

Water End Residents Group

Response to EX208 – Historic England: Note on Site HS22 at Brookmans Park

Following the Stage 8 hearing sessions in August 2020, the Inspector asked HCC to provide modelling of HS22 on the use of Bradmore Lane, to determine how many of the stated 180 peak hour trips would use the lane, and Historic England were asked to comment upon new proposed access arrangements into site HS22 at Brookmans Park.

To date, the information from HCC is still not in the public domain. However, it should be noted that the '180 peak hour trips' figure is based on 300 dwellings, and if capacity of the site is maximized then this figure would increase by 50% or more, based on the site promoter's capacity estimate within EX231 of 449 dwellings with a school, or 514 dwellings without.

Historic England note that the developers are proposing to take access to the site off Bradmore Lane, rather than Station Road, as previously intended, and are concerned that there is the potential for traffic movements to impact upon the settings of the five grade II listed buildings in Water End and the six grade II listed buildings on Station Road in Welham Green. However, because it is unclear to them what proportion of traffic generated by the development is likely to head west along Bradmore Lane, they are unable to comment whether it is acceptable or not in terms of the impact on the settings of the listed buildings in Water End.

It is interesting to note Historic England's observation that during the EIP hearing session, HCC were also unclear about the proportion of traffic generated likely to head west along Bradmore Lane, and we find it amazing that RVC/Hill are able to state at para 1.49 of their Hearing Statement: "*With regard to impacts on roads further west, HCC consider the proposed option will deter residents and visitors to HS22 from travelling west, furthermore, all of the amenities future residents will require are to the east of HS22. There will be no unacceptable harm on roads to the west of HS22*".

As we made very clear in the Stage 8 Hearing session, Bradmore Lane would be the shortest and quickest route from HS22 (BrP4) to and from the A1M and M25 and wider road network to the west, including the major shopping destination of London Colney.

Historic England note that the developers are proposing the realignment of the access at Bradmore Lane and Station Road, alongside various traffic management measures, to restrict the flow of traffic to the west along Bradmore Lane, and although these measures are welcomed, there is concern about their effectiveness in preventing traffic heading west along Bradmore Lane and directing traffic away from Water End and out onto Station Road.

We also share their concern; the proposed measures are simply to make Bradmore Lane subservient to the site access and the inclusion of one chicane. We do not believe that this would provide anything like the level of deterrent needed to induce traffic to take a much longer and congested route elsewhere.

As stated in our response to the consultation on EX231, we do not support the allocation of HS22/BrP4, and agree with the Council that it should be removed from the Plan as a main modification because of its High Harm to the Green Belt and potential to harm the surrounding Very High Harm Green Belt including Water End.

However, if the Inspector is minded to retain the site, we agree with Historic England's suggestion of the addition of the words 'including minimizing traffic movements around the listed buildings in Water End' at the end of the proposed modification to the wording of the access arrangements to HS22/BrP4 at paragraph 21.4.