

Planning Department
South Oxfordshire District Council
135 Western Avenue
Milton Park
Milton
OX14 4SB
16th June 2021

Thame Park Estates Residents Association
21 Hode Garth
Thame
Oxfordshire
OX9 3GF
E: thameparkestatesra@gmail.com
T: 07585 903805

CC: Highways Agency – Planning Department

CC: Thame Town Council – Planning and Environment.

CC: Sam Smith – Jackson Pumping Ltd

Dear Amanda Rendell,

RE: P21/SO917/O Reserve site C, Thame

This weekend 12th & 13th June the farmer (Sam Smith) completed the cutting and bailing of his crops from the 3 fields that surround the Bellway estate. Two of these fields being reserve site C (North & South) and the third being the retained agricultural land to the south of the Bellway estate. This has produced some eye-opening evidence of the importance of proper farmer access to the 'isolated' field of which the Councils, highways and the planning process continue to ignore, deem insignificant or simply have an objective mindset.

I will admit that on the 12th June tensions were running high between the residents and the farmer. This was because of two main issues, 1) Access – The farmer was not using their gate access off Wenman road but was using the Warren Mead and Hode Garth access. Wild flowers were getting trampled, footpaths within the field were being crossed as well as landscaped areas on the estate, by large farming equipment to access their fields. 2) Timing – The wrapping and retrieval of the bails continued until 1:30 am on the Sunday morning.

This evolved over the Sunday and Monday, with the residents speaking to the farmer (Sam) and engaging in conversation about the access from their perspectives. It is these conversations that reinforced TPERA belief that the tension caused belongs firmly at the councils, highways and the planning processes feet for poor consideration of, and lack of forethought of the consequence of the impact this would have on the farmer and its residents. The residents and the farmer found some common ground, in that he too would like (and has previously requested) a formal access route to his fields. This was NOT delivered as part of the Bellway development and is a huge concern that it is again being overlooked as part of reserve site C development. Sam also confirmed that he would require the SAME farming equipment to be used once reserve site C is completed.

Please see overleaf the log of evidence and observations that was produced following the weekends work as it is believed this provides great insight to the future plans for the access road of which all parties (Councils / Highways / Nexus / Developer) seem to have overlooked.

Summery / The ask

This is not the first correspondence in which I have mentioned the need for proper agricultural access. I have however seen absolutely **NO** feedback or attempt to resolve this by any parties.

I highlight our wish that you **Amanda as the case officer**, escalate this issue and hold the application approval until this is resolved. I also strongly request that **Highways** review the access route with the objective mindset that it will need to accommodate this large agricultural equipment as opposed to the text book answer of seeing if a refuse truck will fit around the corners. I would also ask for Thame Town Council to review this and provide support for your residents. Currently the Thame Town Council formal views that you have presented have showed no issues with residents being placed in this position which is a big disappointment.

The residents are still adamant that the easiest resolve is for an independent access road to be given to reserve site C. This access road could run as a straight line through the reserve site C estate to the agricultural entrance to the south of it. With no turns on crossroads via this direct route would seem to be the simplest resolve. Without this the residents will continue to fight for formal, safe and proper field 3 access for this farming equipment.

Regards

For and on behalf of Thame Park Estates Residents Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Broun', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Broun – Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pauline McBride', with a stylized initial 'P' and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pauline McBride – Secretary

Current overview of Agricultural land

I want to re-iterate this IS THE CURRENT SETUP – I have seen some concerning diagrams from Nexus planning that suggest that field 3 is lovely open space for the residents with pathways across – This is misrepresentation by them (see ‘Reserve Site C Open space note’ point 4.3)
- Reserve site C is field 1 & 2 leaving field 3 isolated.



Current Farmer Access off Wenman Road

Currently the access point directly from the field from Wenman road is not fit for purpose. The entrance itself has an incline down to the field of which many of the agricultural trailer's ground upon if used. The Warren Mead / Hode Garth access is therefore the only one. There is however NO formal access from this route.





The equipment and their size needed by the farmer for these fields should not be underestimated. The largest being a fully laden HGV trailer, and a fertiliser holding tank. The farmer has confirmed the same equipment will be required for the isolated field once reserve site C completed

Farming Equipment – NOT just a tractor!

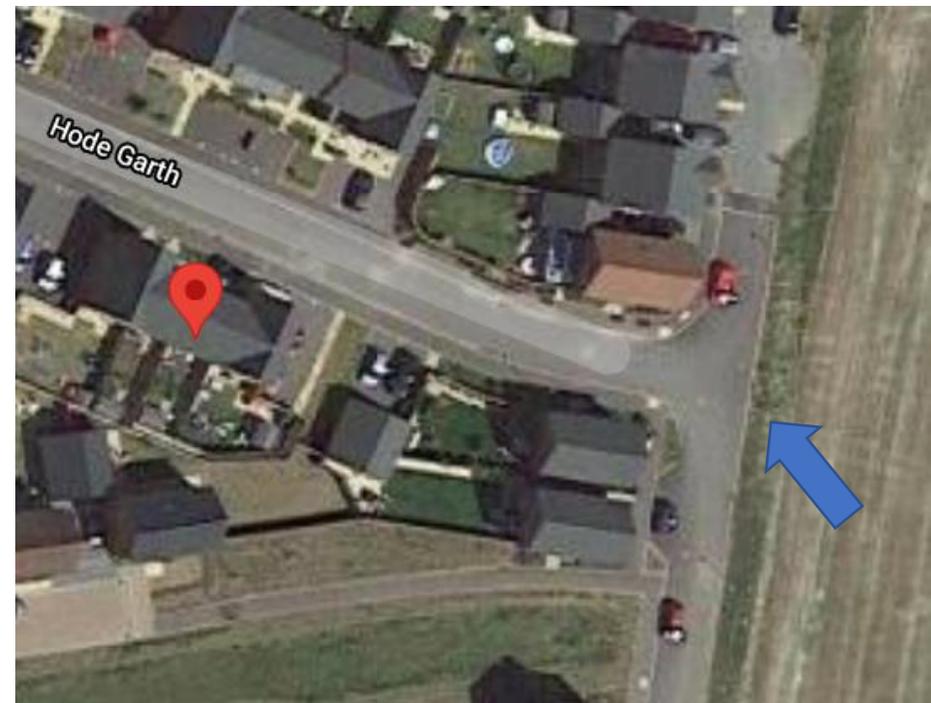


Warren Mead Crossroads – Used to Access ALL fields (1,2 & 3)

The first turning as the agricultural vehicles come onto the estate is the Warren Mead crossroads. There is evidence that the pavements had to be used to turn these vehicles into and out of Hode garth with some of the trailers.

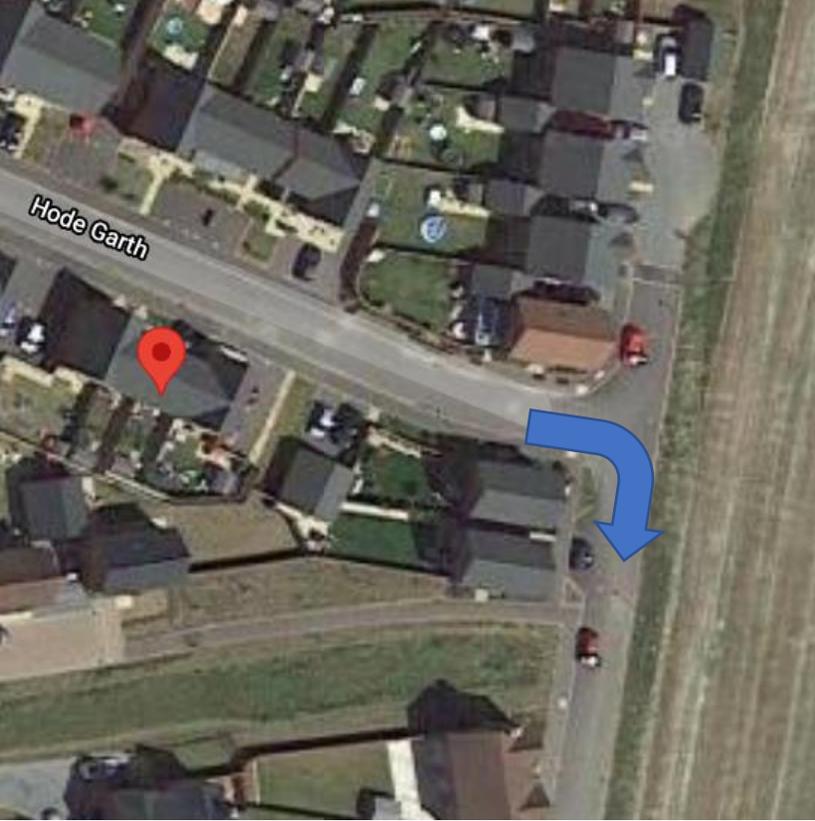
As the crossroads is encapsulated in pathways (rather than any landscaped areas) there is no damage except the tyre marks which soon fade away.





End of Hode Garth
– Used to access
field 1 & 2
C

As the farmer has NOT been given a usable entrance (and there not being any formal access from Hode Garth) the kerb is used to access the field. The only damage is a wildflower verge. This will be the access road into reserve site



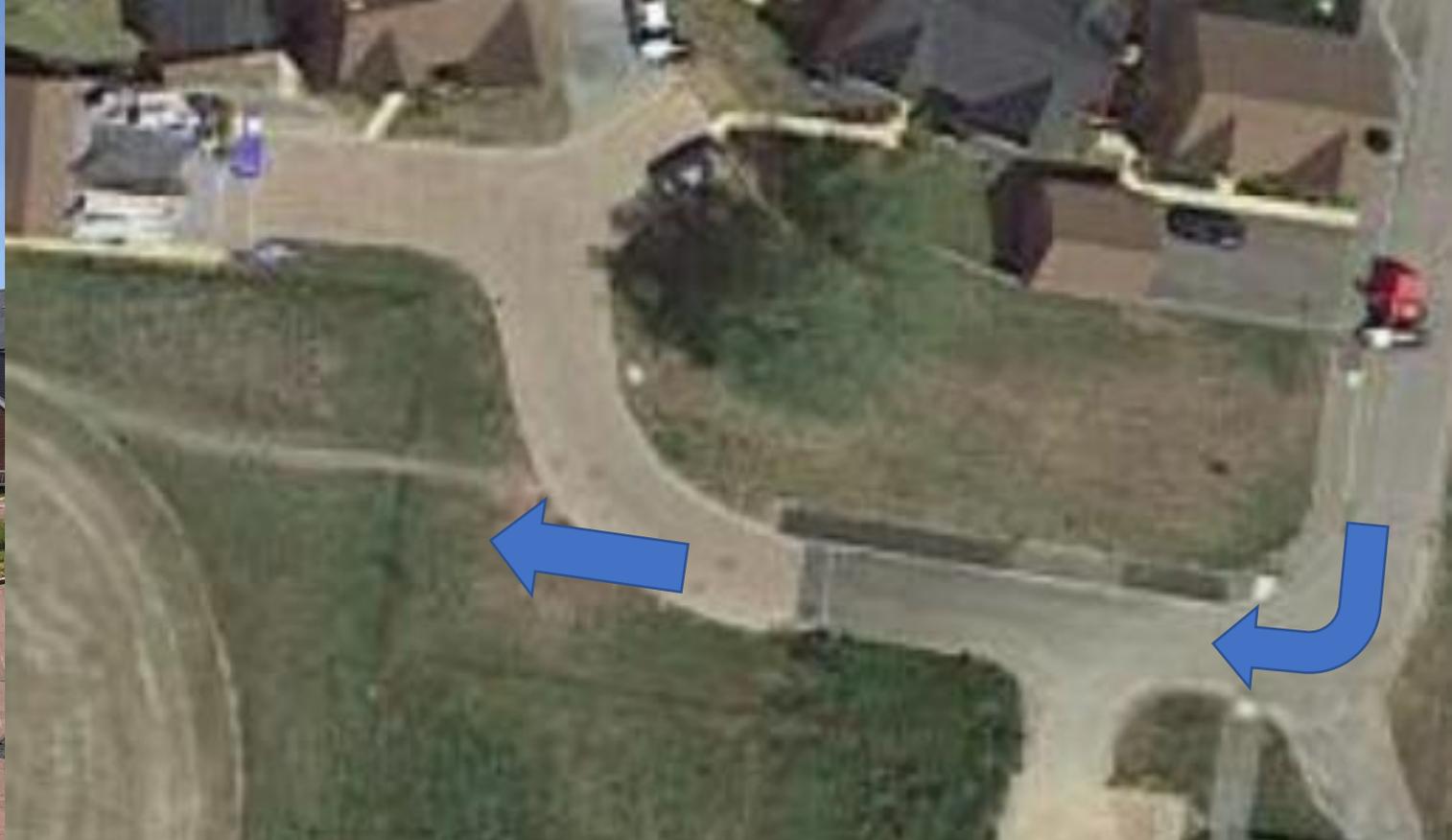
End of Hode Garth –
Used to access field 3
(Isolated Field)

To access the isolated field the farmer has to turn right at the end of Hode Garth in order to access the field. This is the biggest eye opener. It clearly shows that the Hode Garth junction IS NOT big enough for the agricultural equipment needed! This caused damage to the landscaped area on the corner.





End of Hode Garth – Used to access field 3 (Isolated Field)



Finally for the farmer to access the isolated field (with NO formal access) they choose to go through a wild hedgerow. The farmer suggested this was the safest route as the kerb is also very low and means they would not have to cross the footpath (and cause damage) that separates Field 2 & 3.

Back to the Current overview of Agricultural land

1. Warren Mead Junction. Required for all access and not big enough for some farming equipment.
 2. End of Hode Garth – Right turn not big enough for some farming equipment without damage to landscaped areas.
- Field 3 – Already isolated and will be further isolated when reserve site C complete.



Reserve Site C Plan now.

Field 3 remains Isolated!!!

The junction marked 1 is the biggest concern. Planning & Highways (in their objective mindset) have simply looked to ensure that a refuse truck can get round this corner!! I have already proved this is a flawed approach as none of the junctions are big enough on Hampden Gardens to support the required farming equipment. This junction needs to be significantly bigger.

HOW IS THE FARMER TO ACCESS FIELD 3 WITHOUT DAMAGING PATHS AND LANDSCAPE AREAS?
ALL CURRENT WAYS ARE NOT FORMAL AND THE CURRENT ACCESS NOT BIG ENOUGH

Field 3

