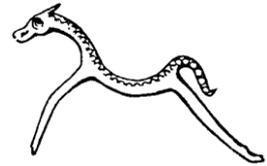


SILCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL

Member of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils



Gregg Chapman
Planning and Development
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Civic Offices
London Road
Basingstoke
RG21 4AH

22nd August 2017

Dear Mr Chapman

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 17/00653/RET

Silchester Parish Council write to formally **OBJECT** to the retrospective planning application for 'Change of use of land to residential caravan site comprising 13 plots including day rooms and construction of hardstanding and access road' on 'Land Adjacent to and Rear of Culhams Mill, Little London Road, Silchester, Hampshire'.

The Council's primary reasons for this objection are that this development is in direct contravention of multiple policies within the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2029, the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The site is located in the open countryside, not identified as a site in the Local Plan, where the PPTS paragraph 25 states new gypsy and traveller site development is very strictly limited. Local Plan Policy CN5 makes clear that only suitable and sustainably located gypsy and traveller sites will be permitted, including a presumption against development within nationally recognised designations. The site is neither suitable nor sustainable and is wholly inappropriate for an area within the AWE Detailed Emergency Planning Zone; at risk of flooding; and including part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The development already undertaken on this Greenfield site without planning permission has already detrimentally impacted: a Site of Special Scientific Interest; a valued landscape, trees, drainage conditions and important biodiversity.

Upon the unauthorised establishment of this site, some 300 local residents contacted the Basingstoke Planning Department to complain or register an objection. At an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of Silchester Parish Council on 27th February 2017, 234 out of 238 members of the public present voted in favour of the Parish Council's motion to object to the establishment of this unauthorised traveller site. Subsequently, at an EGM on 21st August 2017, Silchester Parish Council resolved to object to the retrospective planning application for the following reasons:

1. The plan and plot layout as identified and submitted in **this retrospective application is inconsistent the current actual layout** on the site. The former indicates the site does not impinge on the Site of Special Scientific Interest, nor the flood risk area, nor lie under a power line, although satellite imagery shows this is clearly the case.
2. The unauthorised site **does not meet the locally specific policy tests** for the location of gypsy and traveller sites as set out in Local Plan Policy CN5 as there is no identified need or justification to release this site and 13 plots, day rooms, hardstanding and access road in the open countryside, or lack of alternatives to justify development within the open countryside and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
3. The development **represents a severe risk to highway safety** to all users, both at the junction of the site access with the Public Right of Way, and the junction with Little London Road with insufficient visibility in both directions, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5(d) and CN9. Improvement schemes would be impossible at this junction as the lane is neither under the control of the applicant nor the local highway authority.
4. There is **a lack of social facilities with capacity** such as schools, health services, shops etc. within reasonable distance of the site contrary to Local Plan Policy CN5(c).
5. Services and facilities can only be accessed using a car as there is no safe or convenient pedestrian access, whereby the **strong sense of physical and functional isolation** means there is **no integration between the travelling and settled community**. The development would also be enclosed with

extensive hardstanding and fences whereby the site and occupants are **deliberately isolated** from the rest of the community. The proposals are contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5(c)(d)(g) and CN9.

6. The site **lies within an area at risk of flooding** and as such is not appropriate for residential development. The extensive hardstanding already imported and laid out has impacted on drainage conditions and water quality, increasing the risk of flooding, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5, EM6 and EM7.
7. Being less than 3km from the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), the site **is within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ)** of that facility and the site is not safe for use as gypsy and traveller accommodation, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5 and SS7.
8. A site of this scale, if approved, would represent the largest gypsy and traveller site in the Borough, **would dominate the nearest settled community** of Silchester and would not lead to appropriate integration between the settled and travelling communities, contrary to Local Plan Policy CN5.
9. The **adverse impact on nature conservation and biodiversity**, in particular the site is partly within both a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a designated Priority Habitat. Parts of these habitats have been destroyed by the unauthorised development. No ecological surveys have been submitted in support of the application and this issue has not been adequately considered. The proposals conflict with Local Plan Policies CN5 and EM4.
10. The **adverse visual impact** of the use, proliferation of domestic paraphernalia and day rooms would be substantial, with a harmful change to the character of the land, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5, EM1 and EM10.
11. Trees on the site have already been felled without a License, leading to **harm to the valued landscape character** of the area. The unauthorised development and any further felling of trees would only make this impact worse, contrary to Local Plan Policy EM1(e).
12. There would be **adverse residential amenity conditions for occupants** of the site due to the adjacent sewage treatment works, industrial site and overhead cables, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5(b) and EM12. Additionally, this site had been used for many years as a site for clay pigeon shooting, most likely resulting in significant deposits of lead shot on the site.
13. **Inadequate on-site facilities** will be provided for the 13 plots impacting on the living conditions of future occupants contrary to Local Plan Policy CN5(e), for example, there is no green space within the proposed development.
14. The site **cannot be** adequately and appropriately **connected to local infrastructure**. Furthermore, an overhead power line extends across the site and easement restrictions are not respected, contrary to Local Plan Policies CN5 and CN6.
15. The **impact of contamination** on a sensitive residential land use arising from previous uses of the land, including as a clay pigeon shooting range, and the recent importing of unregulated material has not been assessed, contrary to Local Plan Policy EM12.
16. The development has **potential to impact upon** non-designated heritage **assets of archaeological interest** associated with the former Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum, contrary to Local Plan Policy EM11.
17. Granting permission would establish a **precedent** that is likely to lead to harmful intensification and extension of the use onto other land around the application site, including that identified in blue where unauthorised development has been undertaken, making it difficult for the Council to resist future applications and exacerbating the social and environmental harms.

Yours sincerely

Silchester Parish Council