

Our Ref: JG.BE1564-19P
Your Ref: 01/WB/ONP and 02/WB/ONP
Date: 4 September 2019

Ms Wendy Burden
Intelligent Plans and Examinations (IPE) Ltd,
Regency Offices, 37 Gay Street,
Bath
BA1 2NT

Dear Ms Burden,

Re: Oakley Neighbourhood Plan Examination

We write with regard to your initial correspondence with Bedford Borough and Oakley Parish Councils (ref: 01/WB/ONP dated 20 August 2019) and subsequent Examiner's Questions (02/WB/ONP) dated 27 August 2019 regarding the examination of the Oakley Neighbourhood Plan.

Your initial correspondence outlines that the Examination of the emerging Plan may be conducted, at this stage, without the need for a Hearing. We are concerned that this will not give sufficient consideration to matters that are of substantial importance to the emerging Plan, albeit we note however, that you also reserve your position to allow for other matters to come to light, or, to enable participants to fairly put their case. Requests to be 'heard', have been submitted on behalf of our clients the Sharnbrook Academy Federation and Bedfordia Developments Ltd (on behalf of the Bedfordshire Charitable Trust), both of whom have a substantive interest in the emerging Plan from the perspective of development strategy and meeting a key community requirement/service.

We are grateful that your most recent correspondence explicitly recognises the consultation now commenced on the wording of the proposed Main Modifications to the Bedford Local Plan 2030, amongst other observations on a number of other substantive aspects of the submission Neighbourhood Plan. This letter outlines our further considered thoughts and concerns and requests a review of the manner of the examination of the emerging Plan, which we believe requires a hearing to be held, particularly in the context of your most recent correspondence and events in the Local Plan 2030 Examination.

The request to be heard on behalf of our clients is based on issues relevant to the context of the Modification MM6. As we have consistently demonstrated, the submission version Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to assess the relevant considerations now outlined in the proposed wording of the Main Modification. This, given the current position, includes assessing the capacity of local infrastructure to establish whether higher levels of growth would be appropriate in sustainable Rural Service Centres.

We emphasise that the requirements of the Lincroft Academy site (which provides both primary and secondary education for Oakley and surrounding villages and in particular will be expected to accommodate increased pupil numbers as a result of housing growth) and the benefits of development to the village cannot be delivered through the policies and allocations set out in the submission Neighbourhood Plan as it is worded. It is evident that the development management policies proposed for the Land East of Station Road seek to frustrate achievement of the school's aspirations, and also a remedy for the problems associated with the school operation and other wider concerns regarding transport.

You will be aware that the Lincroft site is already operating close to its maximum potential, so far as pupil numbers are concerned and that this is also controlled by planning condition. Positive solutions are essential to ensure that the facilities do not continue to operate in breach of existing planning conditions controlling pupil numbers at the site and accommodate the increased pupil roll that will arise from development growth, and also address issues with the current operation of recreation provision and pupil safety. This is especially necessary to ensure Lincroft Academy fulfils its central role in providing secondary education facilities serving a wider catchment (including Bromham and Clapham) and supports delivery of growth identified in the emerging Local Plan 2030.

We trust that from our submitted representations you are already aware that the Neighbourhood Plan's proposals are specifically in direct conflict with supporting the future requirements for education infrastructure at Lincroft Academy as well as with the intention of the proposed Main Modification. We are grateful for the relevant questions in your most recent correspondence (including Q2; Q7; Q12; Q13; and Q15 in relation to the Linford Academy playing field). However, we would emphasise our view that a hearing is essential to allow our clients' interests to be heard and properly understood.

The content of Q2 in your most recent correspondence sets out a number of helpful suggestions to enable expansion of existing organisations. However, it is imperative that the submission Neighbourhood Plan does not unnecessarily inhibit Lincroft Academy from meeting its future requirements and supports planned sustainable development. So far as current impacts are concerned, along with this letter we enclose an extract from the Oakley Ward Focus Newsletter (Summer 2019) illustrating the existing need for ongoing parking enforcement associated with growing demand for parking at Lincroft and Oakley Academies, and this has been a substantive issue for the village, which the School's and Bedfordia's proposal can address.

Whilst it appears the case that the draft Neighbourhood Plan is not to be tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan, this notwithstanding the age and status of the extant development plan, or the imminence of the emerging Plan. However, the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

In our opinion it is preferable, wherever possible, to seek to ensure that the policies in a neighbourhood plan do not become out of date soon after adoption, for example if they conflict with policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, after the making of the neighbourhood plan. We believe that this can be achieved by extending the timeframes for the Examination and reconsidering the need for a hearing, and looking at the direction of travel of strategic policies.

We therefore seek clarification on whether it is considered realistic or appropriate that the Neighbourhood Plan Examination to be concluded (under an indicative timeframe of 4-6 weeks) prior to the close of the Main Modifications consultation or issue of the Inspectors' Report.

We await the response of Oakley Parish Council and Bedford Borough Council in relation to your most recent correspondence and hope that you will take into account the points raised in this letter alongside the representations submitted on behalf of our clients when considering these. Please do not hesitate to contact us if any further clarification is required.

Yours Sincerely,

Associate Director

Enc: 'Oakley Ward News – Parking at Lincroft and Oakley Academies'- extract from Oakley Ward Focus Newsletter – Summer 2019

FOCUS Editors



Jon Abbott



Daniel Norton

Published & Promoted by Jon Abbott on behalf of The Liberal Democrats all at 13 The Furlong, Oakley, MK43 7RD Printed by Swan Print, Shuttleworth Road, Bedford MK41 0EP

Oakley Ward

The Villages of Oakley, Pavenham & Stevington

FOCUS



Summer 2019

Getting Down to Work

Mayor Dave Hodgson and your Lib Dem Team set out new plans



Climate Change Fund

Street Scene and Local Environment Improvements

Following the successful election in May, Dave Hodgson has announced a series of new initiatives including a climate change fund, support for young people, local street scene improvements and further measures to attract people to Bedford town centre. Alongside the new initiatives, continued funding is also set to be allocated for the successful Bedford Jobs Hub. The initiatives will be delivered over the next four years.

Dave Hodgson said "Despite ongoing reductions in government funding, we are working to ensure every penny we do have is used for the benefit of local people and communities. The funding being allocated to these initiatives over the next four years demonstrates the strength of our commitment to making a real difference to people's lives.



From the town centre to our local neighbourhoods, from our local to our wider environment, and from our young people to those of all ages seeking employment, this funding will have a positive impact on people and places right across Bedford Borough."



Town Centre Initiatives

Young People Empowerment Fund



Oakley Ward News

Parking at Lincroft & Oakley Academies

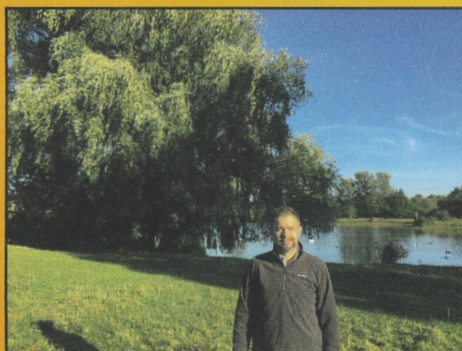


Due to continued thoughtless parking outside of Lincroft & Oakley Schools, the Borough Council is to install a third enforcement camera to ensure poor parking by the entrance of the Primary School is properly monitored. The other two cameras will also be adjusted to ensure the full zig-zag yellow lines are monitored.

Green Flag Status for Harrold-Odell Country Park

Four parks within Bedford Borough have once again won the prestigious Green Flag Award. This signals that they are among the UK's very best green spaces.

It has been an exceptionally successful year for Harrold-Odell Country Park as it achieved scores in the highest categories - its best year yet.



Fighting for our Local Health Services



Dave Hodgson and the local Liberal Democrats are campaigning to protect and improve the vital health services local residents rely upon.

Cllr Jon Abbott said "NHS services in our area continue to be under threat of downgrading. We will continue to keep up the fight to get the services residents need. We have a long track record of success against poorly thought out plans from local NHS commissioners."

Current issues that we are concerned

about include:

- Putnoe Walk-in Centre's long term future
- Shortage of GPs & increased waiting times
- Closure of the Hydrotherapy pool at North Wing
- Closure of Bromham GP Surgeries

To keep up to date on news about all of these issues and other issues across Bedford Borough please sign up to our email news.

www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/signup

Thank You! Two Lib Dem MEPs for our area

In May, the Liberal Democrats secured the best ever European Election result in the party's history, with 16 MEPs and second place in the national vote share - ahead of Conservative and Labour parties.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Lib Dems locally and helped elect 2 MEPs for the East of England.

This result follows on closely from the local elections where the Lib Dems became the largest group on Bedford Borough council with 6 gains and Dave Hodgson re-elected Mayor.

You can contact your new Lib Dem MEPs here:
barbara.gibson@europarl.europa.eu
lucy.nethsingha@europarl.europa.eu



Major Expansion for Electric Vehicle Charging

Mayor Dave Hodgson has announced the introduction of 300 electric vehicle charging points, on 150 posts, in Bedford Borough over the next 3 years, a massive increase on the existing number.

Working in partnership with Chargemaster, the Council will install both fast and rapid chargers on street and within car parks.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said "Bedford Borough Council has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to protecting our environment. In 2018/19, the Council achieved a 50% reduction in carbon emissions in its own Council operated buildings, and is now looking to extend this and reach carbon neutrality by 2030. Electric vehicles are set to become an increasingly common sight on our towns and we are getting the infrastructure in place to help residents embrace this change."



The Votes in Bedford Borough

Brexit Party	32%
Liberal Democrats	25%
Labour	12%
Greens	12%
Conservatives	10%
Change UK	4%
Others	4%

In Bedford it was close between the Lib Dems and Brexit Party

These votes in Bedford Borough were added to all the other areas across the East of England to elect the MEPs

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Oakley Ward Councillor:

Jon Abbott

13 The Furlong, Oakley, MK43 7RD
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Oakley Ward Focus Team:

Daniel Norton

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Mayor of Bedford Borough:

Dave Hodgson

37 Kathie Road, Bedford MK42 0QJ Tel: 718620
email: dave.hodgson@bedford.gov.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/DaveTheMayor

Oakley FOCUS Team



If you have a grumble please get in touch

Name:

Address:

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FOCUS Team Advice Surgeries



Look out for one of our Mobile advice surgeries in your area

Mobile Advice Surgeries:

7.00pm Thursday 15 August
7.00pm Thursday 22 August
7.00pm Thursday 29 August

Regular Advice Surgeries:
Every Saturday 10.00am - 11.00am

Mayor Dave Hodgson's Surgeries

Second Tuesday of every month 4-6pm at Borough Hall
For an appointment ring 718620

Stevington Crossroads

Oakley - Reynes Drive/
Lincroft
Pavenham - High Street/
Weavers Lane

Bedford Central Library

Can you help us?

Yes I would like to help by:

- ☐ Delivering FOCUS in my street
- ☐ Displaying a poster at election time
- ☐ Making a donation (to North Bedfordshire Liberal Democrats)
- ☐ Joining the Liberal Democrats