

Planning Inquiry Ref APP/D3505/V/05/1185675--Land at the former HMS Ganges site

Evidence supplied with statement: -

- 1. Letter From Philippa Dalton dated 16th December 2005**
- 2. Letter From Elizabeth Aldous dated 21st December 2005**
- 3. Letter From Philippa Dalton dated 4th January 2006**

Statement from Elizabeth Aldous, Chairman Freston Parish Council (3 pages)

I am Chairman of Freston Parish Council and have resided in Freston Village all my life.

Following the death of two people at Freston Crossroads in August 2003 I asked our County Councillor, David Wood, to arrange a meeting with the highways department. This meeting took place on May 6th 2004 at Freston Crossroads.

It was stated at that meeting, by the highways representative Brian Lomas, that it was not possible to put in a roundabout without extensive lighting. This would be strongly opposed on environmental grounds.

Among the issues that we raised was safety of pedestrians crossing the B1456. It is my understanding that crossing this road at certain times of the day is accepted as being unsafe. Laurie Mayer has filmed this so that you can see this for yourself.

At the present time there are three places to access public transport at Freston crossroads. Northbound buses towards Ipswich stop at the bus stop that is by the bus shelter. This is marked on the original plan. Southbound buses going to Shotley stop alongside the verge of the B1456 and those going to Holbrook/ Manningtree stop just after turning onto the B1080.

For some months I have been requesting details of how people will access public transport at the junction.

Following my request at the pre planning inquiry I received a letter from Philippa Dalton dated 16th December. This was accompanied by a drawing produced by JMP consulting- drawing number G060199-04 date

Oct 2005. This diagram shows a southbound bus stop but a third bus stop is not indicated on that map. In the letter she stated that “ The proposed highway improvements have been the subject of extensive discussions with Suffolk Highways, and the preliminary design (as enclosed) has been agreed and accepted”

On receipt of this information I requested further details of the bus stops and a copy of the correspondence that confirmed that the changes had been agreed and accepted by the county council. Please see her reply dated 4th Jan 2006.

I have contacted SCC to ascertain whether any safety checks have been undertaken. The information that I received from R Leonard Snr Development Officer on 11th January 2006 is that he was not aware of any safety audits but that he would expect that the scheme would be audited at first stage (feasibility) before the Inquiry.

At a Peninsula Parishes Alliance meeting on 29.09.04 I tabled the following question to SCC highways department

“Do the figures used by Highways take into account all the current planning approvals both residential and commercial on the peninsula? “
The reply received in writing was *“ The existing traffic figures used in the TA are based upon recent survey data which includes all traffic which currently uses the highway network. The predicted traffic flows used are derived from a worst case assumption of traffic generated by the proposed development, and the committed marina housing development, added to the existing traffic flows. Within the calculations there is an allowance for traffic growth and a further seasonal adjustment to take into account summer traffic to the marina at Shotley.”*

The following 2 planning permissions have been granted in Freston:-

- B/02/02014/FUL Change of use of redundant agricultural building to office/light industrial use (BI). These two units are located in the main village are finished but are not yet in use. In the planning application it indicates that up to 23 people could work there. In the past there were 2 people working at this estate office.
- B/02/2003 FUL relates to conversion of Freston Water Tower to a commercial music studio with an element of short-term residential training. This is adjacent to Freston cross roads. No building work has commenced. There was a previous planning permission for this site.

The Royal Hospital School at Holbrook has been advertising that it will be taking day pupils from 2006. I understand from BDC that this will not require planning permission. The signposted route from Ipswich is via the B1456 and B1080.

Access to public transport is vital to our residents. We have no facilities in Freston. The nearest shop and GP surgery are in Holbrook. The state schools for pupils up to 16 years of age are in Holbrook. For further education including "A" level courses children are required to travel to Ipswich. There are a number of let properties in this village. Some of our residents do not have cars.

The plan that the developer has supplied appears to compound the problem of access to public transport, not improve it. The omission of the third bus stop means that all residents now going to and from Holbrook/Manningtree must cross the B1456. Driving in and out of that junction is not easy now particularly at peak times.

At the development committee meeting held at Shotley Village Hall I had difficulty understanding the points put forward by councillors relating to the local plan. Following that meeting I requested from the solicitor at Babergh District Council all notes of officers and councillors present at that meeting. This request was under the freedom of information act.

I have recently had drawn to my attention Topic Paper: Housing- Babergh Local Plan Alteration No2- Public Inquiry dated August 2004: On page 22 it lists under deemed commitments- Former HMS Ganges - 325. This document was not circulated to parishes. I understand that it was produced for the recent public inquiry into the Babergh local plan. Freston PC did receive a copy of the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No 2 Second Draft dated May 2003. I presume that the development committee members were aware of all these facts when they attended the meeting at Shotley Village Hall on 8th June 2005.

Signature :-

Elizabeth Aldous

Chairman Freston Parish Council