

Friday 16 September 2016

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING DEPARTMENT.

Reference: Colchester Borough Council **Development Framework July 2016**

MERSEA ISLAND – Brierley Paddocks and Dawes Lane proposals.

Dear Sirs,

I am pleased to see that your overall view and statement for the next Local Plan regarding the Island has generally covered all aspects sensibly.

However, the inclusion of two large areas to supply a total of 350 houses is not welcome. What happened to the proposed smaller sites which were originally mooted? These would have given more natural growth and no doubt will pop up as “infill” proposals during the life of this new plan, thus considerably increasing the total amount of dwellings and consequent extra call on our already creaking and overstretched infrastructure. No doubt many others have made the points reference the state of our infrastructure and facilities, or lack of.

These two proposed development sites will both have difficult access. East Road for Brierley Paddocks is the busy spine road running along the top of the Island with very many roads coming off it on both sides. It is not a wide road and carries much traffic, including an hourly bus service. The Dawes Lane development is even worse. It cuts across open farmland right on the top of the Island and will be very visible. Dawes Lane itself is very narrow, just room for two *cars* to pass, and gives onto the East Mersea Road at a difficult junction with bad sightlines, just below the Mersea Barrow. This would be the most direct way to and from the site coming on and off the Island. Road “improvements” would have to be made to both these roads would be will be expensive and ruin the rural character of the area. You would then have to put traffic calming measures in along Dawes Lane as it is, peculiarly, straight– more expense! Also, is it sensible to have sites served by only one main internal road so that emergency vehicles only have one point of access. Suppose this access is blocked?

Essex County Council Highways Department have recently designated the Island roads outside the 30mph limits as limited to 40mph, thus indicating that our roads are narrow and twisty and not suited to high volumes of fast traffic. Not only just the Strood but also the road to Colchester as far as the public house standing at the junction with the Peldon/Maldon road is **the ONLY road** on and off the Island. Not only can the Strood be blocked by high tides and abandoned vehicles but any incident on this stretch of road can block it. It is narrow with ditches and banked hedges each side. Two double decker buses have in the past fallen in the ditch here, also a car or two, and this has caused long delays in clearing the road. This means nobody aint going anywhere fast. Also the County have now put a 40mph speed limited near the junction and round the corner on the Colchester Road here.

I think you must be honest and admit that in the event of a catastrophe it would be impossible for Mersea to be evacuated down this one road. It would take only one panicked driver to stall, or hit another vehicle, to cause chaos. This also needs to be borne in mind pending a possible new atomic power station at Bradwell.

In the present political climate with the push for more housing nationally, I cannot see that these proposed 350 house sites will last us for the life of the Plan. They will be done and dusted within 5 years and then more land will be needed. And how many local young people, or any locals, manage to afford to buy them? No, they will pull people in from outside, people who work in Colchester or London as there are very limited employment opportunities here.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Shehadeh,

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