

**Graham Steele, 16a the Street, Shotley, Suffolk, IP9 1LD**

My name is Graham Steel I am a resident of Shotley and an elected member of Shotley Parish Council and the Secretary to the Shotley Parish Plan Steering Committee. I represent Shotley Parish Council at this Inquiry. I am Shotley Parish Council's representative on the Shotley Peninsula Parishes Alliance.

At Shotley Parish Council we have sought to do one thing and one thing only in responding to this application and that is to do right by our community: past, present and future. Ours is not a stance of "not in my back yard" because the HMS Ganges site is our back yard and it is a very special back yard that is full of history. We concur with the view that this is not a "do nothing site." Shotley Parish Council been very active, alone and with partners such as the H.M.S. Ganges Association, in researching and promoting positive uses for the site for at least 20 years. As recently as last year we proposed an amendment to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Deposit Draft of the Local Plan seeking to have the site identified as a mixed use development opportunity, the District Council choose not to support our proposal.

Sustainability within the planning process has come to be an objective assessment of cold facts, statistics and data. How far this is from the original concept – the very simple: the ability to meet the needs of this generation without compromising our ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Whilst we have engaged in the discussion and debate on the merits of the application by reference to units per hectare, cars per unit, traffic flows and other objective particulars and by debating the meanings and meanderings of policy guidance and statements we have done so within the context of what we may wish to call that first principle of sustainability.

Whilst we may well be dealing technically with previously developed site the facilities and infrastructure that existed when it was operating as a naval training facility where not shared with the community. When the navy left they took them with them.

Shotley is already a community under strain. We have no provision for the social and informal education needs of our young people. Primary health care does not provide the range of services a community of this size requires and the GP practice is working at capacity. What resources we have as a community we largely provide for ourselves.

The Village Hall for example operates at close to 100% capacity and was designed to meet the needs of the near 100% increase in population that occurred in the 1980s.

These and many other matters are detailed in the Parish Plan completed in November 2005 and presented to this inquiry as an objective assessment of our needs and aspirations. The Parish Plan has been the subject of two presentations to the Babergh East Local Strategic Partnership where it has been favourably and positively received. It was a real disappointment to us that the members of the Development Committee that considered this application did not give due weight to the views of this community, some even preferring hearsay and the submission of a resident who had a clear prejudicial interest in seeing the Haylink application coming to fruition. This Inquiry is in part concerned that Government policy is delivered consistently and appropriately at a local level, Babergh District Council professes to being committed to the principles of community involvement and stakeholder engagement, our experience of June 8 2005 leads us to believe that they have a long way to go.

Everyone agrees that the only reason proposals to develop the Ganges site come forward is because the land is available to do so. Where the site not there it is the unanimous view that developments, other than infill, would not happen in this area. The Committee report rightly concurred with this by drawing attention to how the proposal is contrary to a raft of national and regional policies and guidance designed to deliver safe and sustainable communities and indeed the current Babergh local plan does not identify Shotley as a suitable location for housing development. The new plan is a prime example of policy schizophrenia: a late addition, of which Shotley Parish Council was not made aware, seeks to make an allocation for the site whilst confirming that the location is not sustainable. Further the Draft failed to redraw the boundaries of the village envelope to accommodate this new allocation.

However, the application also has to be assessed on its own merits. This we have sought to do. In our submissions to Babergh and to the County Council we have tried to objectively describe our needs and react in a spirit of constructive criticism to proposals for mitigation and amelioration measures.

Our conclusions are:

The proposal does not meet our current unmet needs for example in terms of good employment opportunities or for meeting the needs of young people. Where measures are proposed they are either unclear in their purpose or lacking in focus and synergy. The clubhouse is a case in point we quite simply do not know what is being proposed. The loss of the playing field would undermine the opportunity to meet some of those needs and the loss of the opportunity to relocate the museum undermines the mixed use concept the developers initially envisaged.

On many matters there is too little evidence of the impact that the development will have on residents. Some additional work has been done in respect of the B1456 through to Wherstead but there has not been any analysis of the impact on Shotley as required by the transport scoping documents. We have noted the offer of further discussion, however; we do not believe that the safety of residents is a reserved matter. In this case the caution principle has to determine our opinion.

Where measures are proposed with less ambiguity as they are in some parts of the Travel Plan we do not see how they can make a substantial impact. Just what is a new and improved bus stop? In any case a travel plan no matter how well thought and deliverable, and this is neither, cannot be used to justify a development that is unsustainable in every other respect.

The Primary Care Trust will respond on the acceptability of the offer for facilities for the GP service, however, we point out that there have been no proposals brought forward on other recommendations in the Health Impact Assessment. Shotley residents are very concerned about the impact on social care, emergency services, community nursing and other professional health provision.

If you determine that permission should not be granted please also consider giving some direction to all parties on the way ahead. Over the past two years a great deal has been done on the needs of this area and that gives us all the tools to consider what is going to be right. As we have said this is not a do nothing site. However the approach has to be based on local need, regeneration, economic development and partnership models and not a developer led and reactive approach.

Thank you again for this opportunity to place before you the concerns and aspirations of the Shotley community.

