

From: [harris, dave](#)
To: [Paul Henry](#); [awilford](#); [C Sparks](#)
Cc: [berntsen, duncan](#); [chapman, tim](#); [foley, stuart](#); [gilbert, tom](#)
Subject: Upnor Road
Date: 06 December 2019 18:17:01

Hi Paul/Andy/Chris

Hope you are all well and apologies for emailing late on a Friday evening – which I know Planners are often criticised for doing, and then going home! If it is any consolation I will be picking up on emails over the weekend.

I know you met with my team for an initial pre app meeting and Duncan has given me some feedback on the discussion today. My purpose in emailing was really to provide some comments on the principle based on our initial discussions a while back, the comments I have from Duncan and what I have seen from the plans you showed them this week.

As you know, at our prelim meeting I highlighted policy concerns regarding development of this site, based on the need to protect the hogmarsh valley and the landscape sensitivity of the site. You responded by advising that you noted my comments but felt you could potentially address both concerns. I am not sure those same policy concerns were fully expressed this week.

The site is a very sensitive one in the Hogmarsh Valley and is extremely prominent in landscape terms. As part of our SLAA assessment work for the Local Plan, we did consider proposals put forward by the church commissioners for the valley. We were very clear to them and in the assessment. The Hogmarsh Valley is very important in order to provide separation from Fridsbury/Wainscott and Upnor in one direction and Chattenden in another. It also provides an important landscape function as you come around the by pass.

We had a discussion (at our prelim meeting) over how prominent Castle Street is and that it detracts from the landscape and I accept that point.

The challenge I put down to you, (while not wanting to encourage you to continue with promoting the site as I – and my policy team -feel very strongly about the principle of this area) was how could you address the landscape impact and improve the impression of Castle Street, while also addressing the co-alescence issue and the precedent any development would set on the rest of the Hogmarsh valley.

I have now seen the plans you showed Duncan, Stuart and Tim and they do not address the concerns I have, indeed they substantiate those concerns.

While I am not wanting to encourage you, if you are looking to proceed then I would suggest you limit development to extend no further to the south west than the end of development of Castle Street and then to provide a new wooded area to the west and north west to bring back part of the wooded belt that used to be there and which would then significantly soften the development and merge it better into the landscape. This would though require a significant reduction in units. I am still not saying that would make it acceptable in principle but is the only way I can see that there would be any level of support for your proposal in terms of addressing the key concerns I have highlighted above.

I am really sorry if that this comes across so negatively, but I really need you to fully understand the sensitivities of this site and I appreciate just how expensive a lot of the work you need to do will be and I don't want you wasting money.

I hope you take this advice in the spirit it is meant. If following this you still wish to proceed then my team will happily work with you to make the scheme as good as it can be, but please be aware that the principle may still not be able to be overcome.

Kind regards

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