

c/o The Retreat, Station Road
Marston Moreteyne
Bedfordshire MK43 0PU

Lisa Newlands
Development Management
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

January 24th 2012

Dear Sirs;

Application No: CB/11/04445/OUT

Location: Land At Moreteyne Farm, Wood End, Marston Moretaine
Application: Outline Application: Mixed Use Development On 14.5ha
Comprising Up To 125 New Dwellings Including Affordable Housing On
4.15ha Employment Uses Class B1 and B8 On 7.01ha Allotments,
Landscaping, Balancing Ponds and Amenity Space On 3.34ha.

The Marston Moreteyne Action Group, (MMAG) write to oppose the above application for the following reasons:

1.0 The Application

There are errors within the application, e.g.

- 1.1 The design and access statement refers to buses that no longer exist.
- 1.2 The application form is incomplete and does not state whether they propose to connect into the existing drainage system.
- 1.3 The application does not clearly include details of the existing foul sewage system on the application drawings; neither does the applicant state references for the plans / drawings as requested by the application form.
- 1.4 The application states that the plans incorporate areas to store and aid the collection of waste and refers to the Illustrative Masterplan - which does not address the issues.
- 1.5 With regards to the proposal for non-residential use the applicant states that the total gross internal floor space is unknown, however it is clearly identified on the accompanying transport assessment.
- 1.6 The flood risk assessment accompanying the application is out of date and does not take into account the improvement works to the A421.

We believe it is incumbent on the applicant to complete the application correctly - especially one of major significance.

2.0 The Application Process

We understand once again local residents have struggled to engage with the application process:

2.1 The Council's notice of application appears to have been distributed sporadically and on occasion incorrectly addressed.

2.2 Residents were unable to view the documents posted online.

2.3 Two of the documents on the CBC website are wrongly titled and suggests that Sustainability and Environmental Issues have been addressed. The documents entitled "Engineering a Sustainable Environment Part 1" and "Engineering a Sustainable Environment Part 2" are in fact Geotechnical Surveys.

2.4 The "application cover letter" referred to in the Planning Application Form at the time of writing was not available for public view on the Central Bedfordshire website.

2.5 In the time available given the deadline of the 30th January 2012 to comment it is impossible to fully disseminate over 1000 pages of information and comment in detail.

This is at odds with the spirit of the Localism Act 2011 that the local community should be given every opportunity to comment and influence neighbourhood planning - this proposal does not afford such an opportunity.

3.0 Major Development Approval by Stealth

The documentation supporting the application makes reference to a further 10.25ha of land to be reserved for a further 320 units, and whilst we realise the applicant is not applying for permission in this application, by default if this application is accepted it paves the way and sets a precedent for the larger development to be approved.

This is simply obtaining tacit planning permission by stealth which is disingenuous. Equally it means that the full impact and implications of such a major development are diluted so that the applicant does not have to fund associated improvement works - if the plan is to include such fundamental development then it should be addressed as part of the initial outline application.

4.0 The Application Does Not Comply With Local Policy

4.1 With regard to the local context, Policy DM4 states that the development should make best use of available land and lead to more sustainable communities. This application does no such thing.

5.0 The Application Does Not Make Best Use Of The Land

The land borders the old and new A421 and is therefore a more strategic assessment should be made of this land usage and its inter-relationship with surrounding settlements rather than simple offices and storage and distribution units.

This may necessitate changing the usage - which already has a precedent with the existing hotel and petrol station and could add to the amenities of the village and providing meaningful employment opportunities. This opportunity will be lost if this application is approved.

6.0 The Design & Access Statement Does Not Comply With DCLG Guidance

The Design & Access Statement does not comply with paragraph 105 of DCLG Document Guidance On Information Requirements and Validation March 2010 which states that "Design and access statements for outline and detailed planning applications should therefore demonstrate how climate change mitigation (through the minimisation of energy consumption, efficient use of energy including from low-carbon and renewable source to help reduce overall carbon emissions) and adaptation measures (to provide resilience to future climate impacts) have been considered in the design proposal.

The design and access statement does no such thing therefore the application must be rejected.

7.0 Section 106 Offer

The Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms clearly demonstrates the applicant's lack of understanding as to what is actually needed in the village, and instead abdicates responsibility by means of a number of financial contributions to the school, transport, healthcare, sports provision and village hall extension.

The section 106 Agreement should be more thoughtful and related to improving the local area and helping the proposed development integrate into the village - not isolate it as a satellite development vaguely attached on its outskirts.

In addition to the usual contributions described above we would suggest:

- Provision of a new footbridge across the new A421 to link the development to Marston Thrift - something that has become rather isolated as a result of the new road and mitigate the effect of loss of countryside and wildlife as a result of the development.
- Improved utilities infrastructure including fast broadband.
- Refurbishment of roads and pavements within the centre of the village itself.

- Contribution to enable Central Bedfordshire Council to undertake maintenance of areas that are currently looked after by management associations such as Aspen Park since they will be used by resident's of the new development.
- Improved public transport provision including a direct Milton Keynes to Bedford Bus Service.
- Preserving the 10.5ha allocated for future provision as a wildlife haven to contain the creatures that will be displaced by the new development and construction of the new road including foxes, deer, rabbits and birdlife, with a covenant in perpetuity that it cannot be developed.

8.0 Implications Of The Development On Existing Residents

The application does not address the impact on existing residents, for example:

8.1 No consideration has been given in the proposals to the effect on existing residents on routes of the existing footpaths. The increase potentially of say 125 dwellings x say 2 people (guardian and child) = 250 - rising to 445 x say 2 people = 890 at peak times (to school in Marston) is simply not practical or sustainable given the existing infrastructure / pavement widths.

8.2 The proposal does not take any account of the impact on the Aspen Park Resident's. This will be huge bearing in mind the main proposed thoroughfare passes through the areas maintained by the Association which will lead to increased maintenance costs by no fault of the residents.

8.3 The application does not take into account the increase foot traffic on Route 51 which will have a negative impact on the resident's properties bordering the footway.

8.4 The application goes into great detail in terms of noise attenuation for the new development - but does not address the reverberation effect that the same attenuation could have on existing residents on the other side of the old A421.

9.0 The Application Does Not Take Account Current Schemes

The application does not take into account new schemes that already have planning permission including:

9.1 The additional development of hundreds of new homes at Marston Park in the centre of the village and the combined implications that both developments will have transport, healthcare, education, retail and leisure facilities.

9.2 It takes no account of the facilities being built in addition to the homes at Marston Park.

9.3 It takes no account of the proposal to build a giant incinerator, the implication of 500 plus lorry movements at the roundabout off of the A421 or the pollution that the incinerator will saddle new residents of the development with.

10.0 Transport

The transport assessment does not take into the increase traffic as a result of the new developments such as:

10.1 Marston Park Development

10.2 Covanta Rookery Pit South Energy from Waste Plant.

10.3 Centreparcs.

It is equally vague in terms of public transport provision and negates to mention that Bedford to Bletchley line served by the nearest station - Millbrook (some considerable distance from the site) does not operate on Sundays and has a limited hourly service the remaining six days.

Given the above, we believe you have no option other than to reject the application in its entirety.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Roberts
Chair
Marston Moreteyne Action Group (MMAG)