St Ives Town Council: Planning Committee Discussion and Decision (25/00616/OUT)

The Planning Committee considered the application and discussed the potential impacts of the proposed development, particularly in relation to highway capacity, infrastructure, heritage and the adequacy of the submitted plans.

Members expressed significant concerns about the proposed access arrangements and the impact of additional traffic on existing residents. There were doubts about whether the traffic survey data was sufficiently current and representative of local conditions, with concerns that assessments undertaken at County level did not adequately reflect the specific circumstances of the town.

It was noted that, although the development offered potential benefits, including new walking and cycling routes, open green spaces and an additional busway service, these benefits were subject to caveats. Members also questioned whether the proposed green space could realistically be accommodated within the development as submitted.

Members acknowledged the wider housing supply position, including the District Council's identified shortfall against its five-year housing requirement. However, Members considered that this did not override the need to assess the application against relevant planning policies and material considerations.

St Ives Town Council is not opposed to development. We recognise the need for additional housing and understand the importance of meeting local housing needs. However, we firmly believe that this particular site is entirely unsuitable for housing development and do not support its development for this purpose.

The Planning Committee set out five principal reasons for maintaining their objection to the application:

1. **Highways and cumulative transport impact**

The cumulative impact of the development on the existing highway network was a significant concern. Members considered that additional traffic, alongside existing congestion and other committed development, could result in severe and unacceptable impacts on the local road network. Concerns were also raised about the adequacy and relevance of the traffic data and the proposed access arrangements, with reference made to the applicable policy framework, including Policy TR6.3.

2. **Wastewater and infrastructure capacity**

Further confirmation was required regarding the capacity of the wastewater treatment works, the relevant environmental permits and the ability of existing water infrastructure

to accommodate the proposed development. There were concerns that the development could place unacceptable additional pressure on existing infrastructure.

3. **Heritage impact**

The proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the Grade II listed Grange Gate Lodges and their setting. The Committee considered that the harm had not been adequately mitigated through the current proposals.

4. **Development capacity, design and green space**

Concerns were raised about whether the proposed development could accommodate all the elements presented, including approximately 15 hectares of green space and Grade III best and most versatile agricultural land. Members considered that the applicant had failed to demonstrate that these elements could realistically be delivered within the proposed scheme, and that the amount of green space could consequently be reduced.

5. **Weight given to the emerging policy and the separation of settlements**

Members questioned the weight being given to the emerging policy position and whether this matter would be developed further. Particular concern was expressed about maintaining the intended separation between St Ives and Houghton and Wyton. It was considered that the current proposals did not demonstrate a satisfactory outcome in preserving this separation, which was a key purpose of the planning strategy.

RESOLUTION:

St Ives Town Council strongly recommends refusal of the application on the following five grounds and **reaffirms its previous recommendations made on 4th March and 2nd July 2026**:

1. **Highways and cumulative traffic impact:** The cumulative impact of the proposed development, alongside existing and committed development, would exacerbate congestion and place unacceptable pressure on the capacity of the local highway network, potentially resulting in severe impacts.

2. **Wastewater and infrastructure capacity:** Insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the wastewater treatment works, environmental permits and existing water infrastructure have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development without placing unacceptable additional pressure on existing infrastructure.

3. **Heritage impact:** The proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the Grade II listed Grange Gate Lodges and their setting, which has not been adequately mitigated in the submitted plans.

4. **Development capacity, design and green space:** The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development can satisfactorily accommodate all the proposed elements, including the elimination of approximately 15 hectares of green space and Grade III best and most versatile agricultural land, raising concerns that the amount and quality of green space and invaluable agricultural land would be reduced.

5. **Settlement separation and emerging policy:** The proposals fail to demonstrate a satisfactory outcome in maintaining the intended separation between St Ives and Houghton and Wyton, undermining the strategic purpose of preserving the distinction between the settlements.

The recommendation to refuse the application was carried unanimously.