

Plans for 120 homes on quiet country lane refused for fourth time

Plans to build 120 homes on a quiet country lane in the Leicestershire countryside have been refused for a fourth time.

Hundreds of people objected to the plans by Davidsons Homes to develop a site on green fields in the west Leicestershire village of Desford.

There were concerns that it would be built on a narrow road which runs past the village primary school and would have a negative impact on the village.

Hinckley and Bosworth planning officers had recommended the scheme for fields on Ashfield Farm, Kirkby Road, be approved – subject to a section 106 agreement that would see the developer pay almost £1.6 million towards local facilities and services, including schooling, open spaces, health services and libraries.

Villagers put in more than 300 objections, raising concerns about traffic, services being under strain, overcrowding in the village and loss of privacy for neighbouring houses. The parish council also objected and called for the plans to be refused. In a vote, borough councillors agreed to turn them down.

The developer first failed to get permission to build back in 2015, when councillors agreed it would significantly exceed the village's housing needs.

A 2019 application was turned down because of its impact on the “value, beauty and open character” of the land, and

because of the increase in traffic on the narrow road leading to it.

A 2021 application was subsequently turned due to concerns about its impact on the rural character of the village, loss of countryside and congestion. Davidsons appealed to the Secretary of State to overturn that decision, but then dropped the appeal.

Following the latest refusal, Desford Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Working Group issued a statement saying the battle to ensure the village was not over-developed would continue.

It said: “Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council planning department recommended planning consent for 120 houses in one of the worst possible locations to the west of the village.

“Approval would have completely contradicted the existing, made Neighbourhood Plan for the parish, but the borough planning committee unanimously decided to refuse permission, and Desford Parish Council (DPC) is grateful to those councillors for standing firm.

“So our existing plan has been upheld by the councillors – but it does not end here.

“DPC knows it will eventually have to find some more houses in a review of the Neighbourhood Plan – but the community’s right to say where they will go has been safeguarded for the time being. DPC has commissioned independent consultants to report on housing need and traffic in the parish.”

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