



BOWERS GIFFORD & NORTH BENFLEET PARISH COUNCIL

St. Modwen
5th Floor,
180 Great Portland Street,
London
W1W 5QZ

9th March 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION – LAND EAST OF BURNT MILLS ROAD, BASILDON (21/00148/SCOPE)

Thank you for giving Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council the opportunity to comment on the Bradfields Farm Scoping Report as presented to Basildon Borough Council on 16th February 2021.

The Parish Council consider the report to be a very comprehensive document and conclude that many of the questions the Parish Council would require clarification on have been answered but recognise that more details are required in other areas.

Our response to the report is short but, there are some aspects in the report that we consider will impact specifically on the Parish. These aspects may be answered from future reports and investigations, whilst others will remain outstanding and would need to be answered prior to any groundwork taking place.

In the absence of further information or clarification , at the current stage, we would raise the following points:

(i) The report acknowledges the inevitability of an impact on our parish community, not least in air pollution, noise and emissions. This impact could be significantly reduced, but only at a cost which is a commitment that has up to now been skimmed over.

An example of this would be Burnt Mills Road, which is, by your own Highways Assessment for E6, “ *a narrow, winding country lane with a limited verge that is prone to*

flooding, unsuitable to large vehicles”, the prognosis for which was to be the down grading of Burnt Mills Road with the access to Bradfields Farm being from Courtauld Road and the new wonder junction off the A127 at Pound Lane, clarification of this would be needed in due course.

(ii) With the reassessment now removing road mitigation at the A127 and the desire to continue to insist on locating the Travelling Show People sites on Bradfields Farm, despite the readily available alternative that would remove your current 5 years default, how do you intend to balance these two directly opposed pressures, not exceeding the tolerance allowed for commissioning the sites for the travellers and building the infrastructure that is essential prior to their occupation?

(iii/a) In regard to the development the Parish Council would like more information regarding the proposed ridge heights and the reasoning behind the figures (up to 60ft), the flexibility of the figures and the anticipated overall size of any such developments.

(iii/b) Part of the assessment for the new industrial estate needs to recognise that Burnt Mills Road is the width of a narrow country road away from resident's homes.

(iv) The history of the Bradfields Farm area raises questions for those residents that hold witness to the change in the level of flooding over the years and even generations. Current revues have highlighted the part played by the ditch drainage and pond systems established in bygone decades but removed without thought for either gain or convenience of access.

(v) Bradfields Farm will only have a minor impact on the flooding at the western end of Burnt Mills Road but its impact on the eastern end and on the Pound Lane junction needs to be thoroughly assessed in the light of changes made to the site over the years and the points raised in your Hydrology report.

(vi) The actions taken as a result of the Hydrology report and prior to the start of any development needs to be quantified and scheduled with the aims of each action explained.

(vii) Contamination levels regarding the chemicals and compounds commonly found on farm sites need to be accurately assessed in the light of the two items above. Both current levels and future levels resulting from changes to the site need to be assessed and made available. Any contamination released from this site will continue to flow through the remaining part of the village to the north east.

(viii) The foul water contamination at the northern end has been reported frequently over a protracted period to no effect and has over the years steadily increased. Although this report highlights the problem once again, the general feeling regarding finally getting this issue resolved is one of hope rather than expectation.

(ix) Rumours have always been circulated in respect of the extent of munitions laying dormant in the ground within the site but the figures in the assessment that have confirmed earlier concerns, could possibly have some foundation.

Although, it would seem the original assessments are to be achieved by non-intrusive methods it still leaves questions of safety that residents and the Parish Council need to be answered i.e. How residents and their properties both modern and heritage are to be protected during the activities where munitions have been identified and conversely where they have not.

It must be remembered that Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet is a rural area where insurance is not always an option. To reflect this a compensation scheme needs to be clearly identified to mitigate any occurrence of damage and alleviate concerns of harm or damage to property or persons. Reference is made to the hundred or so houses damaged, some beyond repair, in the recent controlled demolition of a WWII bomb elsewhere in the country.

In conclusion Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet are mentioned in the Domesday Book (1066) and a question has been raised by local archaeological groups, whether excavations are to be made on the Bradfields Farm site or any other site in your area of responsibility, for historical artifacts. This being the first and possibly last scope of opportunity to undertake such tasks.

Should you wish to contact the Parish Council regarding any of the above comments please direct your correspondence via email to : clerkbgnbparishcouncil@gmail.com

Yours Sincerely



Christine Barlow, Clerk to the Parish Council
pp. Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council