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**From:** Jack Calder  
**Sent:** 05 July 2018 14:50  
**To:**  
**Cc:** Robert Martin; Derek James; ; Joan Fountain; David Bermingham  
**Subject:** Goring Neighbourhood Plan  
**Attachments:** Appeal Decision 3185261 (1).pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

I am sending this email on behalf of a group of residents who objected to the inclusion of site GNP3 in the Goring Neighbourhood Plan (GNP). Apart from me the group comprises David Bermingham, Joan and Nigel Fountain, Derek James, Robert Martin and Andrew Smith.

#### Site visit

We consider that a visit to site GNP3 is essential to allow Mr Jones to consider whether its allocation for development is appropriate given its location within the AONB. A visit would enable him to consider in particular:

- The proximity of the site to, and visibility from, the much-used footpath at the end of Manor Road;
- The open views to the south from the site (its southern end being where most of the proposed development would be located);
- The open aspect of most of the site, and the part it plays in the transition from built environment into open countryside (contrary to Kirkham and Bramhill's description of it as enclosed by development on three sides);
- The visual impact of the proposed raised level of a new access road from Manor Road to exceed the flood zone 2 level taking account of climate change adjustments; and the similar raising of the level of the land on which most of the new homes would be built;
- The approach to the site from the village, and the impact that the traffic generated by the new homes would have on the roads providing vehicular access, namely Manor Road, Station Road and the High Street.

If an accompanied visit to the site is intended, I would like to attend as a representative of those who oppose development of the site.

#### Permission to speak at public hearing

We request permission for David Bermingham and myself to speak at the Public Hearing. Throughout the preparation of the GNP a group of residents opposed to the development of GNP3 has raised objections on a number of issues, including;

- The failure to apply the flood risk sequential test in accordance with NPPG;
- The failure to give any weight to the findings of Planning Inspectors that GNP3 was unsuitable for development on AONB grounds;
- The unbalanced and (as we see it) flawed nature of the site selection process; and
- The failure to carry out any local housing needs assessment to support the GNP.

We had no substantive response from GPC or its GNP Steering Group to those objections. For example it required correspondence direct with SODC and a Freedom of Information Act request to GPC to elicit the reasoning behind the limitation of the sequential test to the Goring area; and the only response to our

concerns about the site's planning history being ignored was the publication of an email from John Cotton (attached to my submission to SODC).

We have repeated those objections in our submissions on the GNP to SODC. We hope that Mr Jones will examine those issues with the representatives from GPC and SODC at the Public Hearing, and that GPC and SODC will be more forthcoming with responses. But we also feel that someone from the other side of the argument should have the opportunity to challenge those responses, particularly if they rely on arguments not previously put forward, and that this would assist in allowing the Hearing to reach a fair conclusion. We would not seek to repeat at any length points we have already made in our submissions or to speak on issues unrelated to GNP3.

#### Opinion from Blandy & Blandy on flood risk objection to development of GNP3

Response 5 to the SODC consultation contains a legal opinion from solicitors Blandy & Blandy on the flood risk objection to development of GNP3. It refers to a letter dated 24 July 2017 from the Environment Agency which we have not seen and which has not been made public so far as we are aware. I wish to comment on that opinion.

It is common ground between the authors of the GNP and those who oppose development of GNP3 that the site must pass the sequential test, and that, if it does, housing development is acceptable (ignoring other constraints) if: a) it is limited to flood zone 1; and b) appropriate measures are taken to safeguard against future flood risk (which in this case involves raising the level of the land that would be in flood zone 2 after climate change adjustments). The matters in dispute, as outlined in my submission to SODC, are whether the site does indeed pass the sequential test, and whether it is sensible or appropriate to allow development in areas in flood zone 1 in the current flood map which will be in flood zone 2 when the map is amended to reflect the latest flood risk model already completed by the Environment Agency this year.

We believe that the Environment Agency are competent to advise that a site must pass the sequential test (as they did in the email attached to my submission) but not to advise on whether it passes that test (which requires knowledge of whether suitable alternative sites are available). We assume therefore that if the Environment Agency's letter of 24 July 2017 did not object to the proposed development, it must have been on the assumption that the site passed the sequential test and that the development complied with the two conditions mentioned above, based on the flood risk model available at that time. Since it is common ground that site GNP3 must pass the sequential test, we believe that further detailed evidence would be needed to support any claim by Blandy & Blandy that the Environment Agency no longer considers this necessary or has concluded that the site does indeed pass the sequential test. We believe furthermore that on the basis of the amended flood map the Environment Agency would be unlikely to reach the same view on the proposed development as in July 2017.

#### Rejection of appeal against refusal to allow development of land to west of Manor Road (site GNP13)

After the end of the SODC consultation period, an appeal against refusal by SODC to allow development of a dwelling on site GNP13, on the other side of Manor Road from GNP3, was rejected by the Planning Inspectorate (appeal reference is APP/Q3115/W/17/318526). The rejection was based on the same grounds of harm to the AONB as in the two appeals against development of GNP3 mentioned in our submissions to SODC, and in that sense adds nothing to our arguments, though it is perhaps worth noting that in this appeal the Bramhill report's recommendation of the site's suitability for development was available to the Inspector. The Inspector also commented on flood risk and the scope and application of the sequential test. We believe his comments are consistent with our arguments, and again in that sense add nothing new to them. But we feel that the Inspector's opinions are more authoritative than our own and should therefore like Mr Jones to consider them. He has directed that no further evidence or arguments will be admitted without his express permission. We would be grateful if he would permit the evidence of this appeal decision to be admitted, since it did not become available until after the end of

SODC's consultation and is plainly relevant to whether the sites allocated by the GNP for development are appropriate. For convenience I attach a copy, should he be willing to consider it.

Yours sincerely

J W Calder