allocations Plan and in respect of the planning application at High Street.

There is a fourth site as shown in the Site Allocation Issues and Options document known as the land to the rear of School Lane. This is also within the ownership of my clients and the intention now is not to present the site as a development option at this stage in the plan making process.

Yours sincerely



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CROFTS END, SHERINGTON

The landowners of Crofts End live and work in the village. They have approached the development of the site sensitively to respect the ancient barrow, to protect ecology and to leave a positive legacy to the community and not just another housing estate. The scheme below is inspired by their vision.

A development at Crofts End would form a natural rounding off of the southern side of the village and has residential development on three sides. The site is within easy walking distance of the Primary School, recreation ground, shop, public house and bus-stop. As a site close to the heart of the village residents are more likely to fully assimilate into the community than a site on an outer edge of the village and community.

Key Design Points

- A low density village scheme.
- Housing framing and respecting the ancient barrow site.
- An open vista from the mound to the countryside beyond.
- An attractive tree-lined central greenspace.
- Retaining the alignment of the existing public footpath.
- Retaining the boundary hedgerows except for necessary visibility splays.
- All car-parking accommodated on-site.

