

## **Proposed development site no 762 (Land South of Boyton Chapel, The Street)**

### **Boyton Parish Council response**

Boyton Parish Council discussed the above development site at its extraordinary meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October, and wishes to register its objection to the development on the following grounds:

**Density of housing** – a development of the scale proposed would change the character of the village. There are at present some 50 houses grouped around in the centre of the village and this proposal would represent a 40% increase in number and density, which is an extraordinary change of scale. The consultation document uses a baseline calculation of 5 houses per 0.25 hectares regardless of location: in our case this has been interpreted as 0.8 hectares equals 20 houses, which we believe is not appropriate in a greenfield AONB site on the Heritage Coast. For example, the illustration on page 71 of the Issues & Options document shows what 25 houses per hectare would look like – including wide access roads and landscaping. The Boyton site as proposed does not have sufficient width to provide this kind of access or landscaping.

**Heritage** – the fact that this is a heritage site means that the character of the landscape needs to be respected (AONB/Heritage Coast as mentioned previously). The section in the consultation document on Landscape (Issues & Options pages 74 and 75) talks about the national importance of the areas designated as AONB/Heritage Coast and the new guidance on consideration of the landscape based on character, which SCDC says it will follow, using criteria such as tranquillity and absence of light pollution. These factors should be applied to the Boyton site, together with its proximity to Boyton Marshes RSPB bird reserve, which has been recently enlarged and upgraded.

**Sustainability** – the development would not be sustainable: the lack of facilities in the village means that the residents would have to travel significant distances to reach schools and shops, and probably also to reach work. In respect of the latter, home-working is not a feasible option as there is no spare capacity currently in the broadband infrastructure. Any new housing on the scale proposed would also require new provision for water, electricity and broadband infrastructure, as well as improved drainage which would all entail a high level of disruption and cost of installation.

**Physical limits boundaries** – the previous ‘red line envelope’ around Boyton was removed in the latest round of SCDC planning, which means that Boyton now stands on land which is defined as open countryside, and where development is only allowed under exceptional circumstances (Issues & Options page 50). In our view the level of housing need in Suffolk Coastal overall is not such that 20 new houses need to be built in the open countryside.

**Access** – the access to the proposed development would be along The Street (a single track road already heavily used by farm traffic). Assuming each of the new houses was a multi-vehicle household, the daily traffic could be increased by up to 40 extra cars using The Street, probably mainly in the Woodbridge direction, with increased risk of accidents and congestion at the area around The Old School.

In terms of longer-range access to Boyton there is only one main access road via Wilford Bridge, which already constitutes a bottleneck and which would be made worse by increased traffic flows. It would also make access more difficult and potentially time-consuming for emergency vehicles such as ambulances.

**Topography** – the nature of the site is such that existing run-off in heavy rainfall has caused flooding in Cotton’s Acre opposite, and further ribbon development along The Street is likely to make this worse, not only for Cotton’s Acre but for neighbouring houses such as Papaver, Marralomena, The Old Forge and Forge Cottage. There is also the likelihood that increased run-off would have a knock-on effect on houses further down The Street, including Prospect Cottage, Jubilee Cottage, Rowlands and Bellfield. In addition the site is at a higher level along much of its length than The Street, and it would require extensive earth removal and/or landscaping which would adversely affect its economic viability for housing development.

## Residents' comments

A number of residents have also raised specific objections, as summarised below:

- 'Boyton is a small, very rural village. Adding 20 new buildings wholesale would increase the size disproportionately and exponentially.'
- 'Boyton is a tiny village. There are no facilities aside from our village hall. I don't think 20 new houses could be supported by our current infrastructure or amenities.'
- 'The planning red line has been removed and there is no guarantee to protect rurality.'
- 'There are two important trees on the site – would these be protected?'
- 'The proposed development is close to sites of scientific importance.'
- 'There is a single main road through Boyton with the majority of houses sitting alongside. This road is single lane. A development of twenty houses would add at least 40 new cars up and down that road every day.'
- 'The main access road is narrow and would cause problems for the heavy transport involved in building.'
- 'There is a problem with drainage in Boyton. Rainwater washes off the surrounding fields bringing muddy water into the village clogging up the drains causing both the roads and gardens to flood.'