



Members Room

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Cllr Bryan Mulhern
Planning Committee Chairman
Swale Borough council
Swale House
Sittingbourne
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28 January 2019

Dear Chairman

Planning Application: Land at Wises Lane, 17/505711/HYBRID

I am writing to ask your committee members take account of the following when they consider the application above.

The land that makes up the majority of the development site is allocated in the Local Plan for housing development. While some consider that land unsuitable for development of any kind, the decision to allocate it for housing was made when the Local Plan was adopted following an Examination in Public by the planning inspectorate. My comments, therefore, concern those matters which are related to the responsibilities of Kent County Council that my residents have specifically contacted me as their County Councillor to express their view on, and I would ask your members consider them carefully.

The building of new homes on this scale must provide considerable infrastructure to mitigate the impact of the development. I am pleased, as are many of my residents, that new education, leisure and transport assets are included in the application.

However, some of my residents are concerned the infrastructure promised will not be delivered. If your members are minded to approve the application then I ask for an assurance that Section 106 agreements, Section 278 agreements and other conditions and protections applied to the consent to provide the required infrastructure are both tightly worded and tightly controlled to absolutely ensure they are delivered in full, to a good standard and in a timely manner.

Because of its location and the constraints on the local lanes, any major development on this site would require substantial new road infrastructure to mitigate the impact on the A2 London Road/Key Street and the Key Street roundabout in particular.

I believe, as do many of my residents, the proposed new link road to Chestnut Street, which aims to provide an alternative to using the A2 and Key Street roundabout, could help minimise any increase in congestion at Key Street roundabout that would otherwise be caused by this development.

However, to provide that improvement, the link road relies on the delivery of a scheme for changes to the Key Street roundabout and A249 southbound on-slip via Chestnut Street that is currently the subject of a bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF).

The results of the HIF bid will not be known for several months, therefore, I ask your members to consider carefully what alternative source of funding for that scheme is available to ensure improvement is delivered in full should the HIF bid fail, and to include details of that alternative funding source in any planning consent granted.

The other issue raised with me by residents is that they want the new link road built before the houses. The proposed short-term route for traffic from the development is via traffic lights at the junction of Wises Lane and the A2.

I have long-argued traffic lights would exacerbate the congestion tailing back onto the Key Street roundabout, and I maintain their use past the first phase would create unacceptable congestion through the Wises Lane/A2 junction, exacerbate poor air quality issues in Key Street and add to congestion on the Key Street roundabout.

If consent for the new road is given I ask that it be delivered before any homes are occupied on phases two or three.

Thank you for your time in considering the above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Whiting', written in a cursive style.

COUNCILLOR MIKE WHITING
Kent County Council Member serving Swale West