

**Response to Statement of Common Ground (ref EX213 30.10.20)****Land at The Meadway HS27**

Dear Mr. Middleton

I wish to comment on the Statement of Common Ground which was recently signed between Hertfordshire County Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council and the developers Stonebond Properties Limited. This was drawn up in response to the developers proposing a new total of 70 dwellings as opposed to the 30 dwellings originally submitted.

1. Residents were not consulted directly by WHBC or by Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council prior to the meeting. Therefore their views and their 'on-the-ground' insights were not taken into account in the discussion and the outcome cannot be said to represent the views of the residents. For example, in relation to highway design and junction capacity being sufficient to serve 60 dwellings, the Parish Council states in the document that it is 'not in possession of any information to suggest it is incorrect' para 23. If they had consulted the residents, they would have had information to counter this point.
2. The total number of properties proposed is 70. This is inaccurate as it does not take into account a block of 4 flats and the proposed development at Cuffley Motors for 12 flats (planning permission approved) both of which are on the junction of The Meadway and the B156. Both of these developments are accessed from The Meadway. Therefore the total number of new dwellings should be 84.
3. The issues over safety of the junction have not been properly addressed. The developer describes The Meadway as 'akin to a Major Access Road' whereas HCC classify it as a minor access road. The junction with the B156 is very hazardous as visibility is poor. To the east there is a rise in the road which obscures the view of traffic travelling towards Cuffley. To the east the proposed development on the garage site will obscure the view in this direction. There are two junctions to the east (to Sopers Road Industrial Estate and to Cuffley Station) within 20 metres served by a mini roundabout. This makes for a busy junction where a lot of movements take place. Accidents have occurred here in the past.

The B156 is described as a 'heavily trafficked route' in the WHBC Sustainability Appraisal. Outside of peak times, traffic speeds frequently exceed the limit making exiting and entry into The Meadway hazardous in the extreme. The presence of the Industrial Area plus traffic from the recycling centre in Northaw means that a large

number of lorries as well as domestic vehicles use the route. The Statement of Common Ground incorrectly stated that the development will result in 130 dwellings (correct number 146) using this unsafe junction which is the only access.

4. Having read the acoustic report it is evident that the new plan, which accommodates the extra housing much closer to the railway line, has serious problems in terms of night-time noise levels. 50% of the site has night-time noise levels rated as 'medium' rising to 'high' in properties immediately adjacent to the railway line. The report suggests that night-time noise levels would be too high for windows to be open and, for example, acoustic double glazing and oversized acoustic trickle vents are likely to be required. These results suggest that the amenity of occupants of these extra houses would be seriously threatened by noise levels. The report concludes that 'the majority of the site is acceptable from a noise perspective, provided that a good acoustic design process is followed'. However, its conclusion does not apply to all the site. By omission it concedes that noise levels in a minority of properties would not be acceptable, and these are the extra properties proposed by the developer.

In conclusion I suggest that the Statement of Common Ground conclusions are flawed.

Regards

Jane Brook