

# SLOLEY PARISH COUNCIL (incorporating Frankfort)

Clerk to the Council: Anne Tandy  
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1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

Alice Walker (Senior Planning Officer)  
North Norfolk District Council  
Hold Road  
Cromer  
Norfolk  
NR27 9EN

Dear Ms Walker

**Re: Planning Application PF/24/2474.**

**Demolition of part existing building and erection of new cold store together with associated plant room. Albert Bartlett Westwick, Station Road, Worstead, North Walsham, NR29 9RX**

At an Extraordinary Meeting of Sloley Parish Council on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025, the Council unanimously agreed to oppose the application for full planning permission for the part demolition and erection of a new cold store with associated plant room at Albert Bartlett, Worstead, NR29 9RX.

The Parish Council agreed that this proposal would have a serious impact on nearby residences both in terms of visual impact and transport implications. It did not consider there were any economic benefits of the application to the wider community including Sloley but any benefit was limited to the business of Albert Bartlett. The plant is currently operating at full capacity and the new facility is required to expand the frozen and chilled business of the applicant. No additional staff will be required to operate the new storage facility as it is fully computerised.

The following findings are based on the documentation available on the North Norfolk Planning Portal and consultation with residents of Sloley. Albert Bartlett were given the opportunity to meet with the Council to discuss the details of the application but were unable to attend. In conclusion it was considered that this application would demonstrably harm the character and appearance of the area.

Our specific objections are as follows:

NNDC Design Guide EN4 stipulates that new non-residential buildings should be integrated into existing settlements without harming any heritage or landscape interests. The applicant states in the updated design and access statement that the new building will be a maximum height of 34.6m above ground level which is 6.2m higher than the existing chimney to the north-east of the site. Council would argue this is a significant increase in height, equivalent to a 2-storey building. Added to which the density of the chimney is far less than a building covering 1,526m<sup>2</sup>. The impact of this on the closest residents is considered to be oppressive and out of all proportion with any other buildings in the vicinity. For the wider community this will have a big impact and provide a permanent view from

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several aspects of the village and surrounding areas as set out in the applicants landscaping report. The NNDC policy 4.2 for commercial buildings goes onto say at 4.2.3 that “in employment areas in villages, greater care is needed to successfully integrate new buildings into their surroundings. [...] the expectation will be that the building is compatible with the character of the village in terms of it’s scale ...” Section 4.24 states that “new buildings will be considered if their design is attuned to their rural setting.” Council would argue that the proposed height of the building will have a negative impact on the landscape and views of the area. The NPPF; paragraph 139 directs planning authorities to refuse applications which are not well designed and neglect to reflect the local design policies. Whilst the NPPF paragraph 11 states a presumption in favour of sustainable plans, it goes onto say in paragraph 12 that this presumption should not conflict with up-to-date local plans. The Council would say that this application does not meet the requirements as defined by the NNDC Design Policy EN4 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy as it “fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve or enhance the character and quality of the surrounding area”.

Similarly, Policy EC3 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy considers extensions to existing businesses in the countryside. Here it states that “extension to existing businesses in the **countryside** will be permitted where it is of a scale appropriate to the existing development and would not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area.” Section 15 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and local environment through, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

Section 10 of the design and access statement refers to vehicle movements. The Council consider that this information is significantly lacking in detail to back up the claims that vehicle movements will decrease. In addition, the residents of the area are concerned that the current traffic movement is already having a detrimental impact on the road surfacing and even with a limited decrease there is no indication of how accessibility will be managed without further detriment to the area. Policy CT5; Section 3.5.18 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy requires “all new development to prepare a transport assessment to illustrate how the amount of trips generated will be accommodated and accessibility to the site by all modes of transport will be achieved.” With a significantly increased facility it is incredulous to suggest that the production levels will not increase and therefore the vehicle numbers will remain unchanged now or in the future. The NPPF section 89 states that planning decisions “should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements.” In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that the development is sensitive to its surroundings and does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads”.

The Parish Council recognises the needs of the factory to continue operating effectively and profitably but believes that in this case the scale and impact of the proposed development is out of proportion with the area, within in which it is located. It is suggested that the plan might consider a lower-level building which would be more in keeping with it’s the rural location.

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The considerable loss of amenity to the local community is not outweighed by any substantial economic benefit, in order to justify the substantial departure from the NNDC planning guidance.

If any further amendments are put forward by the applicant, the Council would be keen to reconsider this application and make further comments as necessary and would hope the Planning Department would be amenable to communicating this with them.

When the matter does come to Committee for a final decision, a member of the Parish Council would like the opportunity to attend and speak on their behalf.

Yours sincerely

*Anne Tandy*

Anne Tandy  
Clerk to the Council  
On behalf of Sloley Parish Council