

Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council Issue Specific Hearing 4
Oral Contribution by Cllr. Paul Collins and Cllr. Graham Bickers

Socio-economic and Community Issues

Please note any text highlighted with bold and italic emphasis in the following submission represents additional information not conveyed in the oral submission.

2. Socio-economics

Impacts on and opportunities for:

- **The local economy, including local businesses and the local supply chain**
 - No additional comments
- **Employment impacts during construction, and operation, including employment churn**
 - No additional comments
- **Required skills and education initiatives, skills enhancement packages, prior to and during construction, operation, and post construction**
 - No additional comments
- **Tourism impacts prior to and during construction, and post construction, the methodology of assessment and suitability of the Tourism fund**
 - I would echo what my fellow Parish Councillors from Middleton and Kelsale cum Carlton have said. The other thing I'd like to just say is that home based workers don't actually add anything to the economy as they are already contributing to the local economy. They are just moved or displaced into a different job.
 - The second thing is that letting tourists know that Suffolk is still open for business is counter to the fact that in looking for this large number of additional accommodation spaces is not really viable as they don't exist now. The only place spaces exist is in the tourist sector which is at capacity and in fact post-Covid there is already a lack of accommodation for the increased numbers of tourists wanting to come to Suffolk. Whether that continues into the 10-12 year build is yet to be seen but the addition of a large number of construction workers into the tourist sector will be a disincentive and have a negative impact on the tourist sector. The existence of the tourist fund recognises that there is going to be a negative impact but whether this fund can provide the additional required spaces within the tourism economy is doubtful but only time will tell.
 - I did say I would come back at this point on the tourism issue, to add further points on the whole business about tourist economy accommodation and the idea that a Tourist Fund, which encourages existing accommodation to increase the number of bed spaces within those properties. What might happen in an area like Bridgewater and around the Hinkley Point site compared to this area of East Suffolk will

be very different. As Councillor Fellowes said, the area here is a different tourist demographic.

- The businesses that are currently managing and providing accommodation in that in that demographic, are not providing the sort of tourist accommodation that will want to suddenly increase the number of bed spaces by a factor from two to four and end up with houses of multiple occupancy.
- This is not the sort of demographic that is supported in this area and many property owners will not want to make such a dramatic reduction in the nature of their offering.
- And I do question whether it will happen here. Despite the fact that it has happened at Hinkley, I don't think it's going to happen the same way here.
- So, I do question the applicant's predictions for accommodation conversions of this nature here.
- Cllr. Graham Bickers - There is a requirement for accommodation with more than two surnames on a letting contract to be classed as Houses of Multiple Occupancy with additional legal requirements and monitoring to be imposed by the District Council.
 - There is going to be considerable resistance to that in respect of people who have holiday let's because that's going to mean significant costs in terms of fire issues, fire doors, and licencing problems.
 - In the end such a change would a change or reduction in the target audience for the accommodation in the long term unless the properties are also returned to the original condition and target demographic.
- **Effect on rail services and capacity for infrastructure improvements during the construction period,**
 - No additional comments
- **Monitoring and mitigation measures**
 - No additional comments

3. Community issues

- **Demographic modelling (including gravity model) and implications of minor changes in forecasting**
 - No additional comments
- **Housing and accommodation strategy, including location, size and timing of provision of the accommodation campus and caravan site at the LEEIE,**
 - It's a very confusing picture, I think is the best way of putting this. Mr. Hunt talked about the number of bed spaces that the campus coming down to 2,400. I think it was from 3,000, but I'd be willing to be corrected on that number. However, since that time, the maximum number of workers on site has gone from 5,500 to 7,900. So, the original assessment was done based on 5,500 workers at peak and the local area is now faced with the task of finding accommodation for some proportion of the additional 2,400 additional workers in the area, because the majority of them will be non-home based workers.

- ***There was a report by done for the county council by Boyer and Cannon, looking at alternative sites, one of which is in Leiston and has been identified as potential housing development in the local plan.***
 - ***These suggestions were taken out of consideration and we were told that the Leiston site wasn't an appropriate place because access was through the AONB and that all of the workers had to be close to the site.***
 - ***Interestingly, the Boyer and Cannon report had the access point directly to King Georges Avenue and thus avoiding the access route through the AONB. This site could easily have been created in the same way as that at Bridgewater for Hinkley Point C and left a legacy of access and services for additional local homes at the end of the project.***
- The other thing is accommodation capacity in the local area.
 - There isn't the capacity go from 5,500 works to 7,900 workers with the number of provisions locally.
 - Also, there isn't room on the single proposed campus site to add to the current 2,400 total
 - I do understand that and would be against any attempts to increase the density of accommodation on the current limited footprint.
 - However, the applicant just seems to think somehow the local area can absorb this massive increase without any increased provision apart from converting tourist accommodation or increasing the rental sector with additional HMO conversions.
- Mr. Hunt was also talking about significant space capacity outside of the peak?
 - Well, I am not sure which peak he is talking about.
 - If it is the peak from what we expect in the tourism space, in other words, tourist accommodation in the winter when utilisation is slightly lower than the rest of the year. On the surface that might look like a reasonable proposition.
 - However, the tourism sector will not want to flip between a higher density lower financial return demographic in the winter and back to their normal demographic in the spring, summer and autumn months.
 - One of the things that this area of East Suffolk has been highly successful at, is making tourism a 12-month phenomenon. Yes, tourism may dip at some times of the year, but it doesn't dip to the extent that this sort of requirement indicates and how are you going to actually then provide the extra spaces during the months when there is no dip.
 - So, it seems to me that this assessment is not really fit for purpose. And I don't think that the applicant has really provided a credible explanation of how they're going to accommodate all these additional workers without significantly affecting local housing stocks, especially the low-cost rental accommodation in the area.

- There will be significant impacts and they will be very difficult to mitigate. These are not large residential areas. This is not like Bridgewater. Bridgewater is a town of greater than 35,000 people. It's a much larger area than the 5,500 people we have in and around Leiston
 - Areas like Southwold and Aldeburgh are not the sort of that Sizewell C workers will be able to afford or go to. So, I find the entire explanation of how this is going to work not really credible
 - In response to Mr Hunt's assertion of equivalence to Hinkley Point accommodation situation:
 - I find it quite difficult to understand the assertion that the demographics of Hinkley Point and the housing stock around Hinkley Point being anything like it is here. At Hinkley Point they have the M5 only 10 miles from their site, which opens up a much larger swathe of populated areas.
 - You cannot get to Ipswich in 45 minutes, you cannot get to Norwich in 45 minutes. The only places around here that are within 45 minutes are Southwold, Halesworth, Aldeburgh, and Saxmundham. Woodbridge is about half an hour. But it's a massive difference.
 - I cannot accept that what the applicant is telling me is correct here. You can get to Bristol in 45 minutes. You can't approach anywhere that size from here in 45 minutes.
- **Influx of non-home-based workers,**
 - Safeguarding risk - impact on safety especially for women, vulnerable adults and children
 - There would be a change in demographic from one that essentially is local and known and cares about community members to one that does not have the same level of invested emotional interest in the wellbeing of local people. Currently local children and teenagers are safe to play, exercise and socialise within community with low level risk at times unsupervised. Women are safe to walk alone around our quiet lanes 24/7. Our pubs are family friendly and public behaviour is not antisocial. The migration of workers into the area alters the level of risk of abuse from low risk to high risk.
- **Emergency services impacts, and implications for community safety,**
 - Transfer times to hospital and emergency medical assistance - impact to journey times
 - Labouring mothers require timely support by being able to transfer by road to Ipswich Hospital 30 minutes away or have community midwives attend within 30 minutes. All local members of community will risk longer emergency support.
 - Impact on evacuation in event of incident at SZB
 - Currently if we needed to evacuate the area due to incident at SZB, families would have clear roads to drive to children's schools and nurseries, and the residential care homes of family members to collect them. This will be impacted by increased traffic and change of road network.

- **Sports and recreation provision and assessment,**
 - ***As we did not cover this item in the session, I would like to record our issue regarding light pollution of what is a dark night sky area at Eastbridge, less than 250m from the north-western edge of the development site, at its closest point.***
 - ***As a parish council we have been investigating the possibility of registering the village as a dark skies area and have had an initial assessment completed during April at three points in the village giving results of 20.58, 20.89 and 21.35 as shown on the annotated aerial view below. These measurements will have to be repeated in the autumn at a new moon to make an official designation, but at the moment the skies would appear to be at least class 3, Rural Sky, sufficiently dark for Milky Way observation.***
 - ***The point marked with SQM 20.89, bottom right, is about 150m from the closest borrow pit.***
 - ***The increasing light pollution that will be introduced by the development site, if similar to Hinkley Point at +8-10 lux at 1.5 miles, will seriously impair the dark skies environment and result in impacts across the board from sleep disturbance to impacts on nocturnal wildlife alongside the impaired ability to view the night sky and make successful astronomical observations.***
 - ***This point was also raised by the National Trust with respect to Coastguard Cottages where night sky events are held.***



- **Health effects of a 9-12 year construction period on the local community**
 - *Note the point made above regarding sleep disturbance.*
 - *Increase in traffic along the B1122 and Sizewell Link Road will increase pollution effects on those populations close to these transport corridors. The B1122 has not been adequately assessed during the early years proposal and there are considerable concerns regarding effects on children, in particular, given WHO guidance on this matter:*
 - *WHO guidance: <https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/how-air-pollution-is-destroying-our-health/children-and-air-pollution> "Six reasons to protect babies and children from air pollution"*
 - *Their lungs are still developing, and air pollution can interfere with this biological process*
 - *Their bodies are less able to metabolize, detoxify, and excrete the toxicants contained in air pollution*
 - *Their brains are still developing, and neurotoxic compounds in air pollution can affect children's cognitive development*
 - *They inhale more air per unit of bodyweight than adults*
 - *They are more active and therefore breathe in more air pollution*
 - *Babies born to women who were exposed to air pollution during their pregnancy are more likely to be premature and low birthweight"*
- **Effects of the freight strategy on the health and wellbeing of the local communities,**
 - Incoming deliveries - impact to receiving goods
 - Local families are concerned that the increased traffic will impact how frequently we will get goods delivered from supermarkets, Amazon etc. In rural location, families depend on deliveries as nearest clothing stores and large supermarkets are a fifty-mile round trip which is often avoided with long children.
 - Access to work and education - impact to journey times, carbon footprint and mental health
 - Adults and children in Theberton rely on road transport to access work and school. The development will impose longer journey times on the children and disrupt the current home-school transport. Children currently wait for school transport in Theberton standing at the roadside of B1122 - they need to cross B1122 safely and be safe waiting at the roadside. Many local families trip-chain their journeys during the day to accommodate school runs, shopping, after school activities and caring for family members. Increased traffic will add length to journey times, increase car emissions, increase fuel costs and add stress to our essential daily travel for all local residents.
- **Monitoring and mitigation measures**
 - *Councillor Graham Bickers made a representation regarding property blight and the Property Price Support Scheme and he will submit a response separately to cover this topic.*