



## **PALLS Response to Cicero Online Consultation Event**

**3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to confirmation of safe receipt of our views and your response. As your consultation format does not permit the attachment of documents, we are copying this response and attachments by email to Jason Lewis of Cicero Estates and Adam Bennett of Ken Parkes Associates. You may contact us at [pennandlymlanes@gmail.com](mailto:pennandlymlanes@gmail.com).

### **1. Consultation and public engagement**

For public consultation to have meaning it has to be capable of creating change and allow for a dialogue between the developer (in this case site promoter as there is no developer or housebuilder) and the affected community. You have made no such invitation. Are you prepared to allow the community to help shape the plans? If so, we would be happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss our concerns. If not, this online consultation event is not consultation; it is simply an opportunity for you to tell the community what you are going to do.

### **2. Non-comprehensive development**

Now you have parted company with the adjacent landowner (Belco) your proposed development is piecemeal, not phased. You can provide no certainty of the proposed layout on Site 2 (the Belco land) or on the total number of dwellings proposed to be built, the timing of their provision, the provision of SANG, ANRG or public open space, the nature of pedestrian or vehicular access or whether and how it will integrate with your development or link to the public right of way. The absence of a proposed pedestrian and cycle access to Lower Pennington Lane, which will be the main desire line to schools and local facilities, will force people into their cars because they will not feel safe having to walk even further up a lane with no pedestrian provision. Development should be provided as an integrated whole and all the impacts considered comprehensively by the District Council.

### **3. Misrepresentation of Proposals**

Your presentation is misleading and omits to mention or misrepresents several fundamental elements of the proposed development.

You fail to mention the 25% increase in the development area over the SS6 allocated area or that this area is all within the New Forest National Park (the proportion is greater if the Belco land is excluded) to provide 2 new roads and drainage infrastructure to serve the housing estate. You have incorrectly represented the development within the National Park as being within the site allocation. Have the New Forest National Park Authority been consulted about your proposals? You say that you will make a cross-boundary application – does that mean two applications, one to New Forest District Council and one to the New Forest National Park Authority? The National Park Authority have made it very clear that they will not devolve their planning responsibilities to the District Council.

You have sought to deliberately conceal your proposal to widen and straighten the part of Ridgeway Lane adjacent to Poles Lane on further land within the National Park by excluding it from the red line development area and making no clear reference to it anywhere.

#### **4. Damaging Effect of Proposal on Rural Lanes**

We welcome the recognition in your Character Area Study that lanes are rural in character and your statement that:

*'There is no public footway in this location but grass verges to both sides of the public highway. This absence of urbanising features is fundamental to the character of the rural lane.'*

You only refer to Ridgeway Lane in this context but this description is equally applicable to all of the lanes. However, nowhere in your analysis do you mention how much traffic your development will generate (with or without the rest of SS6) or how conflict in either Lower Pennington Lane, Ridgeway Lane or the wider lane network is proposed to be managed. Nor do you recognise the existing heavy recreational use of the lanes. These are fundamental omissions. None of the lanes are wide enough to allow two vehicles to safely pass without slowing or pulling over and all are shared spaces for all users without footpaths. Your development will increase conflict and reduce safety.

The proposed layout is designed for the private car. Proposed pedestrian routes are not on the desire lines to local facilities. Any development should be permeable and give priority to pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with national planning policy.

We strongly object to the proposed through route and access onto Ridgeway Lane. There is no reasoned planning justification for either the proposed access onto Ridgeway Lane with the associated widening and straightening of this ancient drovers' route adjacent to a listed building or for the proposed two vehicular accesses to connect to in order to provide a route through the site. If emergency access is necessary (and if the site is properly designed, we see absolutely no reason why a secondary access is required) an alternative controlled solution utilising a pedestrian/cycle way could be made. Traffic calming would not prevent a through route becoming a rat-run through the rest of the lanes, increasing traffic flows and posing a danger to both vehicular and non-vehicular lane users who have to share the space.

We refer you to our PEP report (attached to our separate email) which sets out in detail our principal concerns on transport matters. This report has been with NFDC and on the PALLS website for 6 months now (including during the period of your pre-application consultation) and we are sure you are already familiar with its contents.

#### **5. Visual impact of proposed development on the lanes and wider area**

Whilst we appreciate that this development is completely speculative (therefore the layout cannot be considered to provide any certainty as to what would be built where) we comment as follows.

Cramming the highest density development hard up against the perimeters of existing low-density housing on the northern and eastern boundaries would result in development which would be visually prominent through gaps in the verdant and spacious existing built frontage especially from Ridgeway Lane and Woodside Park. These are the highest parts of the site and the development will

not sit down in the landscape as claimed. The proposals are entirely at odds with both the adopted Lymington Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document and the draft Masterplanning SPD and adopted Local Plan Policy SS6 itself, none of which are mentioned anywhere in this consultation.

This site is the southern rural edge of Pennington, not urban Bath. A neo-Georgian crescent is completely out of character and inappropriate in this location.

## **6. Landscape Impact**

The development refers to the retention of existing trees on the eastern boundary which are not within the site or under the control of the site promoter. More generally the proposals rely heavily on the retention of existing boundary trees and vegetation outside the site to screen the proposed development, some of which simply do not exist. Where they do, with the exception of the wind-blown and partially felled non-native leylandii screen on the southern boundary, their retention is not within the control of the site promoter. The proposals do not provide sufficient space for landscaping along the site boundaries and will have an urbanising effect. Your site plan shows the Monterrey Pines on Lower Pennington Lane preserved as a screen, but many have already been felled, and more are scheduled for felling.

## **7. Recreational Greenspace and Impact on National Park and Protected Ecological Areas**

The proposals for SANG and ANRG are confusing and the areas appear to overlap. What is the difference? We can find no reference to identified areas of public open space. Is there any? One of the areas on the northern boundary shown as public open space on the adopted masterplan for Policy SS6 is excluded completely. We question the functionality and usability of these spaces many of which are little more than linear corridors or road verges. Even the largest area of proposed SANG will be no more than a road dominated on-lead dog exercise area. This development will increase recreational pressure on the European protected sites of the Solent and the New Forest and cause damage to important supporting habitat for these sites. It will also damage the high biodiversity value of the site and will not deliver a net environmental gain as it is required to do.

## **8. Drainage**

We attach for your consideration a report we have commissioned to examine the issues regarding drainage of the site – which again has been sent to NFDC and is on our website (attached to our separate email). Your own published assessments indicate that the site is unsuitable for SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) and the fact that you now propose to take a further hectare of unallocated National Park land for drainage infrastructure for your proposed housing development simply confirms the scale of the problem. Given that you refuse to publish any of your supporting technical reports we are unable to comment further on your drainage proposals. Suffice it to say that the site is low-lying, has a high groundwater level, and regularly floods at the lower end. We are concerned that your development will not only be difficult and expensive to drain, affecting site viability, but also be likely to lead to increased risk of flooding off-site. It is imperative that a drainage solution is provided for the whole of SS6 which does not rely on additional development outside the site allocation.

## **9. Pedestrian proposals and other off-site works**

Your proposal is showing two pedestrian links to the east of the site and none at all to the west as you have no control over the delivery of the development of Site 2. Neither will meet the desire line to local schools, leisure facilities or local shops.

The link which runs through amenity land south of Forest Gate Gardens does not indicate whether it is solely for pedestrians or whether it includes a cycleway. Its construction would appear to conflict with undertakings made by the District Council to the residents of Forest Gate Gardens. Your proposal to construct a footpath at the northern end of Ridgeway Lane between Forest Gate Gardens and the junction with Rookes Lane will affect mature trees which are protected by tree preservation order because of their public amenity value, require a ditch to be culverted contrary to standing Environment Agency advice and doesn't appear to be wide enough to accommodate a pushchair.

The proposed footpath which is shown in Woodside Park appears to replicate the above provision as it too is shown running due north – where does that lead and what is it for? Will it be lit and tarmac and what will the impact be on the mature tree and hedgerow boundary to Ridgeway Lane which you accept is a fundamental part of its character? The proposal involves breaking through the existing line of mature oaks which are elevated from the road. How do you propose to deal with the change in levels and access for people with disabilities without devastating this important landscape feature?

You have not addressed how pedestrians will cross the A337 nor inform the community what other off site works you intend to undertake. Documents submitted to, but not considered at the Local Plan Examination, referred to a left turn lane off the A337 at the Milford Road roundabout into North Street. Has this been abandoned?