

Mr T A Ross-Benham (Chair)
Stalham Town Council

By Hand: 28th June 2010

To the Independent Examiner.

Further representations for Site Specific Proposals Examination regarding representation ID: Stalham Town Council (Mr Tony Ross-Benham) (ID: 149401)

The Town Council still stands by its original representations and has additional evidence to support those representations.

Since our original representation we have had conversations with a retired Civil Engineer who used to work for Yarmouth Borough council. In his opinion the proposed development site preferred by the district council would not be able to join the existing sewage network and would need to be pumped around the north of the town and through our proposed site to get to the sewage treatment works. This would entail costs well over £1m and possibly running into several million, depending on the exact size of the development. This cost would be the responsibility of the developer and in today's economic climate such a cost would probably make such a site economically unviable and therefore not be deliverable.

We have been in contact with the Water Management Alliance (formerly the Internal Drainage Board) and they have told us that they were never consulted on these proposals. They do not cover the actual site but do cover Lower and Upper Staithe Road and all rainwater run off will go into these roads and towards the Broads. The roads and this area is already a flood risk and in heavy rainfall already flood. Their opinion is that any development on this proposed site would further exacerbate the flooding problem. Our proposed site is not within a flood risk area and has a direct route to the sewage treatment works, most if not all rainwater run off will be absorbed by the surrounding fields and not create a flood risk.

The most recent announcement by the new government want more local input into development sites before they are chosen so that when plan come in they can be passed easily as they already have local community approval. The Town Council and the majority of the community oppose the proposed site by the district council but the majority of the community backs our proposed site. Choosing the Town Council and communities proposed site fits into the current government policy and will speed up the deliverability of the new housing development.

The current proposed site is a green window before entering the town yet the district council are happy for this to be lost. Yet in Hoveton the community would prefer a site that the district council say is a green window before entering Hoveton, which the district council believe such green windows should not be lost. We cannot understand the districts views of protecting green windows in other areas but are happy for us to lose ours.

At the time of the district council's proposals the site we proposed was believed by the district to not be available by the landowner. This has since changed and the landowner is in favour of this site being developed for the industrial/commercial needs of the town along with the housing development to meet the needs of the town. The district originally planned for the industrial/commercial development to go with the proposed housing development but have since changed their minds due to the problems that the town council brought up. Their choice now, which is fully supported by the town council, is the only other available site. The landowners are only in favour of this site being used for this purpose if the housing development is also included within this site and not the proposed site of the district council.

The economic climate has changed dramatically since the district council first proposed the site and this current economic climate would delay or even prevent the deliverability of their proposed site. We believe that by changing the site to the one proposed by the Town Council will help to overcome the problems of the current economic climate and is a site that has the best chance of being delivered within the timescale.

The Town Council believes that as it stands the proposals are unsound, unjustified and are not effective in meeting the needs of the town or bringing the best benefits for the community. Changing to the our proposed site would in our view make the proposals sound, effective and justified and will bring the most benefits for the community. There are many objections in other areas against new developments yet Stalham is in favour of, and supports new development here, as it is needed to protect the long-term economical viability of our high street. The district seems to want to impose a site that will create many problems rather than a site that will bring benefits to the town.

We are also concerned as the current proposed site is not available for development under the Core Strategy until after this examination process yet the district council seems to have pre emptied the decision of the inspector by granting planning permission on part of this site already.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T A Ross-Benham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Mr T A Ross-Benham