



Harrold Parish Council Clerk:  
Robbin Brough  
07388125821  
clerk@harrold.org.uk

Chairman:  
Rev. Robert Tickle  
5 Bramley Court  
Harrold, Beds, MK43 7BG  
01234 721417  
[harroldian@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:harroldian@yahoo.co.uk)

## MINUTES

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7.30pm at the Harrold Centre

#### **Public forum (Names always withheld for Data Protection)**

Two parishioners attended but did not raise any specific subject.

- 1. Present:** Cllrs R Tickle (Chair), D Brough (Vice Chair), A Foster (Bedford Borough Council), J Peverell, D Mercer, B Muller, J Calver, P Pedersen, H Mead, S Reger (Arrived for item 10), F Ross, A Bryce, E Thompson.  
**Apologies:** R Barrett, R Brough (Clerk).
- 2. Disclosure of Interest** – members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in any items on the Agenda. S Reger declared an interest in item 11 as the yellow lines under discussion are outside his property – S Reger will provide information where asked but will not vote.
- 3. Cooption of Fran Ross, Andy Bryce and Eddie Thompson.** There were three vacancies out of 13 maximum for Harrold; two remaining from the uncontested elections and Claire Merrick has resigned since the May 2019 meeting. **Resolved** unanimously to approve the cooption of Cllrs Ross, Bryce and Thompson.
- 4. Approval of Minutes** from the Annual Parish Council meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Resolved unanimously to approve the minutes and the Chairman signed them.
- 5. Matters arising from meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019:** Clerk's report on the Actions List.
  - In progress: Arranging for a utility company to replace the Parish Council owned streetlights. EON have not provided a quote and another company has been found and is quoting.
  - BBC Highways carried out the removal of parking restriction signs on The Green.

- Chased the Borough/Fire Service about installing the lifebag to the Lower Green; ensured this is imminent – there are a number of these being added around Bedfordshire.

## 6. Finance Report:

- The following monthly payments were approved and income was noted:

Invoice Date	Payment	Details	Method	Gross	Payments		Receipts Gross
					VAT	Net	
10 May 2019	Office: Supplies	Clerk expenses: Fasthost annual email service provider	DPC	19.98	0.00	19.98	
13 May 2019	Project: Neighbourhood plan	Additional consulting fees - T Roff	DPC	250.00	0.00	250.00	
14 May 2019	Cemetery Income:		C/R				353.00
15 May 2019	Clock	SMITHS OF DERBY VAT: GB 125677259	DPC	650.40	108.40	542.00	
15 May 2019	Clerk Salary: R Brough		DPC	494.51	0.00	494.51	
15 May 2019	HMRC PAYE Liability		DPC	116.80	0.00	116.80	
15 May 2019	Street Ranger	Salary	DPC	483.40	0.00	483.40	
17 May 2019	Cemetery Income:	Plaque	C/R				24.00
21 May 2019	Project: Neighbourhood plan	CVS Desktop Board rental	DPC	30.00	0.00	30.00	
23 May 2019	Other: Various	Defib training: AED DONATE	DPC	125.00	0.00	125.00	
23 May 2019	Bottle Bank: Income	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar 2019	BAC				237.53
29 May 2019	Plants & Trees:	Annual Upper Green	DPC	240.00	0.00	240.00	
29 May 2019	Project: Buttermarket and Lockup renovation	Stage payment	DPC	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	
03 June 2019	Brook: R Sinclair	May payment	S/O	400.00	0.00	400.00	
04 June 2019	Electricity: Buttermarket EON		D/D	28.83	0.00	28.83	
05 June 2019	Clerk Salary: R Brough Pension		D/D	73.38	0.00	73.38	
05 June 2019	Other: Various	Defibrillator battery replacement	DPC	166.00	0.00	166.00	
11 June 2019	Project: HPPFA/Scouts Facilities	Scout hut - 4th installment - P Huckle Carpentry - VAT 265104	DPC	4,910.49	818.41	4,092.08	
Not yet paid	Project: Neighbourhood plan	Consulting fees RE Drop-In sessions	DPC	650.00	0.00	650.00	
Not yet paid	Project: Neighbourhood plan	Consulting fees RE Grant application	DPC	150.00	0.00	150.00	
Not yet paid	Project: Neighbourhood plan	BBC Printing display posters for Drop-In sessions	DPC	77.00	0.00	77.00	
				<b>9,865.79</b>	<b>926.81</b>	<b>8,938.98</b>	<b>614.53</b>

- Profit & Loss report: Variance analysis - Actual spend vs Budget

Cllr Brough talked through the P&L variance analysis. At this point in the year the council's spend is mainly on track with the budget. Section 137 shows a higher spend than expected at this point in the year due to the final payment for the stone wall, so caution is advised when making grants as there is approximately £3k left for the year out of £10.5k. Variance analysis can be provided on request.

- Balance Sheet: Financial position

Total cash is £137k with approximately £39k unallocated and sat in general reserve. Standard procedure is to leave approximately 50-100% of the precept figure as a General Reserve against future spending. Balance sheet analysis can be provided on request.

## 7. Crime statistics and information and intelligence exchange

Crime report not provided by the Police contact.

## 8. To set "crime priorities" for the Community Priority Setting meeting run by Beds Police

*To set the crime priorities for Harrold for the Community Priority Setting meeting held by Beds Police on 26th June at Bedfordshire Police HQ, Kempston.*

Cllrs Tickle and Muller will attend the Priority meeting. **Resolved** to select the following as priorities for Harrold: Drug use, Speeding (inc. dangerous motorbike riding), Visible Policing.

## 9. Borough Councillor's report for Harrold Ward.

Distributed to councillors and to be added to the "Communications" section of the council website.

## 10. Planning Applications for comment

To add to the minutes the wording of the Parish Council's objection statement on the below planning application, which had a due date of 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Objection was created by professional planning consultant Peter Bull, as appointed at the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019 meeting. See appendix for full objection response.

APPLICATION NO: 19/00842/MAO Major Outline Application

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and outline planning permission for residential development of up to 90 dwellings (Use Class C3) including means of access into the site (not internal roads) and associated highway works, with all other matters (relating to appearance, landscaping, scale and layout) reserved.

LOCATION: Land Adjacent to Harrold Lake, Odell Road, Harrold, Bedfordshire.

**11. Approve/amend/reject proposal for: additional single yellow line on the High St, double yellows on The Green and removal of a High St bus bay**

To approve, request amendments to, or reject the proposal from BBC Highways for a single yellow line extension on the High St, double yellow lines on the narrow section on The Green and removal of a High St bus bay.

The Parish Council met with BBC Highways for advice on how to treat the issue of the bottleneck along the High St, which is worsened at school drop off times due to parking on both sides of the road. The cessation of school bus services last year was anticipated by the Parish Council to resolve the issue of the bus-related bottleneck, and turning at least one of the bus bays into resident parking was planned. Given recent parishioner feedback, it does now seem that a more comprehensive solution is required to assist residents with parking while not causing traffic jams. Parish Council also asked BBC Highways for advice on parking restrictions on The Green, only at the section on the side of the school where the road is too narrow for parking; the Parish Council have repeatedly replaced bollards struck by vehicles trying to pass through this section due to parking here.

**Resolved** to accept BBC Highways proposal (Appendix 2); chose the option for single yellows on the High St with school timings. (8 votes for proposal, 1 vote for proposal but with single yellows with 8am to 6pm restriction, Cllr Muller abstained, Cllr Reger did not vote due to the declared interest). Once restrictions are implemented on The Green, council to monitor how this affects parking along the High St on the opposite side of the road from the war memorial.

**12. Potential extension to 20mph limit and 40mph buffer zone at Lavendon end of village**

Agree next steps following BBC Highways response to Parish Council request for information surrounding extending the 20mph limit further towards the Lavendon/New Road end of the village and creating a 40mph buffer zone at the same end.

- BBC Highways 20mph limit extension response (verbal): Mowhills would be the furthest they would be willing to take it; if you make the length too long then it becomes less effective. You also can't drop from a National Speed limit down to a 20mph, so stretching it right to the far end would have required extra signage anyway, which the Parish Council has previously been keen to avoid.
- BBC Highways have responded positively (verbally) to the question as to whether a 40mph limit buffer zone could be added to the Lavendon end of the village (beyond the current National Speed limit signs). This request for information was instigated from correspondence received and discussed at the October 2018 meeting. Parish Council to decide whether to proceed with a formal request to BBC Highways.

Noted by council. Clerk to request Highways again to consider stretching the 20mph limit further towards New Road: preferably right up to the National Speed limit signs. If a 30mph buffer was implemented at the Lavendon end of the village instead of a 40mph limit then you could potentially reduce to a 20mph without additional signs within the village (**Action Clerk**).

**13. To decide how to respond to Carlton & Chellington Parish Council's request to reduce the speed limit on the main bridge**

*Carlton PC have written to Harrold PC with a suggestion to reduce the bridge speed limit to 20mph and/or place sign/s to alert drivers to pedestrians on the bridge and would like Harrold PC to assist in lobbying BBC Highways to implement it. Both Carlton and Harrold PC have been approached by a parishioner with this request.*

**Resolved** not to support reducing the bridge speed limit to 20mph. 5 councillors were "For" the speed restriction and 7 were "Against". Those who were against it felt that the majority of drivers are cautious over the bridge and for those who aren't so cautious the 20mph limit would have little impact. An additional point was that there would also be the requirement for at least one additional 20/30 sign on the Harrold side; currently there is just a repeater on one side by the new wall. A 20mph limit "entrance/exit" would require one on both sides. Regarding the pedestrian signs: there is already one on each side of the bridge. The one on the Harrold/Odell side is obscured by foliage and needs to be cleared (**Action Clerk**). The one on the Carlton side is next to the causeway.

**14. To decide whether to remove the 5 concrete bollards by the cottages on The Green and replace them with cast iron Manchester bollards**

*Request raised by Cllr Mercer following the addition of Manchester bollards to the other side of The Green. BBC Highways could supply and install the bollards at a cost of £613 to the Parish Council; they recommend that the 5 bollards could be replaced by just 3 Manchester bollards and still be effective in stopping vehicle access.*

**Resolved** unanimously to have the bollards installed. Clerk to seek planning advice as the concrete posts are within the conservation area (**Action Clerk**).

**15. Update from Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee**

Key points: Issues and Options consultation documents were delivered by a professional distribution company towards the end of May 2019. These are to be returned by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019. There were some reports of houses being missed, so Clerk followed up with the delivery company and delivered the missing ones with the help of Cllr Mercer. Two drop-in sessions were held at the Harrold Centre to assist with completing these documents, and to provide further information on the plan process. Clerk to remind parishioners via social media of the deadline for completing the questionnaire and to place a "zoomed-in" version of the sites map on the physical noticeboard (**Action Clerk**).

Grant request from the council for £6,587 has been accepted by Groundwork UK who distribute funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

**16. Request for a grant from Dancevybz**

*Dancevybz would like to request £4k to assist the attendance of dance students at the World Championships in August.*

**Resolved** not to provide a grant to Dancevybz this year due to being close to the maximum legal grant spending cap (Section 137) already at this point in the year (7 "Against", 4 "For" providing some amount of funding, Cllr Brough abstained). Council would like to consider new applicants having previously supported Harrold dancers from Dancevybz attending both the World and European dance championships in previous years.

**17. To review the May 11<sup>th</sup> defibrillator training session**

*The Parish Council arranged training for parishioners on the use of defibrillators and in basic life support on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May. Training was provided by AED Donate.*

*To consider: whether to offer more training to include the school and/or the football/cricket clubs and whether we would/could provide more defibrillators in the village.*

**Resolved** to approach the sports clubs (inc tennis) to offer defib training. **(Action Clerk)**.

**18. Skate ramp resurface**

*The black grip paint on the main ramp at the country park is wearing off. Quote of £840 (Ex VAT) from King Ramps to: strip the existing paint away, add a red oxide under-surface, and apply Gravitex skate paint (grippy, but not hazardous in a fall).*

**Resolved** to accept quote and carry out the works for the Summer **(Action Clerk)**.

**19. Any other business**

Cllr Peverell requested the footpath between Dove Lane and the country park be cleared totally of wet leaves/moss (the sides of the path is the problem). Clerk to request the Street Ranger to carry this out **(Action Clerk)**.

**20. Correspondence:**

None requiring council action.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Wednesday 10th July 2019**

Appendix 1 – Objection to APPLICATION NO: 19/00842/MAO Major Outline Application

Dear Mr Warner,

Application number 19/00842/MAO

Site: Land Adjacent Harrold Lake Odell Road Harrold Bedfordshire PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and outline planning permission for residential development of up to 90 dwellings (Use Class C3) including means of access into the site (not internal roads) and associated highway works, with all other matters (relating to appearance, landscaping, scale and layout) reserved

I write in response to your Council's recent consultation letters in respect of the above application.

**Background**

In May 2016, Harrold Parish Council applied for the designation of the whole of the Harrold Parish as a Neighbourhood Area and, following a period of consultation, Bedford Borough Council endorsed the proposal in a decision statement dated 26 July 2016. The plan is currently in the early stages of identifying the issues and options for local people to consider. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be published in the Autumn this year.

The application site was put forward by the landowner for consideration in the first call for sites process as part of the emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan. The site was identified by the Borough Council as 'site 143'. Assessments of this and the other sites put forward to be considered in the 'call for sites' process for the Bedford Borough Local Plan have been undertaken in preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

In this submission, the landowner proposed a maximum of 40 houses. This was to include family, self-build and older peoples housing.

In assessing the site, the conclusions of the parish council's planning consultant were that -

*“This site is large and if developed in its entirety would be out of character with the immediate built form of Odell Road extending the built form out of the village. It is adjacent to a busy road junction and over 1 km from the village centre which makes it less sustainable than other more central sites. Achieving suitable highway access was an issue on a previous application in 2006 to develop this site for industrial purposes. Overcoming this issue will be compounded by the presence of protected trees fronting the site. Although it is accepted that some loss of Grade 3 agricultural land locally is likely to be necessary to meet the likely allocated housing allocation, there are other sites closer to the village centre which are more sustainable with less visual and landscape impacts and with safer access options than this site.”*

At this moment in time, Harrold residents have not formally considered the merits of each of the proposed sites as part of the neighbourhood plan process. However, this particular site assessment identifies some issues in terms of sustainability and visual impact of the site for less than half the amount of housing that is now being proposed as part of this application. These issues and other technical matters are explored further in this letter.

### **Planning policy**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that proposals should be determined in accordance with the development plan for that area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purpose of this application the development plan consists of the saved policies of the Bedford Borough Local Plan (2002), the Bedford Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008) and the Bedford Allocations and Designations Local Plan (2013).

Other material considerations which also need to be taken into account include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (most recent version published February 2019) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the Council’s draft Local Plan 2030 (currently under examination), as well as Bedford Borough Council’s adopted Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities SPD (adopted 2014), Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2013), Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2013), Sustainable Drainage Systems, SPD (2018), Climate Change and Pollution SPD (2008) and adopted design guidance ‘Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments’ (2000).

### **NPPF**

The following paragraphs are considered to be the most relevant to this planning application -

*11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development...*

*For decision-taking this means:*

*c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay;*  
*or*

*d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

*i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

*48. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:*

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*

*72. The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.*

*77. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.*

*108. In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be –or have been –taken up, given the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*

*170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services—including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate*

The application site is located within the rural area outside any settlement policy areas where currently the principle of residential development is initially one of restraint. Core strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP13, CP14 and saved policy H26 in the adopted Bedford Borough Local Plan refer.

### **Housing land supply**

In February this year the Government confirmed in its revised NPPF that for the purposes of decision taking each local authority's 5 year supply of housing must be calculated using the 'standard method', which it is

understood changed Bedford Borough's supply of housing from 5.8 years (still relevant for plan making) to 3.7 years.

The draft Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 is currently being examined and is a material consideration in determining the current application and proposes new housing allocations. The Plan is scheduled in the Local Development Scheme to be adopted in October 2019. At that point, it is understood that the five year land supply for decision taking should be calculated using the local housing need requirement set out in the Local Plan 2030. In the meantime, however, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF is relevant. Paragraphs 11 (c) and (d) state that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development or the development proposed or the adverse impacts arising from development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (i.e. tip the scales the other way) to justify a refusal of planning permission.

Footnote 7 of NPPF Paragraph 11 confirms that the Council's policies related to preferred housing allocations and locations are out of date because the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. We understand that this means that the balance at the start of the assessment of the current application is tilted in favour of approval ('the tilted balance').

In recent court cases relating to appeals where the tilted balance was applied, it was established that in order to reach a conclusion on a proposal where the tilted balance has been applied it is necessary for the decision maker to reach a conclusion in relation to the five-year housing land supply position and undertake some measurement of the five-year housing land supply so as to understand the extent of the influence of any shortfall in relation to the weight to be attached to the benefit of making housing provision and the weight to be attached to policies with which the housing proposal conflicted. It is not automatic therefore that because the tilted balance is engaged that a proposal should be automatically supported. It is necessary for the Borough Council to assess both the benefits and areas of conflict (the balancing exercise) in order for the Borough Council to reach a conclusion as to whether the application should be supported or not.

In addition to the above application there are a number of other housing proposals pending consideration in the Borough currently. At the time of writing the following major applications for residential development are under consideration. These would also be material considerations in the processing of this application. It is assumed that the Borough Council will take a strategic overview of all of these (and any other relevant applications submitted before this application is determined) before making recommendations on each them.

- Ref. No: 19/00894/MAO - Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the erection of up to 81 dwellings - Land Adjacent To Wootton Upper School And Arts College Hall End Road Wootton Bedfordshire
- Ref. No: 19/00711/MAO - Outline with all matters reserved (except access) for up to 20 residential units - Land Adj 67 High Street Thurleigh Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 2DX
- Ref. No: 19/00593/MAO - Outline application for the erection of up to 200 dwellings with all matters reserved except access - Land At Graze Hill Ravensden Bedfordshire

#### **Housing need for Harrold parish**

In November 2016 the parish council commissioned Beds Rural Communities Charity to undertake a housing needs survey. This is intended to inform housing needs for the proposed Harrold Neighbourhood Plan. The report looked at both needs for affordable and market housing.

In relation to affordable housing, the report concluded that there were 22 households with a local connection that had a need for accommodation. The report recommended that 50% of the need identified should be provided for, which would be 11 units. This would consist of a mixture of shared ownership, rent, and starter homes.

In relation to market housing, the report concluded identified 30 households with need for alternative accommodation. Overall, it was found that there is a need for 2-3 bed houses and bungalows or otherwise suitable properties (e.g. houses built to Lifetime Homes criteria) if Harrold is to meet the identified current and future needs of existing owner occupier residents wishing to stay in the village. It was suggested that the provision of up to 15 units would meet a reasonable proportion of the need while being in keeping with the size of the village.

So in terms of affordable and market housing for the parish, the proposal is in excess of what is needed to meet local needs. This would be contrary to paragraph 77 of the NPPF.

#### **Housing strategy - Bedford Borough Local Plan (BBLP2030)**

Emerging draft local plan *policy 3S – Amount and distribution of housing development* – confirms that across all the rural service centres, 260 dwellings will need to be provided in the plan period. In relation to Harrold, this means that land for 30 new dwellings must be provided. The draft plan confirms that land will generally be allocated through proposed neighbourhood plans.

Clearly, the proposed application seeks permission for more than twice the amount of houses than is suggested in the emerging BBLP 2030. Paragraph 6.13 of the plan explains that certain larger key service centres within the borough contain a good range of services and which are well connected to larger town centres by regular public transport. They also provide a strong service role for the local community and surrounding area. However, paragraph 6.14 confirms that rural services centres, such as Harrold, have fewer facilities and provide a more localised convenience and service role to meet day to day needs of residents and businesses in the rural areas.

Whilst the weight to be attached to the BBLP2030 is limited given it has not yet been adopted, the existing adopted Core Strategy confirms the growth strategy and defines key service centres as *'large villages with a good level of services.'* Paragraph 72 of the NPPF also refers to the need for developments to *'be supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.'*

The existing facilities located in Harrold that would be expected to serve the development are explored further in the following parts of this response.

#### **Education provision**

The site would be served by the Harrold Primary Academy and the Sharnbrook Academy both of which form part of the Sharnbrook Academy Federation.

We have been in touch with the Federation who have confirmed that on current known numbers, Harrold Primary will have 59 places available in September 2019 across all year groups (Reception – Year 6) against the published admission number (PAN) for each year group. The PAN for each year group is currently 30, and this is reviewed each year. The PAN for Sharnbrook Academy is 210 per year group.

The applicant's Community Statement confirms that both Harrold Parish Council and the Borough Council were approached as part of their pre-application consultation process. It is surprising given the number of homes that the applicant did not approach the local school Federation to clarify the impacts the development

will have on education facilities that serve the parish of Harrold. In the very least, the Borough Council should seek clarification directly with the Federation as to the precise impacts the development will have on education facilities.

The development will undoubtedly generate demand for additional school places which possibly cannot be met within the existing local Federation schools serving the parish. In the absence of a proposal from the developer to provide sufficient new school places the proposal would be contrary to paragraph 72 of the NPPF.

#### **Local health care facilities**

The Harrold Medical Practice serves Harrold and the other surrounding villages including ones outside Bedford Borough. We have been in touch with the practice manager to understand the possible implications of the proposed development on local health care provision. It is understood that the current patient list stands at 6165. They are aware of a number of planning applications in the locality including two large housing developments proposed in nearby Lavendon which along with this proposed development could potentially increase their patient list size to approximately 7000.

In common with many rural medical practices, Harrold Medical Practice finds it very difficult to recruit and retain staff who generally prefer to work in the surrounding towns. They also have great difficulties securing locums and part time staff who are already in great demand at the locations where they trained and live. Most locums and other clinicians dislike the extra driving needed to get to Harrold and very few are willing to consider taking responsibility for daytime on-call duties when the practice is spread over such a large area. In recent months, it has taken vastly excessive resources to be able to secure cover for pre-planned clinician's leave.

In relation to dentists, there is no dental practice in Harrold. The nearest ones are located in Clapham (Dientes) which is 7.5 miles from Harrold Centre and approximately 26 minutes by bus and in Olney (Cobbs Dental Practice) which is 5.8 miles and approximately a 2 hour bus ride away.

Access to general health care is an important consideration in the processing of any planning application for new housing. Both the NPPF and draft local plan (policy 1S – Healthy communities) confirm the importance of assessing the health impacts of developments such as these.

It is clear that the local medical practice already has some challenges in its day to day operation and it could see patient numbers increase by around 13% with this and other new housing developments nearby. It is all the more relevant in this instance as the provision of 90 new homes and the range of different demographic groups likely to occupy these properties are entitled to access to good health care. There is no certainty that this will be the case.

The applicant's pre-application consultation process did not include the Harrold Medical Practice and it is highly likely that a development of this size will have a medium to high impact on local health care provision. In the circumstances, it is suggested that the views of the medical practice is sought before the application is determined. In the meantime and until such a time as it is verified, the proposal would be contrary to paragraph 72 of the NPPF.

#### **Convenience shopping provision**

Harrold is currently served by a small butchers shop with the main convenience shopping needs of the village catered by the Co-op store located adjacent The Green in the village centre. There is no convenience store in Odell village currently. It is anticipated that accessibility to the shop from the site will probably be via a mixture of walking and car trips. It is difficult to understand how this store will be able to cater for the convenience

shopping needs of an additional 90 houses to be located on the Odell Road. The floor space of this shop is quite limited already with little scope for additional floor space to be added. There is already known to be acute parking problems and parking around the shop at peak times. This suggests that a housing development of this size would not be properly served by this existing convenience shop relying instead on trips to larger stores in the nearest adjacent towns of Rushden and Bedford approximately 9.6 miles and 9.2 miles from the application site respectively.

We believe that the proposal would be contrary to paragraph 72 of the NPPF.

### **Public transport**

The village of Harrold is primarily served by the bus route 25 which is operated between Bedford and Rushden. The nearest south bound bus stop is located approximately 150m south from the application site whereas the northbound stop is located approximately 500m south of the application site. Neither bus stops are protected by a shelter. Also, the north bound stop is reliant on a footpath on the eastern side of the road meaning that bus users from the development site will need to cross the road twice to be able to safely access the stop. The service is not frequent and does not operate on Sundays at all.

Given the number of properties proposed, the likely mixed demographic of occupants and the limited access to convenience shopping and medical facilities, it would be reasonable to expect that public transport services would be more frequent and would include better access and protection for users. Given the foregoing, we would suggest that the proposal would be contrary to paragraphs 72 and 108 of the NPPF.

### **Visual and landscape impacts**

The site assessment undertaken as part of the neighbourhood plan process (see section above), confirmed that *'The character of Odell Road is linear development. The development of the rear rectangular area of the proposed site would be out of character with Odell Road.'*

The applicant has undertaken a detailed landscape and visual appraisal to assess the likely landscape and visual impacts will have on the locality. In the conclusion it suggests that the effect of the development would be *'minor and localised'* and effect and *'would not constitute an unacceptable impact on landscape fabric or character, given the relatively unremarkable status of the land as agricultural land.'* It goes on to say *'the addition of the proposal is also considered to have minimal effect upon the wider character of the landscape within which it sits, in places even improving features'* due to topography and existing vegetation... *'the proposed development comprises a relatively modest extension to the existing area of Harrold. The scale, form and appearance of the development would reflect and enhance the positive characteristics of the surrounding area and raise the overall standard of development expected. Being well-integrated with the surrounding areas, the development would appear as a natural and logical addition to Harrold.'* (parish council underlining).

The parish council do not accept that a development of this site and the amount of housing would have minor/minimal effect on the immediate and wider landscape respectively. The development would neither be discrete, modest and it would not reflect and enhance the landscape surrounding Harrold village. In conclusion it is suggested that considered that the applicant has under-estimated the anticipated visual effects. This can of course be verified by the Council's landscape consultant.

Given the above, we believe that the proposal is contrary to paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

### **Other technical considerations**

In relation to other technical issues - archaeological and heritage, flood risk, noise, air quality, ecological, lighting, technical transport and highways matters, agricultural, arboricultural, ground contamination - the parish council feels that it does not have sufficient technical knowledge to comment confidently on these

issues. However, clearly the borough council will need to weigh up all the consultation responses to technical matters in the balancing exercise before reaching a recommendation.

### **Conclusion**

As set out above, there are a number of issues and areas where the proposed development particularly given the scale/number of units would be in conflict with the NPPF and related development plan policies. Whilst we appreciate that the Borough Council have a balancing exercise to undertake before determining this application, we strongly believe that when taken cumulatively the absence of adequate infrastructure and facilities, the disregard for local needs, the absence of safe and sustainable transport options and the landscape and visual impacts will result in a development which is unsustainable and where the dis-benefits would outweigh the benefits. On this basis, and in line with paragraphs 11(d)(ii), 72, 77, 108 and 170 of the NPPF and the associated development plan policies we believe that the proposed development should not be granted planning permission.

### **Appendix 2 – BBC Highways proposal for parking restrictions (2 diagrams)**



