

Down End Road Appeal - August 2021

Thank you Madam Inspector for allowing me to speak. This is a joint statement by myself and Cllr Sue Walker my fellow ward councillor for Portchester West Ward which this site is within. From the first consultation and right through this application we have both been concerned about the effect 350 houses and associated car movements that this application would have on Down End Road and further afield the local road network. Over our many years as ward councillors we have noticed a huge increase in traffic movements up and down Down End Road. Down End Road and some of its close by roads have become rat runs. Since developments have multiplied along the A27 from Portchester to easterly destinations, many many traffics lights have been put into place. It is now common practice for vehicles moving east west or west east to use the old military road along the top of portsdown hill which ultimately leads down through Down End Road to the A27 to avoid the hold ups at traffic light junctions.

The accident record for Down End Road is poor. Over the last 10 years there have been 10 accidents, 5 serious, and 4 slight. Very sadly in June 2020 a 21 year old died at the Down End Road railway bridge. When you visit this site you will undoubtedly notice the peculiar alignment of the bridge, and its length. Our residents and ourselves have noticed the vast increase in traffic, and we have had numerous complaints about the safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists as well as vehicles.

The junction with Down End Road and the A27 is always busy with traffic coming and going between Portchester and Fareham up to the Delme Roundabout at peak times particularly the traffic queues in all directions and it is getting worse.

This site will exacerbate the use of the car because there are no real facilities close by, there are no shops nor will there be from this development, even the infant and junior school catchment area for this site is nowhere near within walking distance which again will make the site dependant on the car. We are not against housing, but housing has to be where facilities are available or close by, and does not make dependency on car use a must. If however, the

site were to be found in some respects sustainable despite the huge increase in car use, we have always taken the view that as a basic must a footbridge, whatever the cost, should be provided alongside the existing railway bridge and we have asked for this requirement on a number of occasions.

The developer is proposing traffic lights to alleviate the issues with the narrow bridge BUT there appears to be no plans to allow pedestrians to cross Down End Road from one side to the other nor for cyclists to be accommodated.

As a local councillor we have always felt that the safest way to accommodate pedestrians over the railway bridge would be a separate foot bridge keeping cars and pedestrians separate. The consequential queuing of traffic particularly from Down End road southwards and northwards with tailbacks and further congestion on the A27.

There is also a major rat running issue through the roads running parallel to the A27, sometimes with very large lorries and coaches trying to miss the queuing traffic causing significant disruption for residents.

Cams School, one of our senior schools is close by with many many children walking to and fro each day. It cannot be good for their health as they walk alongside queuing traffic and I know that Dr Cullen has made a good representation on this particular issue.

To end our statement we would implore you to consider most carefully the pedestrian and vehicle safety which would result from these proposals. We do not wish to see accidents or injuries from this proposed development.

If this appeal is allowed we will see the loss of another farm which provides agricultural produce which undoubtedly contributes to the ability for this country to grow its own produce. I am somewhat surprised that DEFRA make no comments on the number of good agricultural land and farms that are being lost not only this area but across the country.

Madam Inspector I will forward a copy of this statement to Mr Salter for ease of reference.