

For the attention of : Mr. Timothy Jones (Independent Examiner)

C/O Mr. Sam Townley

From: Sarah Jane Dexter a member of and on behalf of the Wallingford Road Residence Group.

31<sup>st</sup> October 2018

RE: GORING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

COMMENTS ON EMAILS BETWEEN THE GNP AND BRAMHILL -  
RELEASED UNDER ICO INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S  
INSTRUCTIONS AND EXAMINER'S DIRECTIONS.

Dear Mr. Townley

I have read the emails between the GNP and Bramhill and written these comments to you under the best of my knowledge and capacity.

#### Emails relating to GNP6

21 Nov 16

The intermitary ask Bramhill for their further thoughts on the developers revised proposals. She also presents a list of questions regarding GNP5 and 6. From a letter commissioned by the GNP Steering Group

#### GNP 6

1) Are there any major landscape or visual impact issues with access for GNP6 to Wallingford Road across the triangle in the NW corner of the site? It seems that no other road access is possible.

2) What mitigation, if any, would you want to see for road access there?

3) If road access at that point is mitigated with, for example, hedges or trees, would it also become acceptable to build houses in the triangle along Wallingford Road as shown in the concept drawings?

4) Is there any further mitigation which you consider would make limited development of that triangle acceptable in addition to use for the road?

5) Is there anything you can help us with in relation to the orchard which would counter the developer's statements about it and justify its retention?

The word seems that no other access road is possible - suggests that the GNP are un-sure.

The GNP have only ever been presented with the Wallingford Road access from the developer.

In the GNP website: Draft commentary to GNP Jan 16 from Unsworth Planning

(pg 4) under Access Arrangements onto B4009 (GNP6) says "We would reassure the NP Group that the basic location and outline design of this access has arisen from a full analysis, including of existing and predicted traffic flows, accident statistics, highway geometry and national and local transport policy and standards. A professional transport firm 'Origin Transport' has reported to us and they identified this location as the most appropriate after considering alternatives elsewhere - in particular via 43 Springhill Road, via Icknield Road and elsewhere on the B4009, Wallingford Road, frontage." .....

Printed on the following page is a short 6 paragraph "Summary and Conclusions" from the Transport consultants. ( The actual full report was only presented to the GNP in the reg 14 consultation Dec 17)

The report only showed a traffic analysis of the Wallingford Road access and no comparison with any of the other possible access alternatives mentioned above..

In your possession is the WRRG's traffic reports from Glanville and TPA showing alternative access is possible. Therefore I do not need to repeat their contents

Bramhill in an undated email replying to the Intermediary's request made on 21 Nov 16 regarding GNP6

States "need to look again"... "but can't probably profile in the road so that it doesn't stand out in the landscape."

Probably suggests that Bramhill are not sure and further go on to say "Alternative access would be preferable though." Bramhill then go on to say the "Housing in the Triangle might get in as a least worse option"

29 Nov 16

Bramhill after visiting Site GNP6 & 5

Noted that "the consultants for site 5 & 6 appear to have been some what economical in their visual assessments"

They go on to say that " the access from the Wallingford Road could work, but the houses along the triangle frontage should be resisted as the land there is very elevated" and continues to explain the visual reasons.

(Note that Bramhill are refering to the houses along the triangle frontage here and not development at 25dps density in the triangle) (could work when referring to the road again sounds un-sure)

Part of this observation by Bramhill on the NW of the site is almost identical to what is written in the Kirkham report "Landscape Capacity Assessment. Sites on the Edge of the Larger Villages of South Oxfordshire. 2015 "Access off the B4009 would cut across the prominent area of pasture on the edge of the village which sits on rising ground and flows into the higher open downland and is therefore not recommended" and the other part of their observation regarding the road is completely at opposite to Kirkham report.

31 July 16

Bramhill state after looking at the Kirkham report that they are in general agreement with it.

I believe this shows that Bramhill are being put under pressure here to try and find a way to accept something that they are not really happy with.

1 Dec 16

Bramhill replies to a cross section sent to them on the 30 Dec 16 saying it is on the margins of acceptability (speaking about roof tops of houses on the ridge) and ask for more cross sections and from different points.

6 Dec 16

Bramhill wrote that they hadn't received anything since 30<sup>th</sup> Dec and were working on the report for the Public Consultation on the 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 16

The intermediary sends the cross sections and notes from the developer (there is no mention of the triangle here or the access road)

7 Dec 16

In preparation for the Public Exhibition/Consultation 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 16

Bramhill wrote saying she was sorting out the commentary on the triangle and orchard issues and asking for confirmation "that this is at the right level and in the ball park you were expecting".

(Therefore a week later after the Bramhills visit to the GNP6 site 29 Nov (were they said that house on the triangle frontage should be resisted) we have a complete turn around here regarding the houses on the triangle and they suddenly get accepted - with no emails in between 29<sup>th</sup> Nov to 7<sup>th</sup> Dec to explain why Bramhill changed their minds on their recommendation.)

Bramhills commentary prepared then shows the questions that were asked by the GNP Steering Group through the intermediary (email 21 Nov 16) to Bramhill. Question No.1 gets changed here - from "It seems no other road access is possible." to "No other road access is possible."

Bramhill go on to state that they have not accessed this site (therefore having made their report on) "extensive observations from Wallingford Road and footpaths.

Bramhill further comments on their concerns with the visibility of rooftops showing above the ridgeline at quite some length and then the mitigation of the road which takes up another 5 paragraphs.(obviously still of some concern)

9 Dec 16

Bramhill say they will have the full draft report ready for the intermediary over the weekend expressing that it needs to have a read through and edit and highlighted section that need still to be completed and suggest "we can fine tune it next week."

24 Jan 17

In on going preparation for the 1<sup>st</sup> Bramhill Supplemental report Jan 17

Bramhill writes to the intermediary saying “your emails are just not getting through to us.”

(In the copy of emails that I have received, this email sent from the intermediary is missing.

Also there seems to be no email contact regarding “the fine tuning the following week” as suggested in the 9 Dec 16 email from Bramhill above.

Infact after the 9 Dec 16 I don’t have any more correspondence emails between Bramhill and the Intermediary until 24 Jan 17 which seems strange in the run up to the Bramhill Supplemental report Jan 17.)

In the Bramhill Supplement Report Jan 2017 at page 87 Bramhill state their reason for the change of mind for development in the Triangle saying “The study had to assume a building density of 25 dph and the likely impacts that would arise from development of that density on this small triangle of land.”

I would like to draw your attention back to the Triangle Frontage here which Bramhill (29 Nov 16 email) recommended should be resisted, (even if there original report was under the impression of 25 dph?) it is irrelevant because there second recommendation was not.

29 Jan 16

The Intermediary confirms she has received the files (for Supplement Report) and says she has sent them to the Chair of the Steering Group for double checking and wont release to anyone until they have both signed it off.

30 Jan 17

Final version received to be forwarded to the rest of the Steering Group

3 Feb 17 to 2 June 17

The next email correspondence between Bramhill and the Intermediary is in preparation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bramhill Supplemental report. It concentrates mainly on the Orchard.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bramhill Supplemental report there is one paragraph that addresses the questioning of acceptability of the Triangle. No.30 which says “Previous recommendations have been made in respect of this area,

particularly in our Supplementary Report Jan 2017 that we address this area in detail, and we have nothing further to add in relation to this discrete part of the site.”

(Discrete part of the site is hardly how Bramhill described it in their email 29 Nov 16 “Triangle frontage should be resisted, as the land there is very elevated” or the Kirkham report 2015 described it as “prominent are of pasture” ....”which sits on rising ground “

## OTHER SITES AND CORRESPONDANCE

### GNP5

2 Aug 16

The intermediary wrote to Bramhill saying “You seem to have changed your position on site 5 significantly. That will have a huge impact, as it was one place which otherwise likely to meet many of our needs. Our you absolutely definite on that change before I release your report and face the repercussions?”

Here we seen not only pressure being put on Bramhill and questioning their judgement - but also an intent to fill another site on the NW edge of the village.

Considering the 46 on GNP6(49%) - 14 on GNP2 and 19 already on Icene close (already built but part of the housing allocation) all next to each other on the west edge of the village apart from GNP2 but in very close proximity. This is already 70% of the housing allocation - which is gross overloading to this part of the village already - and the GNP were hoping to put more here.!!! (There is only 34 house allocated in the rest of the village.) I did briefly bring up part of this point in the hearing about the percentage - but not about GNP5 implications.

### GNP7

22 Sept 16

4) Bramhill wrote say she had a note that someone felt they had not been consistent in our considerations of the AONB across Gatehampton sites. Bramhill then go on to say that they think they have been very consistent - but agree to make minor changes to bring this group of sites in line with each other were applicable and altered GNP7 from medium capacity to low capacity.

7) Bramhill wrote "I've a note that the justification for site 7 needs to be as robust as possible, questioning whether the reasoning is valid as it could get overturned. We have reviewed our text and don't think we can

add or strengthen it in any way.

It appears that Bramhill are being asked in form of notes they had taken somewhere to strengthen GNP7 as it could become vulnerable for houses. (I may be mistaken in this but this is the way it reads to me.)

15 July 16

The Intermediary requests for the Steering Group Chairman to join them in the meeting an hour later.

Bramhill wrote "Okay although as before we do need to keep this focused please - I presume there is a reason why you don't want to both come at the same time?"

The Intermediary wrote " I'll stay when Mike joins us,"

19 July 16

The Intermediary wrote "Both of us will be with you around 10am.

(Although it says the SG member has some things the Group want to make sure are addressed)

I find this private meeting with the Steering Group Chair member does not sit in well with the original concept of communication with Bramhill. To my knowledge the Intermediary was appointed especially to ensure that the making of the plan would not appear to have been influenced in any way.

This is highlighted in a recent letter sent to you from the GPC dated 11th Oct 2018 where they say (1) para 3 "It was therefore determined at the outset that the point of contact for the experts should be the chair of the Sustainability Working Group, within whose purview the landscape etc issues would fall. The purpose of this limitation was to keep the experts at arm's length from the Steering Group and others involved in the process so that their opinion was free not just from actual taint but even from any risk of the appearance of influence being exerted over the formation of their opinion."

8 Dec 16

Also stated by the Intermediary's reply to an email from Bram hill (7 Dec 16) saying that a GPC member wanted to speak with them. The Intermediary wrote "I would rather you didn't discuss matters with any one but me until the report is delivered, so we can maintain our current demonstrable separation.

The revealed 15 July 16 email also adds questions as to whether anymore of these private meetings with the steering group member took place that are not recorded in the emails?

Therefore this meeting that took place understandably could add some doubt to the plan being influenced. I know the steering group consists of members all over the village and the members have to live somewhere and I am not accusing either the Intermediary or Steering Group chair or (any other members of the GNP) of any ulterior motives - but just to say it adds a doubt.

I ask for some clarity on the point as to why was a member of the steering group was allowed into a private meeting with Bramhill? and were there any more.?

In ending this email to you - I would just like to say that I do hold a great respect for the GNP and believe that the members which are all volunteers have worked incredible hard to achieve this final plan. I do believe however that there has been a misjudgement or lack of information when it comes to accessing site GNP6 particularly the access road and the triangle and pressure put upon Bramhill to change their original recommendations.

I would also like to state that in receiving the emails between Bramhill and the GNP this has enforced by beliefs.

I note from the emails that I have not received all the documents and plan ect included in my initial reponse to the FOI and therefore will be asking the clerk to provide me with them.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Jane Dexter

On behalf of the WRRG's