



EATON BRAY PARISH COUNCIL

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9th January 2015

Vicki Davies
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House, Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

Dear Vicki,

PLANNING APPLICATION CB/14/04055/OUT LAND OFF TOTTERNHOE ROAD, EATON BRAY, DUNSTABLE BEDS LU6 2BD

With reference to the proposed development made under the planning application as detailed above, having reviewed all aspects of the documentation publicly available at the Parish Council meeting held on 5th January 2015 in respect to the application it was agreed by all councillors that we strongly object to the application.

It is worth noting that the level of communication to the Parish Council from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) on this major application has been poor and we have been given little time to provide a considered and formal response given that the application fell between our December and January Parish Council meetings. In addition, it has proved additionally challenging to meet correspondence submission criteria and the advice we can provide the parishioners given the lack of public notices in the area and the changing of cut-off date for objections.

However, after thorough consideration of the proposal it is for the following reasons with which Eaton Bray Parish Council OBJECT to the planning application:

- 1) The land of the proposed development is designated Green Belt and that, according to Government guidelines, only in 'exceptional circumstances' can developments be approved on Green Belt land and that this is NOT considered an exceptional circumstance.
- 2) There has been no identified need for a development of such magnitude in Eaton Bray and the surrounding areas.
- 3) The recent affordable housing survey identified, across the whole of the parish, an interest for up to 12 small properties of the 'affordable' housing designation but that the scheme



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developers (Grand Union) have struggled since then to really identify any suitable location or real interest for a small development.

4) The area identified suffers heavily from flooding that is not accurately reflected in the environment agency's flood plain area map. A recent correspondence from Anglian Water and the Environment Agency have confirmed in writing to us that they do not recommend or support the development in this area given the flood risk and additional pressure it will put on the water courses.

5) The existing road network could not support the increase in the additional traffic 150 homes would bring. The property size proposed suggests that each one will average 3-4 people. Given that there is little or no public transport network in Eaton Bray that would be suitable for those who would need to use it to get to and from work, each property will almost certainly bring with it 2 cars – which then increases the road usage significantly to an additional 300+ vehicles.

New build residential requires one parking space per bedroom, up to and including 4 bedrooms, plus 0.25 visitors' parking spaces per property. The proposed development at The Rye/Totternhoe Road clearly contravenes CBC's own parking policy.

The Highways Working Group of the Parish Council have already identified that the road network is already heavily under strain with the high level of HGV and 'rat run' traffic using the village as a cut through to avoid the Dunstable gridlock. The main carriageway through the village is breaking up and in many places (Totternhoe Road entry into Eaton Bray and Bower Lane) the carriageway is simply not wide enough. This, in addition to both the construction traffic and the additional resident vehicles, would mean that it is only a matter of time before a serious and possible fatal accident were to occur on roads that are simply not big enough for the present volume.

The proposed development estimates that 50% of the residents of the development would use public transport and walk to/from the bus stops. However, the development plan does not include any pavement areas and thus would mean that these 150+ people would have to walk in the road to a limited and inadequate public transport network.

In addition to this, the recent cancellation of a bus service through Eaton Bray at critical commuting times would make it almost impossible for these new residents to travel using the proposed method of public transport.

7) The proposed site location is on an already dangerous junction, particularly at the weekends when the Rye playing field is heavily used by children playing football. This has historically been a dangerous and difficult junction but with the addition of an additional 300+ cars using the junction would increase the level of congestion and danger.

8) The village's drainage and sewer system is already under threat. The past few years have seen unprecedented levels of flooding in that exact area of the proposed development with some residents of Totternhoe Road being flooded out of their homes for many months owing to the proximity to the flood plain region. Inadequate drainage and sewerage mean that without



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significant investment in the village's entire drain and sewer system raw sewerage would make its way out and into the open. This is supported by Anglian Water's response to us in respect to the application (copy attached).

9) There is only one small junior school in the village and this is already also at capacity and would not support the increase in the number of young children in the area. For the older children, it is our understanding that the vast majority go to Leighton Buzzard for school. However, there is little or no bus route with regular provision that would support such an increase in the number of children. The Transport statement is inaccurate and we suggest that the TRICS data bears no correlation to our current rural public transport service.

In addition, correspondence received from the Head Teacher of Edlesborough School has confirmed that they would not accept any additional volume of intake from a proposed development given their already high-usage.

10) There is one, small shop that would struggle to cope with an increase in the number of residents and the next nearest shops of any size would require those to use their car to travel there.

11) The Section 106 contributions are wholly inadequate for the reasons stated thus far.

12) The proposed size of the development would be one that increases our rural village by 10%+/- and this would have a significant and damaging impact on the village's character.

13) Given CBC's ownership of the land, we would seek their (CBC) assurance that, clearly given the uplift in the value that CBC would receive from the scale of the development, this is not merely a commercial development. The application is unnecessary and overdevelopment in an area that has no demand for the property.

Finally, it is also worth noting that the supporting scheme documents of the proposal contain many inaccuracies, such as Eaton Bray being placed in Buckinghamshire and this, in our opinion, supports the fact that this is simply an ill-thought-out planning application that is not needed or wanted by any of the 4,200⁺ residents of Eaton Bray.

To reiterate, it is for the above reasons, but not limited to, that we object to the proposed large scale development in Eaton Bray.

Yours sincerely,



Heidi R. Head
Clerk to Eaton Bray Parish Council

For and on behalf of Eaton Bray Parish Council

