

Statement of Shotley Parish Council to the Meeting of the Babergh District Council Development Committee June 8 2005 at Shotley Village Hall

At Shotley Parish Council we have sought to do one thing and one thing only in responding to this application and that is to do right by our community: past, present and future. Ours is not a stance of “not in my back yard” because the HMS Ganges site is our back yard and it is a very special back yard full of history and we will be very careful when it comes to unlocking its potential.

Sustainability within the planning process has come to be an objective assessment of cold facts, statistics and data. How far this is from the original concept – the very simple: The ability to meet the needs of this generation without compromising our ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Whilst we have engaged in the discussion and debate on the merits of the application by reference to units per hectare, cars per unit, traffic flows and other objective particulars and by debating the meanings and meanderings of policy guidance and statements we have done so within the context of what we may wish to call that first principle of sustainability.

Shotley is already a community under strain. We have no provision for our young people. Primary health care does not provide the range of services a community of this size requires and the GP practice is working at capacity. What resources we have as a community we largely provide for ourselves. This hall for example operates at close to 100% capacity and was designed to meet the needs of the near 100% increase in population that occurred in the 1980s.

Everyone agrees that the only reason proposals to develop the Ganges site have come forward, is, because the land is available to do so. Were the site not there it is the unanimous view that developments, other than infill, would not happen in this area. The Committee report rightly concurs with this by drawing your attention to how the proposal is contrary to a raft of national and regional policies and guidance designed to deliver safe and sustainable communities and indeed your own local plan, which does not identify Shotley as a suitable location for housing development.

However, the application also has to be assessed on its own merits. This we have sought to do. In our submissions to your selves and to the County Council we have tried to objectively describe our needs and react in a spirit of constructive criticism to proposals for mitigation and amelioration measures.

Our conclusions are:

The proposal does not meet our current unmet needs; For example, in terms of good employment opportunities or for meeting the needs of young people. Where measures are proposed they are either unclear in their purpose or lacking in focus and synergy. The ‘clubhouse’ is a case in point we quite simply do not know what is being proposed. The loss of the playing field would undermine the opportunity to meet some of those needs and the loss of the opportunity to relocate the museum undermines the ‘mixed use’ concept the developers initially envisaged.

On many matters there is too little evidence of the impact that the development will have on residents. Some additional work has been done in respect of the B1456 through to Wherstead but there has not been a full analysis of the impact on Shotley. We have noted the offer of further discussion, however, we do not believe that the safety of residents is a reserved matter. In this case the caution principle has to determine our opinion.

Where measures are proposed with less ambiguity as they are in the Travel Plan we do not see how they can make a substantial impact. Just what is a new and improved bus stop? The Primary Care Trust will respond on the acceptability of the offer for facilities for the GP service, however, we would also add that there have been no proposals brought forward on other recommendations in the Health Impact Assessment.

If you agree the recommendations as presented to you today please do not see this as a step backwards. Over the past two years a great deal has been done by all parties on the needs of this area and that gives us all the tools to consider what is going to be right. As the report says this is not a ‘do nothing’ site. However the approach has to be based on regeneration, economic development and partnership models and not a developer led and reactive approach.

BATHSIDE BAY – UPDATE

On 21 July it was reported that the Government were “minded” to approve the P&O plan to construct a new container port and logistics complex at Shellhaven.

This does not mean that the proposals put forward by Hutchison Port (UK) for Bathside Bay and the re-configuration of Felixstowe South will be turned down. Shellhaven will provide capacity for an additional 3.5 million standard containers (TEUs). Bathside Bay would give an increase of 1.7 million TEUs and Felixstowe South and additional 1.6 million TEUs.

Hutchison Port (UK) contend that their expansion will be still be required to meet the future needs of their company and world trade. The final outcome is still awaited.

Community Responder Scheme

Are you interested in supporting our community to provide emergency medical response assistance until the emergency services arrive?

Full training will be provided and sponsorship for the equipment has been agreed in principle through the Parish Council.

We would not be called out to road traffic accidents but to emergency situations in the home that may require the use of medical equipment such as defibrillators, heart monitors etc. for which appropriate training would be given. If you have already contacted me, please do so again, or for further information please contact Wendy Corness on 788179