

Late material – Planning Committee 4th June 2024

ITEM 5 : HILL FARM, HEMPSTED – 23/00993/REM

Representation

Comments have been sent to Ward Councillors, which have been passed to the case officer. The text of the comments is copied in below:

“I am contacting you with concerns about the planning application by Bellway Homes for consideration on 4th June.

I have previously raised issues with the planning department relating to a number of criticisms of the application, but have been forced to accept that they were not considered of sufficient relevance by the planners. However, there is a remaining serious worry I still have. This is the acceptance by the Highways Department with the traffic flow in and out of this sizeable new estate.

Bearing in mind the number of vehicles each household seems to have these days and the uses of home deliveries of all types the quantity of traffic is likely to overwhelm what was originally a narrow village lane, Since I moved into Hempsted some 40 years ago the increase in residential buildings within and around the so-called village has grown tremendously. Indeed, for the past 10-15 years it has felt as though we live on a building site.

The traffic on the lane has increased hugely and has regularly included large builders' lorries and machinery and the number of parents driving their children to the school is chaos at times. The planned development on Hill Farm is around three times the new development that has already taken place (and I exclude the estates around the docks and east of the bypass that nevertheless impact on traffic within the "village"). The new residents also seem to have more vehicles per household than used to be the case. This includes in the original houses in Hempsted that have been taken over by younger families as older residents have died. In High View where I live many homes have at least two or more cars and one family in a three bedroom semi detached house have four. This is the sort of volume I would expect in the Hill Farm development - although goodness knows where they will be parked.

There will be one entrance and exit to the estate and this is toward the bottom of the lane. Vision for cars leaving the estate will be limited as cars travelling down the hill - especially delivery vehicles that are under time pressure speed down the hill. Bearing in mind the occupiers are likely to be young working families I imagine it will be purgatory around rush hour times and would not discount traffic building at the bypass traffic lights with drivers waiting to turn into the lane.

Another factor is the width of the pavement along the lane . It is narrow and tends to slope toward the road. Has consideration even been given to a pedestrian crossing from the new estate? Presumably many more young children will be driven to school - causing yet more chaos - or will be walking to school.

We also wait to see what happens when the development on the old petrol depot comes into play as their entrance is very close to an increasingly busy roundabout.

Today I read on the Gloucester Live website that Highways are concerned about the impact on the St Barnabas roundabout of the 2, 500 housing plan at Whaddon. And quite rightly so, but in ratio terms it seems little different from the hike in traffic within Hempsted.

I don't accept that any of the foregoing is related to Nimbyism, but there is a feeling that we are being stifled as a once small community by all of these developments. We have even found that a much used and long existing track from Rectory Lane to the river has been closed by a new owner of the field.

The late government stressed the need for planners to take more account of the needs of locals, but in my view this hasn't happened in the case of Hempsted.

Perhaps you would be good enough to give some consideration to my observations and maybe try to persuade colleagues on the planning committee to think about this before the meeting."

It is the view of Officers that the relevant planning matters in these comments have been covered in the Committee Report.

There is no change to the Officer recommendation.