# Persimmon Homes plan to remove all affordable housing from White Rose Park sparks local backlash



Persimmon Homes has submitted a controversial plan that could entirely eliminate affordable housing from its ambitious White Rose Park development in Hellesdon. This alteration threatens to erase 172 affordable homes originally intended for the later phases of the project, which will consist of 520 properties across phases three to six. The initial phases of this complex already saw a reduction, with 75 affordable homes being built, a decrease of 22 from prior commitments.

Local sentiments regarding this reversal have been sharply critical. Lacey Douglass, councillor for Hellesdon South East, articulated profound concerns at a recent public meeting, asserting that a complete absence of affordable housing across these phases contradicts the urgent need outlined in a housing needs assessment commissioned in May 2024. This report indicated that many residents, even those with average incomes, contend with the rising challenge of securing market-rate homes. Douglass stated, “This will mean there will be a total of 520 properties across the four phases and not one affordable home for people,” highlighting the disconnect between the development plans and the community's pressing requirements.

The community's frustration has intensified over the lack of engagement from Persimmon regarding these significant changes. Residents have expressed fears that the elimination of affordable housing will prevent future generations from entering the property market. An objector from Middletons Lane conveyed, "This is absolutely unacceptable. We need to give future generations a fighting chance to get on the property ladder," underscoring the sentiments shared among many locals about the necessity of affordable homes in sustaining a vibrant community.

However, Persimmon has defended its revised proposal by citing financial viability reports supported by independent experts at Broadland District Council. The company claims that factors such as nutrient neutrality and the need for inherent tree retention have further diminished the site's capacity for development, contributing to the reduction of potential homes from an initial target of 1,000 to a current projection of 772. Critics argue that the justification provided for removing all affordable housing must undergo thorough independent scrutiny to ensure that genuine financial pressures are accountable rather than merely an effort to maximise profit margins.

Hellesdon's infrastructure requirements are also a pressing concern in light of the ongoing development. Local councillor Shelagh Gurney raised alarms about the strain on existing services, emphasising that adequate healthcare resources, schools, and recreational spaces should align with the proposed population increase generated by such extensive housing projects. The current plans include only two hectares of recreational space, significantly short of the four hectares that the parish council initially requested. This shortfall adds another layer of discontent to the negotiations between the local council and Persimmon.

Beyond the debate concerning housing and community needs, habitat and environmental sustainability have amplified concerns among local residents. There have been considerable objections over the planned felling of numerous trees to facilitate road widening and other infrastructure improvements related to the development, further exacerbating environmental scrutiny surrounding the project. The removal of trees has implications not only for the ecological balance but also for the quality of life in Hellesdon, where residents already feel the pressure of inadequate public green spaces.

As the situation develops, it appears crucial for Hellesdon and the broader Norwich area to engage in persistent dialogue with Persimmon Homes, ensuring that the final plans meet the dual objectives of promoting sustainable community growth while addressing the dire need for affordable housing that residents are advocating for.

This evolving narrative around the White Rose Park development serves as a poignant reminder of the complex interplay between commercial interests, community needs, and environmental considerations, necessitating comprehensive oversight to cultivate a balanced, equitable future for Hellesdon's residents.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2. Paragraphs 2, 4
3. Paragraph 6
4. Paragraph 6
5. Paragraph 6
6. Paragraph 6
7. Paragraph 6

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25173193.affordable-homes-removed-hellesdon-development/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://hellesdon-pc.gov.uk/2025/01/14/public-meeting-to-discuss-amended-persimmon-application/> - Hellesdon Parish Council held a public meeting on January 6, 2025, to discuss Persimmon Homes' revised applications for phases 4 to 6 of the White Rose Park development. Persimmon proposed reducing 'non-essential s106 costs' to improve the project's viability, which the council strongly objected to. The council emphasized the need for affordable housing, citing a Housing Needs Assessment that revealed even average-earning households struggle to afford market homes. Additionally, concerns were raised about the reduction of formal recreational open space, as Hellesdon already has less than half the required publicly accessible green space. The council criticized Persimmon for not engaging proactively with the community and expressed openness to discussions on creating a sustainable community through the development.
3. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/housing/22330349.infrastructure-fears-housing-tree-felling-project-continues/> - Residents near the former Royal Norwich Golf Club in Hellesdon have expressed concerns over the Persimmon Homes development, particularly regarding infrastructure and environmental impact. The project, which includes plans for 1,000 homes, has led to mass tree felling along Drayton High Road to accommodate road widening and bus lanes. Local councillor Shelagh Gurney highlighted the strain on existing services, such as NHS dentists, and the need for infrastructure to match the population growth. The parish council has been in discussions with Persimmon to ensure the development aligns with agreed designs and minimizes environmental damage.
4. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/lifestyle/22471579.revised-plans-1-000-new-hellesdon-homes-fall-short-parish-council-demands/> - Hellesdon Parish Council has criticized Persimmon Homes' revised plans for the White Rose Park development, which propose up to 1,000 new homes. The council had previously requested over four hectares of land for formal recreation space but was offered only two hectares in the revised plans. Councillor David King emphasized the need for a fair deal for both current and future residents, expressing dissatisfaction with the proposed amount of recreational space. Persimmon Homes stated that the amendments aim to address the council's concerns and hope for favorable review by the council in October.
5. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/24522650.debate-housing-development-hellesdon-heats/> - A proposed 50-home development in Hellesdon has sparked debate among local residents, who fear increased traffic and strain on existing infrastructure. The site, formerly occupied by the Jarrold Sports and Social Club, is located near the airport, already experiencing high traffic levels. Concerns include potential congestion and the impact on local services. The development will require consultations with nearby schools and medical practices, as well as Sport England, which objected to the sale of the land to a private party in 2018. Residents have called for fewer houses to be built to mitigate these issues.
6. <https://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/14830331.residents-new-persimmon-homes-development-left-waterlogged-gardens/> - Residents of The Green, a new Persimmon Homes development in Middlewich, have reported issues with waterlogged gardens due to inadequate drainage. Some homeowners have had to pay for additional drainage work themselves, as Persimmon Homes addressed the problem selectively. One resident discovered construction debris, including a spade and a spirit level, in her garden, leading to drainage problems. Persimmon Homes stated that they have carried out work in some properties where there was excessive waterlogging and that each case is judged individually.
7. <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/ashford/news/living-hell-of-new-build-owners-in-unsellable-homes-ridd-299551/> - Homeowners at Repton Park in Ashford, built by Persimmon Homes in 2018, have reported significant damp issues in their properties, rendering them unsellable. Residents have noticed mould on walls and skirting boards, with independent surveys identifying blocked air bricks and high external ground levels as contributing factors. Affected homeowners are seeking repairs in line with surveyor reports and are concerned about the impact on property value and livability.