

Subject: APP/H1515/W24/3353271 - Officers' Meadow, Land North of Shenfield

Date: Monday 2 December 2024 at 15:42:41 Greenwich Mean Time

From: Jane Piper

To: Kathryn Williams, planning@brentwood.gov.uk, caroline.corrigan@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

CC: Ben Yallop

Hi Kathryn

We note that on 22 October 2024, Brentwood BC Planning Committee resolved to approve the Redrow planning application on land north of Shenfield (re: 22/01324/FUL) for 191 dwellings which is, of course, part of the R03 allocation.

In the light of this decision, the resolution to grant the outline planning application for the safeguarded primary school and early years site on R03 (ref:23/01159/OUT) on 9 July 2024 and in advance of the Council's Statement of Case being prepared on the Croudace appeal, we write to request that the Council reviews its case, in particular in regard to the second draft reason for refusal of the Croudace housing scheme that,

"there has been insufficient early, inclusive and effective engagement with the community in conflict with Policy BE14 - 2.a and as such there has been failure to properly consider the needs of the community within the development."

As you will recall, the development proposals on land north of Shenfield were first published for consultation in the Brentwood Local Plan Pre-submission Local Plan in February 2019, under Policy R03. The proposals were then consulted on again when the plan was submitted for Examination and were the subject of a number of hearing sessions throughout the Examination process from December 2020 to end of July 2021.

Collaborative working was then continued during the extensive period of work to develop the Masterplan Development Principles document, with all four developers working with BBC officers and ECC Place Services as well as other statutory consultees. The draft document was then presented to an All Members Briefing held on 3 August 2022, and then to the Essex Quality Review Panel on 7 June 2023, along with the four individual draft applications. It should be noted that the Croudace proposals were presented as a single hybrid application for housing and the safeguarded school site. The Masterplan Development Principles document also has its own website (<https://landnorthofshenfield.co.uk/>) set up by Meeting Place on behalf of the developers that went live on 5 July 2023 with the draft document.

During this time, and after the approval of the Principles document on 3 August 2023, Croudace had regular pre-application discussions with officers and statutory consultees to discuss its specific application.

Croudace then undertook its own pre-application public consultation and community engagement – on the hybrid housing and school proposals - in general conformity with the overarching objectives of the Localism Act 2011, NPPF 2021, and the BBC 'Statement of Community Involvement' (SCI) adopted in December 2018. This is all

set out in the SCI submitted as part of the full application. Croudace offered multiple genuine opportunities for all members of the community and a wide range of other stakeholders to comment on and input into the proposed development, including:

- Newsletters and enclosed feedback forms sent to over 1,800 local addresses
- An online webinar with the Applicant and Consultant Team including a live Q&A session, held on 11 July 2023
- Invites sent to over 180 of the nearest neighbours for a 'near-neighbour event' which offered pre-booked appointments with the Applicant and Consultant Team
- A project website with an online feedback form (<https://landnorthofshenfield.co.uk/croudace-homes/>)
- Meetings and ongoing engagement with political and community representatives
- A dedicated email address, freephone telephone number and freepost address, and
- Engagement with the local media.

It should be noted that all the work under the Local Plan and Masterplan Development Framework applied equally to all four development sites. The pre-application engagement was specific to each application. It should also be noted that according to information in the Redrow application, its community engagement was less than that undertaken by Croudace for its hybrid proposals.

The decision to permit the Redrow application and the outline application for the safeguarded school and early years site will be material considerations at appeal.

As set out in the PPG on determining planning applications, it is clear at paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 21b-016-20140306, that members must take decisions on planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This ensures that decisions are made in a consistent manner. It is not clear from the YouTube video recording of either the Redrow or safeguarded school site decision (nor the minutes of the decision on the safeguarded school site) what reasons the Committee had for departing from its earlier decision regarding the Croudace full application for housing (ref 23/01164/FUL).

The importance of consistency in decision-making is a fundamental tenet of the planning system, and as such Croudace is affronted by this uneven treatment. We invite the Council, therefore, not to persist in suggesting that planning permission should be refused on that ground. If the Council persists with this point, we envisage making an application for costs on the basis of this unreasonable conduct.

We look forward to receiving your response on this matter.

Whilst writing, and further to my previous email, would you please let me know who will be dealing with the appeal so I can engage with them regarding the SoCG. The deadlines are quite tight.

Kind regards

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Director

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