

## **Christopher Cushing Fakenham North District Update – FTC 27/09/2023**

### **1. Urban Extension**

#### **New Roundabout**

- The first stage of the project will be to build a new roundabout on the A148 near Water Moor Lane. This was postponed from last year because of an inflationary increase in estimated costs of £1m.
- NNDC have been granted permission to apply for some government funding for this, though there is no guarantee they will be successful.
- Trinity College, who own the land, have indicated they would be prepared to make up the shortfall, though only on condition that the development will proceed.

#### **Nutrient Neutrality**

- The Government's attempt to nullify Natural England's Nutrient Neutrality edict was rejected by the House of Lords earlier this month. The Government have indicated this will be included in the King's Speech as legislation in the new parliamentary session.
- NNDC will pursue their original mitigation plan. This is to create a Joint Venture Scheme with Anglian Water, Breckland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils. This will be able to receive funding from Natural England to purchase land which can be turned into wetland and create credits to offset the nitrates and phosphates that new housing will create.
- NNDC can offer no assurances this will unlock the Fakenham development, as any credits that become available for allocation will be considered against the emerging JV allocation policy, which will be agreed in the next couple of weeks.
- It is not clear as to the level of credits that may be available, whether they would be sufficient in covering the urban extension and whether this scheme will be in line to receive any credits from the first offsetting opportunity as developers will have to agree to purchase as a starting point.
- With regard to the River Wensum, mitigation will need to be in place upstream/catchment of the point of impact of the development on the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – in this case the discharge point into the River Wensum of the wastewater treatment works that the development will connect to. This is because the river itself is the SAC site. There are only limited areas for this as the River Wensum rises only eight miles west of the town.
- NNDC want to press ahead and build the roundabout regardless of whether the houses can be delivered now. There is no prospect of any development taking place without it. They believe a solution will be found for nutrient neutrality, whether they be via Government amendments to legislation or through mitigation solutions being achieved via local solutions / JV initiatives.

- In conclusion there are a lot of variables at play which will influence what happens next. I will keep the Town Council updated.

## **2. Hedge & Verge Cutting**

- I am grateful for Lesley's help with my requests to get various verges cut, particularly along Rudham Stile Lane near Elizabeth Avenue. I'm still waiting to hear about Thorpland Road.
- Several residents have complained to me about overgrown verges and hedges. I know that the Town Council is having difficulties with CGM. They certainly do not appear to be undertaking the five grass cuts they are contracted to do on an annual basis.

## **3. Greenway Close**

- There is a major issue with rubbish being piled up against a Victory Housing property in Greenway Close. I have been pursuing Victory for three months to get this cleared. They have agreed to hire a skip and take it away but have not confirmed when this will be. The rubbish has given rise to a rat infestation which I again have highlighted to Victory.
- I have asked the NNDC Environmental Services team for their help, though the responsibility for addressing the issue lies with Victory Housing. Any pressure the Town Council can bring to bear will be appreciated.

## **4. Fisher Road / Seppings Road Path**

- I received a complaint about dog fouling along this path. I have asked if warning signs could be put up along here warning people they could be fined if they do not pick their dog's mess. NNDC have these though the FTC would need to purchase them. There is an example of one at Field Lane which is simply a laminated sheet so presumably not expensive.

## **5. New Signage**

- New signs have been erected at Water Moor Lane to replace the one that disappeared, and at the entrance to Morrisons car park to warn drivers it is a pedestrian crossing.

Christopher Cushing

25/09/2023