



MINUTES OF ADDITIONAL ORDINARY MEETING

**Thursday 3rd September 2020 at 7:30pm
via Zoom**

Councillors Present

Cllr Geoff Chapman (GC) – Chairman, Cllr Judith McGinley (JM) (Chair), Cllr David James (DJ), Cllr Bill Preston (BP), Cllr Gary Whiteside (GW) and Rosemary Coulter (Clerk)

**077/FC/
06/20-21** **Apologies for absence** None
Did not attend Cllr Peter Waggett

**078/FC/
06/20-21** **Declarations of Interest**
None

**079/FC/
06/20-21** **Meeting open to the Public**
12 members of the public attended the meeting

**080/FC/
06/20-21** **Planning Applications**
The Parish Council considered the following planning application:

20/02162/OUT

Land at Oakdown Farm, A30, Dummer RG23 7LR

Outline planning application for the demolition of 3 dwellings, out-buildings and related structures and construction of commercial and industrial units including mezzanine floorspace (use class B8) with ancillary offices (use class B1), associated infrastructure works (including parking and landscaping), and full details of sight levels, drainage and diversion of underground pipeline. All matters reserved except for access arrangements.

No representation from applicant.

Members of the public confirmed that they had joined the meeting to listen to the debate by the Parish Council (PC) and although they had opinions on the application, they generally felt that the plans submitted were not easy to comprehend.

The meeting started with the views of Parish Councillors.

Issues raised:

Traffic Issues

- Concern was expressed about the proposed entry and exit of vehicles from the distribution centre and felt the proposed new roundabout was not in a good place and will cause a lot of traffic issues. It was also felt that the impact on Ganderdown Cottages will be huge.
- Concern was expressed about the problems that will arise from increased traffic from the distribution centre at the junction of the A33 Winchester Road / A30 Stockbridge Road (linking onto the A303). Although the application states that lorries and vans will not use this route, it was felt that this will be used as a cut through to the A303. The PC are acutely aware of the issues at this junction and the numerous accidents which occur here and are lobbying HCC Highways for improvements and changes at this junction.

- Concern was expressed that by putting in a roundabout on a primary road, this will open access to the other side of the road for future development. Should this happen, another source of traffic will further increase traffic.
- It was noted that Highways England have responded to BDBC's consultation with a holding letter saying they need more time to fully assess the impacts of the proposed consultation. It was felt that Highways England will have a huge influence and a decision will not be made without their input.
- GC explained that Highways England is responsible for trunk roads around the country and Hampshire Highways is responsible for other major routes, such as the A33. The A33 is a primary road but not part of the trunk system as it runs next to the M3.
- It was noted that a recent planning application for a proposed motorway service station at junction 6 used traffic count information whilst Black Dam roundabout was being upgraded. Highways England stated that this was not admissible as it was carried out during major roadworks and therefore, not reflecting a realistic situation. To the PC's knowledge, this application has not been taken further.
- It was noted that traffic at junction 7 will also increase with the housing developments at Hounsome Fields and Basingstoke Golf Course.

Scale and Need for the Proposed Development

- Concern was expressed about the scale of the development and that it does not currently have a tenant. Other similar developments, in other parts of the country, have remained empty and there was concern that this would happen here.
- Question – is there an identified need for this development and is there a strategic plan giving an analysis of the need/requirement? Other distribution centres are located in Houndsmills – would it not be logical to locate this proposed development in that part of Basingstoke?

BDBC have a local plan, which is the middle tier of planning policy for our area. (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is at the top, with Neighbourhood Plans (NP) at the bottom.) The current Local Plan states that there is a need for storage and distribution facilities, but this facility is in excess of the identified need by approximately 200%. This analysis was undertaken around 2008-9 and it was accepted that needs may have now changed. However, according to the current Local Plan, there is no identified need for a development of this scale. It was recognised that there could be increased demand post-Covid-19.

BDBC are in the process of reviewing their Local Plan and are looking at the south-west corridor and around the M3 junction 7 area.

Environmental Issues

- Concern was expressed that the proposal is a massively incongruous development in the countryside. The proposed development falls outside the settlement boundary and is, therefore, in the countryside. It should not be considered a brownfield site and should not be assessed as such.
- Concern was expressed about the plans for noise abatement. Plans are included to build bunds on the Dummer side of the development. However, on the North Waltham side, the plans use existing deciduous trees as a noise barrier. Concern was expressed that when the leaves drop, there will be nothing to dissipate the noise.
- The plans also contain a 15-year planting strategy, but it was generally felt that this is unlikely to be completed and the developers should be held to account for this.
- Concern was expressed about the continuous noise levels, particularly of refrigeration lorries which will still be noisy when loading.
- Concern was expressed regarding 24hour/day light pollution.

Sustainability Issues

- Concerns were expressed about sustainability of the project. There is very little evidence in the documentation of a contribution towards sustainability or meeting BDBC's aim of reducing carbon emissions, eg. use of solar panels on the roof.

The following issues and questions were raised:

- Question – can the PC use the same or similar objections raised against the proposed hospital?
Although many of the issues are similar, the objections to the hospital were written specifically around that proposal and would not necessarily fit to this proposal.
- It was accepted that from the developers' point of view, this is a good site near to the existing transport links of the M3.
- Recognition was given to Clean Air Green Environment (CAGE) who have published a comprehensive document on their website pulling together all the issues. The PC recognised that this involved a huge amount of work, having done a similar exercise 4-5 years ago for the proposed hospital.
- Representatives of CAGE were asked if they had anything to add. Their concerns are as follows:
 - Traffic movements on the A30/A33 will cause difficulties for residents of Dummer.
 - It is difficult to see how they can reconfigure the M3 junction 7 as the land falls away at the side of the motorway. There is a very short distance between junctions 7 and 8 and existing issues as vehicles change lanes between junctions. It is difficult to visualise how larger vehicles will manage this. There are also concerns about the increased traffic implications at Bullington Cross, particularly from the west bound A303 onto the north bound A34 and on the extremely short slip road onto the east bound A303 from the A34.
 - When questioned about the 4th arm to the proposed new roundabout, the developers stated that it was difficult to leave a roundabout without a 4th arm. It was felt that this explanation was unacceptable.
 - The developers have been talking with BDBC since Autumn 2019 about this proposal. CAGE and local residents have had a very short space of time to read the documents and comment.
 - CAGE plan to object to the proposal rather than suggesting mitigation.
 - Indications are that Highways England are taking an interest in this proposal and are worried about the implications for the M3 junctions 7 and 8 and the slip road at junction 7, which they think is too narrow. They are reviewing at present.
- It was noted that there was a planning application for service station on the same site some years ago. This was prior to the BDBC planning portal and, therefore, information online is limited. It was refused on the basis of traffic moving between junction 7 and 8. The volume of traffic is greater now, although the junction remains unchanged. The level of noise will also have increased.
- Question - the volume of objections usually count when BDBC considers a planning application but will that work in this case?
The weight of public opinion will help to influence the decision and it may help to have support from Borough Councillor's and MP's, who are heavily influenced by constituents. This application will go to BDBC's Development Committee, rather than be decided on the recommendation of a planning officer. CAGE representatives confirmed that they have a meeting with Kit Malthouse, MP, on 04.09.20 and hope he will be persuaded to support them. It is unclear of the views of Maria Miller, MP.
- It was noted that the recent consultation on healthcare across North Hampshire may recommend a new hospital, but it is not known if this will happen or where it will be located.
- Question – can comments be submitted after the deadline? BDBC are obliged to accept comment up to the time the application goes to Development Committee.

Parish Councils response to consultation: Objection on the weight of opinion from local residents, with comments as outlined in appendix 1.

ACTION:

Complete online consultation forms to BDBC.

Clerk

081/FC/06/20-21 **Date of Next Meeting** – As and when required

Signed Date

APPENDIX 1

PLANNING APPLICATION:**20/02162/OUT****Land at Oakdown Farm, A30, Dummer RG23 7LR**

Outline planning application for the demolition of 3 dwellings, out-buildings and related structures and construction of commercial and industrial units including mezzanine floorspace (use class B8) with ancillary offices (use class B1), associated infrastructure works (including parking and landscaping), and full details of sight levels, drainage and diversion of underground pipeline. All matters reserved except for access arrangements.

North Waltham Parish Councils (NWPC) response to the consultation: Due to the weight of public opinion, North Waltham Parish Council objects to planning application 20/02162/OUT, with the following comments:

Traffic Issues

Planning policy BDBC Local Plan Policy EP1 - Highways states:

Development proposals for storage and distribution floorspace, outside of the existing Strategic Employment Areas, which come forward in advance of a subsequent DPD, will be permitted which are

...

(k) capable of being provided without having a severe highways impact.

- The proposed development will inevitably increase traffic volumes. NWPC have concerns about the safety on all surrounding roads and the impact on local communities. A robust assessment of the applicant's transport plan is required to satisfy concerns that the increase in traffic volumes are safe and sustainable.
- The proposed new roundabout requires review due to its impact on local residents.
- Increased traffic from other planned developments not yet built, ie. Hounsome Fields and Basingstoke Golf Course, needs to be considered.
- The applicants suggest that no traffic will leave the site heading towards the south west on the A30 and will not be using the A30 /A33 junction and the slip road to the A303. The Parish Council fails to see how this can be enforced. The A30/A33 junction is already dangerous and accidents frequently occur. In addition, there are slow moving funeral corteges visiting the crematorium adding to the problems. The Parish Council are already lobbying Hampshire Highways about the safety of the A30/A33 junction and requesting safety improvements.
- The impact on the junction between the A303 and A34 at Bullington Cross has not been considered by the developers and requires further consideration. This junction is badly laid out with short slip roads and known delays in busy hours.
- There is a very short distance between junction 7 and 8 on the M3 and existing issues as vehicles change lanes within a short distance. It is difficult to visualise how larger vehicles will manage this safely and this should be fully considered.

Scale and Need for the Proposed Development

Planning Policy BDBC Local Plan – section 7.8 states:

Over the plan period the Borough will require up to 122,00sqm of storage and distribution floorspace to meet future needs.

Planning Policy BDBC Local Plan – Policy EP1 – Proven Need states:

Development proposals for storage and distribution floorspace, outside of the existing Strategic Employment Areas, which come forward in advance of a subsequent DPD, will be permitted which are

...

(m) able to demonstrate that there is proven need for the floorspace proposed.

- The proposed development is significantly greater (221%) than that defined as being needed in the Basingstoke area by BDBC's own Employment Land Review and the Parish Council questions how this can be justified.

- The Parish Council questions how approval for such a development can be given without a clear understanding of its use and without a future tenant. Other such developments across the country have remained vacant for a considerable time following completion.
- The Parish Council questions whether there are other suitable brown field sites suitable for a development of this nature.

Environmental Issues

Planning Policy BDBC Local Plan – Policy EP1 – Landscape Impact (and Biodiversity) states:

Development proposals for storage and distribution floorspace, outside of the existing Strategic Employment Areas, which come forward in advance of a subsequent DPD, will be permitted which are

...

(g) able to successfully mitigate the landscape impact, which will include the provision of sufficient space for appropriate soft landscaping/green infrastructure, appropriate location of development within the site, and utilise a design, and layout of built form and use of materials in order to ensure that any landscape impacts are minimalised

- This development is outside the Settlement Boundary Policy and is, therefore, unsympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area. As the development falls in the countryside, the land should not be considered as a brownfield site and should not be considered as such.
- The plans indicate that on the North Waltham side of the development, an existing line of deciduous trees will help to mitigate noise. The Parish Council considers this insufficient, especially for six months of the year when the trees do not have leaves.
- The Parish Council also have concerns about noise levels and 24-hour light pollution.

Sustainability Issues

It is difficult to see how the proposed plan contributes to BDBC's plan to reduce carbon emissions (Climate Change Strategy 2014-2020). There is little evidence in the documentation of how this can be achieved.

North Waltham Parish Council
7th September 2020