



The Lymington Society



Lymington Society Welcomes Refusal of Mini Roundabout near Level Crossing

The Lymington Society today welcomed the decision of the Planning Inspector to refuse Redrow's Appeal for permission to build a mini roundabout at the junction of Bridge Road and the adjacent chicken factory site, which they wish to develop.

Whilst understanding that this is a complex issue involving different opinions from traffic flow consultants etc., the Society felt that on balance it supported the position of the local authority and the traffic authority that the positioning of a mini roundabout so close to a level crossing could be dangerous without additional controls on the traffic. We therefore took the opportunity to attend the appeal hearing in support of the NFDC's stance and are pleased that the Inspector agreed with our position.

Currently, even before the site has been developed, long traffic jams build up on both sides of the level crossing, which can stretch back up all Walhampton Hill and into Gosport Street. Once the chicken factory site has been fully developed, the level of traffic generated at this junction will be likely to increase significantly, especially if the current planning permission is renewed to enable over 300 dwellings to be created, together with a care home and commercial premises.

This increased activity generated by future developments is very likely to result in large volumes of traffic trying to access the site and long queues seem inevitable, which many feel a mini roundabout would not be able to cope with. The Society was also concerned that a mini-roundabout would pose considerable difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists caused by the increased traffic flow on and off the chicken factory site.

The development of the chicken factory site is an issue that society has been involved with for many years. This is a one-off unique opportunity to create a wonderful development which could if handled correctly, enhance the town for decades to come. The society originally opposed the proposal by Paxton's for the huge development that currently has permission and which Redrow are trying to renew by the fast track process brought in by the government to help developers during the recession. We have objected to the renewal of this permission, which we still feel is far too dense for the site and will produce an isolated dormitory development, on the grounds that both circumstances and the planning regime have changed substantially since consent was given in 2005.

The Society was pleased to be invited to attend a recent presentation by the current owners, where they introduced their new architects MJP Architects.

This award-winning practice is led by Sir Richard McCormack, who presented his initial concepts for the site to the meeting. The society welcomed the overall thrust of the proposal, which is designed to integrate the site into the town via a feature bridge near the railway station, which has been a key aim of the Society from the outset.

We remain however, concerned that these new proposals still envisage a large development with fairly large and dominating buildings, which we feel is inconsistent with the character and distinctiveness of the historic town at the point where it faces onto areas of outstanding natural beauty as well as nature reserves.

We look forward to working with all the stakeholders involved in examining this proposal and will try and ensure that a high quality development is produced, which makes the most of this fantastic location.

Speaking today, Don Mackenzie, Press Spokesman for the society said:

We welcome the decision by the Planning Inspector to refuse the appeal by Redrow, which would have allowed them to build a mini roundabout, extremely close to the level crossing in Bridge Road. Whilst understanding that at low traffic levels, a mini roundabout might have had some advantages, we agreed with the NFDC that it could be dangerous, especially during peak traffic flows and if the new developments planned for the site resulted in large increases in traffic using the junction. We were particularly concerned about the impact on pedestrians and cyclists from this proposal.

However, we very much welcome the decision by Redrow to appoint award-winning architects to look at the chicken factory site with fresh eyes. We have been impressed with their initial concepts for the site, which are very much more in keeping with our own position of integrating the site into the town centre and not producing an over-dense and isolated dormitory development, which we feel the current planning permission is likely to create. We remain concerned, however, about the scale and size of the proposed buildings, and we will be putting these concerns forward at the appropriate time.

We look forward to maintaining contact with Redrow and their architects, together with the town Council and the NFDC to try and ensure that an exciting new scheme can be developed, which will do justice to this unique site”

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