

26 February 2019

Mr K Steptoe
Development Management
East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8EQ

Dear Mr Steptoe

Re: EHDC Planning Application 3/19/0118/OUT – Gresley Park, Stevenage

Walkern Parish Council strongly opposes the above development on the following grounds:

- It will have a detrimental impact on the existing local infrastructure. Gresley Way is already congested in the mornings with traffic backing up from the A602 to Ware/Hertford. The High Street in Walkern is gridlocked every morning and evening from traffic heading towards Buntingford and the A10. Walkern is used at a rat-run. Traffic from an additional 600 homes, amounting to possible 1800 vehicles, albeit spread across the whole day, will only add to the congestion with little or no consultation having taken place regarding the impact of these additional vehicles onto Gresley Way. Three new junctions onto Gresley Way would undoubtedly cause major traffic hold-ups at rush hour times. Approval of the road layout as it is detailed at this stage will have constraints at a later stage for public consultation regarding site design and layout. The fact that outline permission is limited to the main and spine roads, drainage infrastructure and ancillary works is flawed by not showing more layout details. Also what proposals are in place to mitigate any undue pressure on water provision and other infrastructures on the surrounding villages of Walkern and Aston?
- Hertfordshire Design and Review were involved but yet once again, as Walkern has found with its Froghall Lane development, their observations and recommendations were not followed up. There needs to be transparency here.
- Walkern Parish Council asks about provision for schooling? Walkern has serious congestion four times a day with vehicles entering and leaving Walkern to park and drop off/pick up children at the primary school. Walkern would not wish any further traffic

entering the village at these times when it will have to deal with extra traffic that the development at Froghall Lane/Aubries will bring.

- All rights of way in and around the site, including Bridleway 21, must be safeguarded.
- Concern is raised regarding the close proximity of the Showman's Guild Site entrance to the Roundabout on Gresley Way/Stevenage Road to Walkern and to the movement of large, lengthy trailers and vehicles on and off site.
- The proposed development and all it entails, will significantly impact on the Beane Valley and river Beane, a rare chalk stream, with its own important ecosystem. The environment and character of the whole area would be greatly affected and affect the wildlife living there. Walkern Parish Council is strongly opposed to the loss of this Green Belt land and therefore the loss of open countryside and changing views of the Beane Valley.
- Walkern Parish Council would like evidence that light pollution will not disrupt the lives of people living nearby and encroach on wildlife living in close proximity to the proposed development. We would like assurance that wildlife corridors linking the site with the open countryside will not be disturbed.
- With regards to S106 monies, what provision has been made to recompense Walkern for disruption to its village, congestion, increase in vehicle movements, pollution and loss of views of our changing countryside?

Please take into account these comments when making your decision.

Yours sincerely

Heidi Broady (Mrs)
Clerk to Walkern Parish Council

28 November 2019

Mr O Sowerby
Development Management Officer
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Hertford SG13 8DE

Dear Mr Sowerby

Re: EHDC Planning application EOS1 3/19/0118/OUT

Further to your recent communication with Mr Sypula (PACE), Walkern Parish Council has several concerns about the effect the proposed development will have to the already congested road system within Walkern Village.

Firstly, earlier this year a representative from Pigeon Land Management attended a Walkern Parish Council meeting and was directly asked about the impact of traffic between Gresley Way and Walkern through to the A10 at Buntingford, you will no doubt be aware that during peak traffic hours, traffic from Stevenage attempts to use the village to get through to the A10 at Buntingford and vice versa causing major road delays to journey times

This additionally causes an increase in air pollution from standing traffic and causes grid lock within the main High Street section of the village. Furthermore, this traffic is stationary and polluting the air severely as children are walking that route and crossing the High Street to the primary school.

Imagine our surprise when we were told that no impact assessment had been carried out. Has this been done yet? If so, we need to see it please. If not when will it be done and by whom?

Secondly, Walkern's own Froghall Lane development of 85 new homes is due to be completed in 2020 and will also impact traffic from the village travelling to Gresley Way. Has this been factored into your numbers and if so, can we please have sight of the relevant impact assessment to the overall proposed new development?

Thirdly, we note the comments made by yourself when responding to Stephen Sypula as follows:

" Herts District Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As per paragraph 109 of the NPPF, "Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. It is the view of the Highway Authority that the development as proposed, including the stated mitigation, does not result in a residual impact on the local highway network which is 'severe', and as such, consider that there are no grounds for recommending refusal on highway grounds."

Could you please explain why your view is that the impact would not be severe "or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe." What evidence exists that the residual cumulative impact is not severe? How is this evidence put together and what framework is used? What modelling and bench marking do you use to arrive at a conclusion like this?

Notwithstanding all the objections you have received, it's not lost on any of us when we are sitting on the A1 at rush hour not moving, that any additional traffic merging onto the A1 at Stevenage during these times will definitely have a negative impact on traffic flows and potentially increase the risk of accidents.

Also increased pollution from additional vehicles due to stationary traffic wherever it is, is now a major climate issue and as such the government has identified this as a priority to tackle. We think an extra 1500 cars along Gresley way during peak hours will substantially have an effect on the air quality in this area.

Yours sincerely

Heidi Broady (Mrs)
Clerk to Walkern Parish Council