

From: GRANT, Helen

Sent: 03 November 2017 14:45

To: Rob Jarman <robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk>

Cc: ashleywynn@maidstone.gov.uk; stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk

Subject: MBC Planning application 16/508660 (Glebe Land south of Vicarage Road Yalding) - Transport Assessment

Dear Rob

I write both as a resident of Yalding and the local MP to express my serious concerns about the quality and substance of the transport assessment relating to the above application.

I refer to the attached letter of objection from Dr John Ackerman dated 29th October 2017. Dr Ackerman has gone to some considerable trouble to point out the flaws in the existing assessment and his statistical data seems entirely justifiable in demanding a review.

My own evidence in support of his letter, and also opposing this application (pro tem), is that of personal experience as a local road user. My comments relate to two locations; Vicarage Lane and Yalding Town Bridge.

Vicarage Lane

My residence is located off Vicarage Lane about half a mile from the junction with Yalding High Street. I confirm Mr Ackerman's contention that this road, in current usage, is not a two-lane, category 4, Urban All-Purpose (UAP4) road. It is, for all intents and purposes, a single track road due to vehicular parking on both sides throughout the day.

When I leave my driveway into Vicarage Lane I do not believe I have ever managed to navigate the entire stretch to Yalding High Street without either yielding to oncoming traffic, or being given thoroughfare by considerate oncoming drivers. In both cases this involves vehicles pulling over into people's drive entrances, and such like, in order to allow others to pass. It is simply not true to describe it as a two-lane road.

Yalding Town Bridge

I confirm everything Dr Ackerman has already set out in his letter regarding waiting times, backing-up, the impedance of emergency vehicles and so forth. Even the current situation is unsustainable, let alone capacity being extendable to future increases in traffic. Approaching the bridge from Benover Road I frequently have to wait for several minutes in static traffic, surrounded by exhaust fumes, unsuccessfully attempting to cross the Town Bridge.

Often I am forced to turn 180 degrees and backtrack down the B2162 to use the very narrow Mill Lane (opposite the junction of Emmett Hill Lane) as an alternative route to crossing the river Beult.

On occasions even this option is unavailable due the backing up of vehicles both in front and behind, preventing me from turning my vehicle around.

Further, Mill Lane feeds into Vicarage Lane which, as mentioned above, is already congested with parked vehicles on both sides of the road, offering a wholly unsuitable by-pass to the village bridge.

Approaching the bridge from Yalding High Street also frequently presents long waiting times and I am often forced to divert down Kenward Road to Watlington railway crossing and down through Nettlestead if I need to travel south.

Whilst writing this letter I have become aware of another issue relating to this application which suggests procedural impropriety and I raise this as the local MP with concerns for the governance of the planning process in Maidstone.

I understand that the planning officer yesterday (2nd November) published his recommendation to the planning committee a day before the public consultation period closes (today, 3rd November) ahead of the matter being put before the planning committee next Thursday (9th November). I must therefore question the reasoning for this and whether or not it is procedurally acceptable.

It strikes me that the matter is not yet properly prepared for committee consideration, with an incomplete public consultation, and should therefore be removed from the list for next week.

In view of the shortcomings of the traffic impact assessment I would go so far as to suggest that this application should not proceed under any circumstances until an accurate and verifiable transport impact assessment has been undertaken.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen".

HELEN GRANT MP