

Regulation Committee - Thursday 1 December 2022 (14.00)

Public Speakers etc

Item 5 - application - erection of a new primary school and nursery - land at Comeytrowe, Taunton, Somerset (SCC/3938/2022)

Objectors:

1. Carolyn Warburton

Councillors

For the Trull Neighbourhood Plan, we worked with SCC education to support a primary school to provide a cornerstone for the whole urban extension; new possibilities for the children, a focus for the community, a safe place. A place for learning and a place for play.

Now, inadequate public consultation has silenced the Trull community voice. The Site Notice describes 'land at Comeytrowe' and apparently one notice was put up – on Comeytrowe Road – but the site is in Trull Parish!

Contrary to the statement in the Committee Report, this is EIA development, and should be advertised and consulted on as such. The Regulations are perfectly clear. This is a "subsequent application" for a local planning authority's own development. It is part of a multi-stage consent, for which the location was undecided at the time of the principle decision; an assessment must be undertaken at the subsequent stage. See regulation 9!

Start again.

Having read the consultation responses, it is extraordinary that Officers recommend granting permission. Why have a Design Panel, only to ignore them? The proposals are unfit for purpose.

What is on offer here is meagre, nothing to raise the expectations of the local children. More of a child-storage shed. The Outline Permission failed to meet policy for play spaces overall, and this extends that failure. Monkton Heathfield school area is over 4 hectares, this is 2.2hectares.

Community access? You can hire only the hall, and only when the school is closed – not when the ventilation is active.

The school could have gone elsewhere – it is on a waterlogged space, with predictions at times of heavy rain (even for a 'small and urban catchment'!) for fast flowing water and a pocket of 900mm flooding – 'danger for many' This is unsafe!

The area is ideal for treating phosphates, not for treating children. Remember phosphates?

There are 33 parking spaces for 60 staff – scarcely a recipe for a calm start to the day. Pupils will be dropped off on the spineroad – about 220 cars. Not walking, not bikes (48 bike racks), but cars. Oh, and for the 52 nursery places... drive-by? This is unsafe!

The application is for 420 pupils; 640 is the number predicted by SCC. Proposals for expansion must be considered here; how else can the consequences of failure be assessed?

It is another game of brinkmanship. Will this be another decision where profit overrules children's futures? Give them a start!

2. Tony Smith

Councillors,

Today, you are asked to consider a flagship element of Taunton's urban extension. Those of you who are now familiar with the site should be concerned at its condition, and the cumulative impact of its development on the Galmington Stream and the Tone. *You* may have had late sight of the LLFA's final report, denied to other statutory consultees and to concerned residents.

The school building is now positioned directly over that area of the site most at risk from surface-water flooding, assessed as High, Medium and Low by the Environment Agency. The water-depth there is modelled to be 0.3 to 0.9m deep, flowing at c. 1km per hour - even on optimistic assumptions. Any change in the parameters used in the FRA would increase the modelled risk to "*Danger for Some*", at least.

The Hydrock drainage report, on which the FRA is based, ignores ANY runoff from the playing-fields - which must exceed greenfield rates. The contentious assertion that "*all surface-water runoff from storm events ...will be retained within the overall site*" is contingent upon adequate attenuation storage-capacity, continuous operation of a Hydrabrace, and discharge through a 150-mm pipe, along an unspecified route to the Galmington Stream. The FRA is required to address the cumulative effect of this Application upon the catchment; it concludes, perversely, that it would be "*beneficial*". What is the LLFA's opinion ?

Local residents, new and old, may be surprised to learn that the Spine Road will not reach the school site until Spring 2024, at the earliest, and that all pupils and staff will have to be accommodated at an unspecified "host" site, until the new school eventually opens. This Application does not embody a design for the necessary total

pupil-numbers on-site, or incorporate the appropriate calculations for fresh and foul-water discharge.

The Travel Plan is based on wholly-unrealistic assumptions for car-usage, public-transport provision, cycle and footpath networks, and presumes that ONLY pupils from the Urban Extension will obtain a place at the school.

Lastly, new material information for this Application has not been advertised in accordance with EIA development.

Councillors, if you are not minded to refuse this unsustainable development, at least defer determination until you, the LLFA, and the Design team can be convinced that it is safe, future-proof, and a credit to Somerset.

Thank you.

Supporters / Applicant / Agent:

Coral DuCroq – Planning Agent; Stride Treglown

Richard Healey – Prospective Head Teacher

Elizabeth Smith – SCC Education

- See attached