

Attn: Drayton 2020 Steering Group

Dear Drayton 2020 Steering Group,

19/03/14

Letter of Concern regarding Possible Barrow Road Development.

With some of us having attended 2020 Steering Group meetings and public consultations we are concerned about a number of recent developments regarding the above.

Our concerns are expressly about:

- Site Priority
- Site Layout
- Timing
- Traffic & Safety
- Motive

Firstly, it seems that Barrow Road has switched from 2nd to first priority on the NDP list but without any public consultation. Who decided this? When and why? Talk is, the developers will be on site by Spring 2015.

Secondly, having expressed our concerns regarding the site layout in the draft document for Drayton 2020 NDP (and being invited to comment) we note there has been no change to the latest site layout plan dated 6th March 2014. Tony Croucher, in his comments regarding the Drayton NDP points out that plan details for the proposed Barrow Road Site were not provided but were provided for The Manor Farm site. Many of us have since received a plan for this site dated 6th March 2014. This was a surprise to most of us living close to the Barrow Road Site. Again who decided – when and why?

Separation of new housing from existing housing seems to have been adopted as a principle for the South High Street Site yet completely ignored for the Barrow Road site. Surely matters of principle should hold for all areas of the village. (Drayton 2020 NDP Paragraph 123, Page 52)

There seems to be evidence from the site layout that the private land developers agents have an agenda to develop the infrastructure in the most economic format without consideration for those who will be affected, or those who will be purchasing the new units. We have suggested the simple solution of transposing the new housing units in order to maximise the open areas for both existing and new properties which would maintain and even increase new housing unit values as well as privacy for all concerned. (Reference written observations from Mr Croucher in February 2014, paragraph 7).

We have been led to believe the Drayton 2020 plan is our chance to determine our own future under tough demands from Central and Local Government so we question why the Steering Group is putting the priorities of private Land Development Agents ahead of the villagers directly affected?

Speaking informally to some of the Steering Group committee members at a recent Housing Delivery Update meeting held at Abingdon Guild Hall, Mr Harris expressed these concerns and was told that to develop the layout to the north and west of the field would require a change in Legislation. We are concerned the steering committee has accepted this advice from the land development agents with no proof and in fact Mr Adrian Duffield, Head of Planning for Vale of White Horse District Council confirmed that no legislation or regulations exist in this regard. He also verbally noted that most developers reasons are usually from an economic viewpoint.

Closely related to this is our concern about the timing of the potential development. None of us were aware that the Steering Group are actively negotiating with the developers agents for a construction start as early as next spring. For these reasons, whilst it is good that the Steering Group have discovered a pro-active private land development agent, we feel it is unhealthy for the Land Development Agents to be influencing the Steering Group in a way which is beneficial to the Land Developers yet places the Villagers in a Lose-Lose situation, when a positive outcome could so easily be achieved. (This before any plans have even been approved).

Further concerns involve the traffic issues such a development would have on the already congested artery that is Abingdon Road. Less than ½ a mile from the large housing development (160 units South of Abingdon) on the Drayton Road that is soon to be going ahead, a further 60 housing units on this stretch of road is just ludicrous. We all know what happens when there is an incident on the A34. The safety of pedestrians walking on this section of the village to the shop or post-office is of paramount concern and there have already been comments by concerned villagers on this subject.

The detailed plan on display in October last year suggested a mini-roundabout at Sutton Wick Lane would provide access to the Barrow Road site. That has now changed to a staggered entrance. Again how can we rely on the Drayton 2020 plan when so many changes are apparently implemented in an ad hoc fashion with no consultation. Inserting yet another T-intersection so close to the Sutton Wick intersection will create further safety issues. The Amber assessment against Low Impact on Traffic Flow is misleading and of all the possible development sites in Drayton this should be Red.

Some residents have noticed that several existing houses are completely omitted from the developers latest plan. Are these to be bulldozed. Do the occupants know? Is this another error? Or is there a plan that some know about and others don't. One couple living in Abingdon Road at the access to Barrow Road are being continually pestered with offers to buy their house well over the asking price. Is this to secure infrastructure access?

We are concerned that either the village is being sold short by Drayton 2020, or developers are at work trying to undermine Drayton 2020 and force through development that those living adjacent to the Barrow Road site do not welcome and regarding which they have received contradictory signals.

In conclusion, we feel our concerns are being ignored and undermined, and for the above reasons and until our concerns have been adequately addressed, we do not feel we can support the Drayton NDP in its current format.

Yours sincerely
