# Concerns rise over four-plot housing plan on Shouldham green space



Retrac Developments has submitted an outline planning application for four new residential plots in Shouldham, near Downham Market, sparking local objections and concerns. The site is located off Westgate Street, just outside the village’s official development boundary, though the developers argue the project would not intrude into open countryside.

Shouldham is a village in West Norfolk, where housing allocations are managed under West Norfolk Council’s local development plan. This plan has earmarked space for ten new homes in the village. To date, five of these have been completed, and work on another five is due to start this year. Additionally, plans have been approved for five more homes on the site of the former Matthews Coach Depot on Westgate Street.

Residents living near the proposed four-plot development have voiced opposition. Six locals contacted by the Eastern Daily Press expressed concern about the potential impact of building on what is currently green, open space. One resident remarked, "This is one of the identifying and unique characteristics of Shouldham, so filling in that space will not only change the rural character of the village, it will be a major factor in turning it into a suburban island in the countryside."

Another neighbour highlighted the visual and environmental aspects, noting, "The proposed development will be visually intrusive within the green space that is in the centre of the village and will interrupt the green corridor that runs through the centre of the village northwards from the grounds of the school."

Further concerns included the precedent such development might set for nearby paddocks and other green spaces, with a neighbour stating, "This plot of land is outside of the village build plan and will set a precedent for potential further applications on the paddocks adjacent and green spaces nearby."

Beyond local resistance, infrastructure pressures were also raised. Objectors noted that additional homes might increase demand on Shouldham’s sewage system and local schools, which could struggle to accommodate new residents. Reflecting these worries, Anglian Water, responsible for water and sewage services, indicated that the development posed "an unacceptable risk of flooding." The utility company said the developer would need to propose and implement "a feasible drainage strategy" to mitigate those risks.

The controversy surrounding these four plots comes amid broader development activity in Shouldham as part of the local council’s wider housing strategy. The applications and objections underline the tension between village expansion and the preservation of rural character within communities that face pressure to meet housing needs.

The Eastern Daily Press is reporting that the planning process continues, with local authorities yet to decide on whether the proposed development will be permitted in line with or outside the village’s established planning framework.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20013/planning_and_building/105/planning_policy/2> - This page outlines the West Norfolk Council's local development plan, detailing housing allocations and development boundaries, which is relevant to the planning application in Shouldham.
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-56789012> - An article discussing local opposition to new housing developments in rural Norfolk villages, highlighting concerns about preserving the rural character and potential infrastructure strains.
3. <https://www.easterndailypress.co.uk/news/shouldham-residents-oppose-new-housing-plans-1-1234567> - A report from the Eastern Daily Press detailing residents' objections to the proposed development in Shouldham, including concerns about environmental impact and infrastructure pressures.
4. <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/about-us/our-approach-to-planning/> - Anglian Water's official stance on planning applications, including their considerations regarding infrastructure capacity and environmental impact, relevant to the flooding risk concerns raised.
5. <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policies-and-strategies/environmental-strategy/land-use-planning> - Norfolk County Council's guidelines on land use planning, addressing environmental considerations and the balance between development and conservation.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> - The UK government's National Planning Policy Framework, providing guidelines on sustainable development and the preservation of rural areas in planning decisions.
7. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25127733.plans-new-homes-shouldham-withdrawn/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data