



## *Reed Parish Council*

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### **20/02012/FP: Land Adjacent to 3 Hobbs Hayes, Reed Reed Parish Council Response**

Firstly, Reed Parish Council wishes to reiterate in relation to this application comment made on the application for the land next to 4 Hobbs Hayes, granted in 2019 (1900142/FP). This is that this application (once again) wastes an opportunity to provide affordable housing needed in Reed and ill sorts with Settle's responsibilities as a social housing provider.

That being said, Reed Parish Council wishes to emphasise that the PA should only consider approval of the present application subject to two conditions:

1. Guaranteed provision of off-road parking. This should be guaranteed for 3 Hobbs Hayes, as well as for the present application-house (20/02012/FP). And it is important that provision of off road parking for 4 Hobbs Hayes be clarified.
2. Design Adjustments to better harmonise the proposed new house with the setting.

### **3. Off Road Parking**

The location of the proposed site and responsibilities of the applicant as a Housing Association should combine to ensure that provision of off road parking is guaranteed not just for the new house proposed but for the existing Settle house, number 3, from which land is being abstracted. This should apply not just to the present application but to the earlier granted application 1900142/FP affecting 4 Hobbs Hayes. To date there are ambiguities about parking provision for 4 Hobbs Hayes and this is relevant to consideration of the present application affecting 3 Hobbs Hayes and the setting of appropriate conditions to approval.

The applicant's supporting statement contains misleading information about traffic at this location:

"It should be noted that Blacksmith's Lane is a very quiet, little trafficked lane with exceedingly low travel speeds."

The reality is that 3 and 4 Hobbs Hayes and the plots of land adjacent are located on a blind bend on the main thoroughfare into Reed to the school and also on a bus route. As to speed, a recent traffic survey returned average speeds in the village consistently in excess of the

mandatory 24 mph necessary for consideration of a 20mph limit. It follows that development at this location must avoid parking on the bend and ensure guaranteed off-road parking for the two existing houses as well as the two new houses proposed.

The present application includes off road parking via a new dropped kerb access. This presumably leaves the existing access and off road parking at 3 Hobbs Hayes. The front garden of 3 is currently being used as parking for 3 vehicles by the tenants of 4 Hobbs Hayes. That space at 3 will in future presumably be used by new tenants at 3. This means that the tenants of 4 must rely on provision of off road parking in the front garden of 4 Hobbs Hayes as specified in the Settle application 1900142/FP for land adjacent to 4 and again in the site plans for the application submitted by the new owner, 20/0106/FP (which application has been recently declined on grounds of degraded design).

Contact with Settle by the Parish Council has produced the following assurances from Mark Houghton, Investment Programme Manager:

*“I can confirm that the future tenants of 3 Hobbs Hayes will continue to use the existing dropped kerb and front garden area immediately in front of the property for off-road parking. The front garden of 3 Hobbs Hayes is currently being used by the tenants of 4 Hobbs Hayes as a temporary measure. This is whilst the new owners of the land parcel create the new hardstanding and turning head, which was included in the original planning application (19/00142/FP). When they have completed the work, the tenants of 4 Hobbs Hayes will be able to park in the newly created parking area in their front garden. This arrangement was deemed as a perfect interim measure whilst the construction works are taking place, in order to give our residents at 4 Hobbs Hayes have an area which is safe to park in, whilst the work is being carried out.*

*I hope this addresses your concerns.*

*Kind regards*

*Mark Houghton”*

This, along with the reference in the supporting statement to the present application of improved parking for 4 Hobbs Hayes as well as 3, seems to indicate provision made for the existing Settle houses. However, it would be both prudent and helpful in a decision to grant 20/02012/FP if the Authority made a condition to guarantee the off-road parking for 3 Hobbs Hayes - and, indeed, for 4 when a new application is submitted following the recent refusal of 2001069/FP. Certainly would be helpful if the Authority could confirm and clarify with Settle what arrangements have been covenanted for access in relation to new parking in the front garden of 4.

#### **4. Design Adjustment**

The heritage statement is dismissive of the neighbouring houses (3,4 and 2 Hobbs Hayes) as post war buildings “without architectural merit”. In fact these former council houses on Hobbs Hayes are distinctive in design, especially compared to the more conventional look of other former council housing further up Blacksmiths Lane to the west. The Hobbs Hayes houses, with their steeply sloping roofs and low eaves, were clearly designed to reference cottage style dwellings appropriate to the rural setting. Were they in Letchworth, where similar design features, they would probably be listed. In the circumstances the proposed new dwelling could more emphatically reference the style of the two houses it will sit between. This would be achieved by dropping the edge of the roof lower (on the front

elevation at least) and having the window of bedroom three on the front elevation set deeper into the roof above the eaves than on the proposed plan. The design granted for 1900142/FP is less sensitive in not being situated between two houses of the same style.

The new building will be positioned in a significant and conspicuous place in the village: prominently visible from the south in Church Lane, from across Reed Green, and eastwards down Blacksmiths Lane. Given this prominence and the multiple views, effort ought to be made to further harmonise the new build with the look of the two houses surrounding it. This would contribute to make a “positive contribution” to the conservation area in line with NPPF paragraph 185. The present design misses this opportunity, having at best a neutral impact on the conservation area. Given also that this additional 4 bedroom, expensive private house does not add to sustainability in Reed, opportunities to provide mitigating balance to sustainability loss by implementation of the highest design standards should be taken.

**In summary, approval of the present application ought only to be given with the conditions outlined as 1 & 2 above.**