



DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AGENDA

**THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2016 AT 7.00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

The Councillors listed below are requested to attend the above meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Membership

Councillor D Collins (Chairman)	Councillor Riddick
Councillor Guest (Vice-Chairman)	Councillor Ritchie
Councillor Birnie	Councillor R Sutton
Councillor Clark	Councillor Whitman
Councillor Conway	Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe
Councillor Maddern	Councillor Fisher
Councillor Matthews	Councillor Tindall

For further information, please contact Katie Mogan or Member Support

AGENDA

- 11. THE BEACON - OBJECTION (Pages 2 - 14)**

Agenda Item 11

As this new application has an increased number of flats and parking spaces and also has only 6 electric vehicles as apposed to 20 in the previous application I would like to point out the following.

The applicant is claiming this development promotes high levels of sustainability. However, there are factors which do not point towards this building being as sustainable as claimed, i.e. its location and its longevity/future-proofing.

As pointed out by Highways Authority in the prior application, the site is not considered to be particularly sustainable or accessible to alternative modes of transport due to the site being outside of accessibility zone 3 in DBC's accessibility zones document, there being a low frequency of buses serving the area, the site being 1000m or a 15 minute walk to the train station and the area not being cycle friendly. I would also point out that as the site is adjacent to the main and very busy junction into the town, this would not be very welcoming to pedestrians either. Considering this and the potential for high traffic generation the development conflicts with paragraphs 17,34 and 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

"Para 17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan making and decision taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:

actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;"

*"Para 34. **Plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.**"*

*"Para 35. Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. **Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;**"*

No matter how sustainable a building's design, surely it can only be truly sustainable if located in a sustainable location.

It has also been pointed out that fitting electric car charging points to automated parking systems is economically unfeasible and would leave only 6 charging points for electric vehicles. It is proposed that these 6 charging points as they are fast charging points (which are only compatible with the newest of electric vehicles) will be shared by all residents. This would surely not be practical or sufficient considering the extremely large number of residents thus again conflicting with paragraph 35 of the NPPF.

*"Para 35. Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. **Therefore, developments should be located**"*

and designed where practical to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles;

I would also like to point out a number of policies in Dacorum Borough Council's Local Plan which conflict with the development's increased density (now over **1200 dwellings per hectare**), its location out of the town and local centres (also bearing in mind this gateway location is shown as a green gateway and wildlife corridor in figure 20 of DBC's Core Strategy) and lastly its extremely out of character (with surrounding areas), modern design.

"POLICY 21 DENSITY OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT "

"Densities will generally be expected to be in the range of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare net."

"Higher densities will generally be encouraged in urban areas at locations where services and/or workplaces can be reached without the need for motorised travel or which are served well by passenger transport, for example at town and local centres."

"For sites at the edge of an urban area, special attention will be paid to the effect of development density on open countryside and views. In such locations proposals will be expected to retain existing trees and hedges and incorporate appropriate landscaping in order to achieve a soft edge to the countryside."

Housing proposals will not be permitted if the density of the scheme would adversely affect the amenity and/or existing character of the surrounding area or would fail to satisfy the design criteria in Policy 11."

"POLICY CS10: Quality of Settlement Design

At the broad settlement level, development should:

(a) respect defined countryside borders and the landscape character surrounding the town or village;

(b) reinforce the topography of natural landscapes and the existing soft edges of towns and villages;

(c) promote higher densities in and around town centres and local centres;

(d) protect and enhance significant views into and out of towns and villages;

(f) preserve and enhance green gateways; and

(g) protect and enhance wildlife corridors."

"POLICY CS11: Quality of Neighbourhood Design

Within settlements and neighbourhoods, development should:

(a) respect the typical density intended in an area and enhance spaces between buildings and general character;

(b) preserve attractive streetscapes and enhance any positive linkages between character areas;

(c) co-ordinate streetscape design between character areas;

(d) protect or enhance significant views within character areas;

"POLICY 31 GENERAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS

The scale and nature of development proposals in General Employment Areas will be

assessed having regard to:

(i) the character of the particular General Employment Area;

(iii) the character of adjoining areas;

(iv) the accessibility of the location for motorised vehicles, passenger transport, cyclists and pedestrians; and

(v) traffic generation and highway impact.

Two Waters employment area:

All development must be designed and landscaped to minimise the impact on and enhance the semi-rural character of Boxmoor."

The cumulative affects of incremental developments should also not be overlooked with regard to traffic generation. Nearby proposal H/2 (National Grid and 339-353 London Road) will include 160 dwellings, Proposal MU/4 (Hemel Station Gateway) 200 dwellings, the nearly completed 36 dwellings in Apsley High Street and the development of the Hewdon Hire site 15+ dwellings.

"POLICY CS9: Management of Roads

All new development will be directed to the appropriate category of road in the road hierarchy based on its scale, traffic generation, safety impact, and environmental effect. The traffic generated from new development must be compatible with the location, design and capacity of the current and future operation of the road hierarchy, taking into account any planned improvements and cumulative effects of incremental developments."

'Another material consideration to take into account should be the Two Waters Framework which highlights the Two Waters junction as a significant problem for bottle necks and peak hour traffic congestion even without this addition of 272 flats. '

Despite HCC's recommendation to approve this application, having looked at the last two traffic assessments submitted by the applicant for The Beacon development I feel there are key issues at these junctions which have not been highlighted.

It is mine and many other local residents opinion that there are three main problems at this junction which cause the traffic congestion people have referred to in their objections.

The first and one that has been apparent for quite some time is there being too many vehicles from all directions at the Two Waters Junction trying to get into Apsley (due to the large amount of retail) and as such queuing occurs on the Apsley side (eastern side) not allowing vehicles to get over the junction when the lights are green, causing tailbacks in all directions especially on London Road traveling East towards Two Waters.

This has been made significantly worse since the introduction of the new Aldi supermarket on Whiteleaf Road as not only has there been an increase in traffic but the carpark often fills up to capacity leaving cars queuing back out onto Whiteleaf Road all the way down to London Road which can block traffic travelling westbound on London Road. The other issue being an increased number of cars wanting to turn right out of Whiteleaf Road which not only increases the tailbacks on London Road but when people get frustrated they pull out even if there is no space and again block traffic heading westbound on London Road.

There are no specific times for these scenarios to happen, it is just dependant on how active people are in a retail sense so obviously more apparent at weekends and can be significantly worse in the warmer months. It is our opinion that the introduction of this many flats at this location will be the nail in the coffin so to speak.

I have attached some videos and pictures to show these problems.

As far as the applicants justification of the APS system my concerns still stand, the assumption that 80% of the occupants will not be elderly or have children is in my eyes preposterous, will it be in a contract that the 80% will not be allowed to have children while living in this building? Also I see there is still no allowance in the APS processing time for double parked cars which the beacons layout has a large amount of and once again the applicant is comparing this development to a building with half the number of flats and located in a city centre (The Cube) and also referring to public car parks in other city centres.

Aldi car park queuing video (parked adjacent proposed development entrance) [[OneDrive Link](#)] / [[YouTube Link](#)]

London Road queue video (southbound on London Road towards Whiteleaf Road / Two Waters) [[OneDrive Link](#)] / [[YouTube Link](#)]

Aldi car park queue



People using middle of road



London Road towards Whiteleaf Road / Two Waters queue





Cars queued on opposite side of junction



frustrated drivers pulling out of Whiteleaf Road (turning right)



More London Road queues (towards Whiteleaf Road)





