

S.22/0460/FUL Transcript from Hunts Grove Parish Council

Please see below transcript of the address that Hunts Grove Parish Council will put forward at the DCC meeting on 17th January reference S.22/0460/FUL - Farmhouse Triangle.

Hunts Grove Parish Council sees very substantial benefits to the proposed development which aren't adequately reflected in the officer's report.

We think that the negatives are overstated and that the balance is very different from the recommendation you've been presented with.

It's simple for us: If it's a choice between allotments in one place or having a heart to our village, we'd choose having a heart. By that we mean.

- To retain the farmhouse as a community asset. The outline approval allows this farmhouse to be demolished
- Having a home for the first new Gloucestershire Parish in 40 years
- Residents having shops in the village centre – and employment space through offices.

This is our only chance. Every bit of space in Hunts Grove is accounted for. We can't fix this later!

We will grow from 2,500 to 7,500 residents; they will need these facilities.

Let's work through the report:

- The master plan has changed multiple times and the current village looks nothing like the first version. All other changes have been to the detriment of residents, this one works for us.
- The allotments aren't being lost; they're split with a 16% increase. The report states they are not accessible and in a different parish. We disagree: the second site is more accessible by a public right of way for a lot of the village. It's only as far from Hunts Grove as the M5 is wide, and right on our boundary.
- The reduced landscape buffer will be the same depth as the rest of Hunts Grove along the M5 and any lost is negligible in area given the total open space.
- Neutral weight is given to the community and commercial aspects despite
 - Shops being in the heart of the village and space for local businesses which currently have nowhere to operate. We've seen Hunts Grove businesses move and close. Without this Hunts Grove just has a neighbourhood centre which has been shunted to the extreme edge of the village by the A38, far further from majority of the village than the second allotment site.
 - We would have a base in the farmhouse for the Parish Council meeting, we are currently homeless. Current choices are the school, when it's open, or an expensive hotel outside the parish.
 - The farmhouse will also be a community asset. Our community centre looks likely to be less than promised. This development is the chance to gain something. A final chance to get facilities that our community needs and deserves. A place for community groups to meet, and a base for youth provision.
 - The farmhouse is the original building in Hunts Grove, surrounded by new builds. We want to link our community to our past, we're doing that in street names, in naming our open spaces, and we'd like to do it by using the farmhouse.
- There is only limited positive weight given to the number of affordable homes, cancelled out by the moderate weight given to them supposedly being too concentrated. This proposal offers 6 x

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the affordable housing mix currently seen in Hunts Grove. 30% delivered by the developer rather than 5%. The housing is more distributed than the homes bought by housing associations already, 119 homes in one parcel on Marconi Drive and 40 homes purchased by Gloucester City Homes with no distribution.

- We feel there has been a very strict interpretation of the ecological impact, especially when compared with the provisions of the existing permissions. This scheme provides mitigation that does not exist in the current permissions, there's provision of a bat house on the allotment site, doubling as toilet and storage facilities for allotment holders, again something that is not provided in the current permissions.

In conclusion, this is the last opportunity to secure valuable community benefits, that part offset losses, from the approval of a revised masterplan in 2017. This variation approved the cancellation of the sports pavilion, set a limited budget on the community building so no viable scheme can be delivered, and removed the mixed-use heart of the village to beside the A38 bypass.

This application is about balance, weighing up the pros and cons. The community benefits from the farmhouse as a home for the parish, community uses and an enhanced allotments provision in size and function.

We ask the committee to **support** the application and consider any planning conditions that address any remaining policy concerns.

Thank you

Demelza Turner-Wilkes
Vice-Chair Hunts Grove Parish Council