



2002-2003
Neighbourhood Renewal
2004-2005
Supporting People

Mike Hammond
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Mr. John Mullan,
Chairman, Shotley Parish Council,
2 Tudor Close,
Shotley Gate,
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IP9 1PA

Your Ref:
My Ref: PCO80/MH/HT

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28 July 2005

Dear Mr. Mullan,

PLANNING APPLICATION – FORMER HMS GANGES SITE

I refer to your letter dated 13 July.

While I understand your concern that the decision made by the Council's Development Committee in this case was not the one the Parish Council wished to see, I must seek to reassure you that the consultation process that we instituted and maintained over the life of the application was anything but a serious and well-organised outreach to ensure that the local community had every opportunity to see, learn about and comment upon this significant proposal. I also ought to leave you in no doubt that this quite properly took a considerable amount of resources and effort.

Addressing your specific questions:

1. Any pre-application submissions we regard as confidential – otherwise it would discourage developers from discussing their ideas with us in an open way. We do not discourage developers from talking to local resident or others at the same time - in fact in many cases we actively encourage it.
2. Those present at the Committee cannot recall the phrase "done deal" being used, although there was no doubt from Mr Roberts' speech that he was disappointed with the recommendation, and had been confident of a favourable one. However I can tell you that it is the practice of our Head of Planning (Control) not to make his recommendations public nor to discuss them outside his office (even with the applicant) until the report has been published and in Members' hands. So Mr Roberts would not have seen that recommendation until the report was published on 26 May, and was not told, before that date, what the recommendation would be.
3. I would encourage Shotley Parish Council to continue to operate in a spirit of partnership with Babergh and others. These partnerships do help Babergh better understand the needs and aspirations of your community, and enabled our Head of Planning Control to refer to these needs in his report to Committee.