

Ask for: Phil Kirby
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Our ref: PK/CBR
Your ref:
Date: 22 May 2018

Mr Peter Milliken
Chair of Easton PC
Sent by email to milliken@gmx.com

Dear Mr Milliken

In response to your letter dated 23 April 2018 I can confirm that I have examined the issues and concerns Easton Parish Council has raised.

In responding to your complaint the first point to note is that there is no fixed process for the discharge of conditions imposed as part of a Local Development Order. Therefore I have not been able to identify any breach of the planning regulations or adopted processes.

In light of the above I understand that officers' initial desire was to expedite the delivery of the infrastructure required to bring forward development on the Food Enterprise Zone. As a consequence a relatively light touch approach to the approval of the highway details was adopted. However, when it became evident that there was a growing level of local angst about the proposed highway works this approach was reviewed and a decision was made to change the case officer (to avoid any perceived conflict of interest); to carry out a broad consultation exercise; and to refer the matter to Broadland District Council's Planning Committee for a final decision. These changes were communicated to you in Phil Courtier's email dated 23 April 2018.

Since Phil Courtier's email dated 23 April 2018 I understand that further legal advice is being sought regarding the location of the point of access to the site and the manner in which this element of the proposal is being progressed. Notably, legal advice is being sought regarding whether the current access plans need a separate planning application to be submitted to South Norfolk Council and/or whether it's more appropriate to move the access so that it is entirely in Broadland's jurisdiction with the inherent impact upon existing vegetation.

Whilst we are waiting for this advice the current proposal remains in a hiatus and I see no benefit in carrying out a consultation exercise on a matter which may fundamentally change. Similarly, I see no benefit in withdrawing the current submission prior to receiving the aforementioned legal opinion.

Once this legal opinion is received I am happy to share its contents with you and any other interested parties.

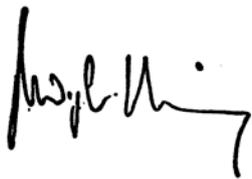
I note that the main thrust of your complaint is that Broadland District Council and its officers have failed to be open and transparent. In response I accept that the Council could have carried out a much wider consultation exercise when the details of the highway works were first formally received. However, as soon as it became evident that there was local concern regarding the proposal the matter was reviewed and a change of approach was adopted. The fact that we are currently awaiting legal advice means that this change of approach has not yet been fully implemented but I am satisfied that this does not constitute a lack of transparency or openness.

I am also satisfied that no one has been disadvantaged by the Council's actions regarding this matter to date. All interested parties will have an opportunity to make written representations in due course and the matter will be considered by the Planning Committee where public speaking will enable interested parties to make additional verbal representations.

In light of the above points I am unable to justify your complaint.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint you are entitled to refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman. More information can be found online at www.lgo.org.uk or by phone at 0300 061 0614. Should you decide to take this course of action I would encourage you to do so in a timely fashion to avoid being ruled "out of time" by the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Kirby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Phil Kirby
Chief Executive