

FTC Press Release

Proposed Victoria Mill Road development

17th May 2022

Framlingham Town Council is very disappointed that East Suffolk Council (ESC) Planning Officers continue to support the proposed development in Victoria Mill Road, Framlingham. It has been established (and the Planning Officers now accept) that this is contrary to both the ESC Local Plan and the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan. The Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan was produced by local people, approved by a government inspector and voted upon in a referendum, and has statutory basis. Measures announced in the Queens Speech include strengthening powers of local communities to shape how development takes place to grow the housing stock.

However Planning Officers claim (incorrectly according to our legal advice) that they have discretion to override local plans if in their opinion proposed development “does no harm”. If this were true, it would make local plans pointless, and clearly undermines the Government’s intention to give local communities real power to shape where development takes place.

The access road to the proposed development is inadequate, and the Planning Officers propose that the road should be realigned by using amenity land in private ownership, and which is designated as an “Asset of Community Value”. This is contrary to law and to ESC policy, but again the Planning Officers believe they are not bound by this.

The decision on the application is in the hands of elected ESC Councillors on the Planning Committee, and we urge them to recognise the wider issues in upholding the clear government intention to empower local communities. Both ESC and Framlingham Town Council are committed to deliver the Government’s housing targets – in Framlingham’s case we shall exceed them – and it is wrong that unelected officials should have discretion to override democratic local plans.