

18<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Mr P Ridley  
Head of Planning Services  
Suffolk Coastal District Council  
Melton Road  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk IP12 1AU

Dear Mr Ridley

**Planning Applications C0/08/1725 – Adastral Business Park and adjoining land, Martlesham - Erection of 2,000 dwellings, 60,000 sq. metres of additional employment floorspace, mixed use centre, primary school, hotel, energy centre, public park, changes to the junction onto the A12, and new road connections etc**

1. The Suffolk Preservation Society (the Society) is pleased to be able to submit the following representations aimed at assisting the LPA in its determination of the above application. They are made without prejudice to comments the Society might subsequently make on the details of the proposal. It asks that they are conveyed, in their entirety, to the Committee and Members whenever the application is discussed, considered and determined.

#### Background

2. The Society submits, at this stage, only comments on the principle of the proposal. It has not had an opportunity to consider its comments on the details of the proposal and does not propose to do so until the LPA have determined the principle. This is because the Society considers at this time, the proposal is premature and therefore it would be unwise to devote its limited resources to commenting on the detail when the application may not proceed in anything like its current form.

3. The Society received a presentation from BT last year on their proposals for the site. BT acknowledged, during the presentation, that the future of the site would be determined via the councils and communities Local Development Framework (LDF) as the various LDDs are formulated. It is aware of the recent consultations and debates regarding the strategic land allocations for future housing which need to be identified in the LDF Core Strategy and that this site has been identified by the council as one it prefers.

4. It is noted that the proposal involves both redevelopment on PDL and development of greenfield land.

5. The Society appreciates the problem the council finds itself in is identifying and bringing forward housing sites to meet the minimum target in the current RSS14. The Society has been concerned that the “top down” process of establishing housing targets, nationally and regionally without sufficient regard to environmental limits and capacity as well as the views and concerns of local communities, concludes with the council often having to bring forward and promote sites local people and communities find totally unacceptable. The need to deliver the RSS housing target for Suffolk Coastal District up to 2021 or 15 years after the adoption of the Core Strategy, must not be at the cost of the local environment, retaining Suffolk’s distinctiveness or against the will of local communities.

#### Principle of Redevelopment and Development

6. The Society accepts that the existing BT site is PDL and that redevelopment for a mixed use proposal, commensurate with the physical and environmental limits of the area and services is a possible option subject to detailing and phasing. But the applicants have linked the proposal to adjoining greenfield land on the basis that a larger scheme offers greater benefits and possibilities. It is the greenfield element which appears to have created the greatest concerns and problems

7. The redevelopment and development of the area represents a major change and planning issue not least to the local community. They understandably are against the total package due to its scale and impact. Given this the Society sees it as fundamental that the future of the whole area is determined in the LDF process via the Core Strategy Submission. This will ultimately allow local people, the Society and others, to have their concerns considered by an independent inspector in an examination into soundness of the Core Strategy. It will also allow the applicant and LPA to make their views known. The Society understands, that prematurity is a valid reason to refuse the application at this stage.

8. It is unfortunate, in the Society's view that the applicants have at this stage submitted this application. It has only apparently alienated communities and others against the principle of the proposal and for them to be seen as potentially trying to influence or pressurise the council into allowing the site for future development despite valid objections from local communities.

**9. The Government has made it clear that it expects councils to determine the future of sites and developments of this nature and scale to be via the LDF process and not via ad-hoc planning applications.** Therefore, the Development Control process should not be the way the future of the site is determined as it will seriously curtail the ability of objectors to pursue their concerns. The Society would be against the processing and determination of the proposal by the LPA or Secretary of State in advance of a final decision on the LDF Core Strategy Submission.

#### Concluding comments

10. Given the above, the Society suggests the following:

- a. The application is withdrawn at this stage to allow the future of the area to be determined by the independent inspector when considering the soundness of the LDF Core Strategy;

or

- b. The application is refused as premature until adoption of the final version of the LDF Core Strategy by the council has taken place.

11. In the event, that for whatever reason, the LPA decides not to follow the suggested courses of action in 10 a. or b. above, and to proceed with the processing of the application with a view to its approval, then the Society would be pleased to submit comments aimed at ensuring any proposal and development addresses major issues and concerns and is of the highest possible environmental, design and sustainable standards. Our initial assessment suggests many changes, improvements, omissions and additions will be necessary to achieve this.

12. The Society asks to be kept informed on the processing of the application and specifically to be consulted on the details once the principle of development has been considered. It would ask to be consulted on all amendments. It also asks to be informed of the eventual decision on the application.

Yours sincerely

Richard Ward DipTP MRTPI  
Director

Cc Go East

Cc Chris Mole, MP & John Gummer, MP

Cc SPS Executive

Cc James Lightfoot

Cc SPS Suffolk Coastal District Committee

Cc PTC Committee

Cc Ipswich Borough Council

Cc John Pitchford, Strategic Planning and Sub-Regional Partnerships Manager -  
Suffolk County Council

Cc Waldringfield Parish Council

Cc Anne Maddison - Waldringfield Wildlife Group

Cc Waldringfield Sailing Club

Cc Hemley Parish Council

Cc Martlesham Parish Council

Cc Woodbridge Town Council

Cc Media consultants

Cc Ipswich Society

Cc Chief Ex of BT

Cc David Lock Associates