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**14th January 2025**

**24/02823/SCO | Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 | Land at East Hemel**

The Clerk for NMPC did seek advice from the Dacorum Planning Team in relation to this EIA and the process however NMPC determined at its meeting (13/1/25) that it wished to submit formal comment to both Dacorum and St Albans councils at the earliest opportunity rather than wait for any later planning stages.

NMPC has grave concerns that issues raised at the later planning stages are not given sufficient weight as it is too late in the process whereas NMPC believes that raising items of strategic concern at the earliest opportunity may enable adequate scrutiny to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation implemented to prevent more significant objections during the latter stages of the planning process.

**There are three factors that NMPC would like to raise at this stage, and where applicable council have made suggestions of potential mitigation.**

1. **Apsley Train Station**

*The report states:*

 *4.8.4 The nearest train station is Apsley station, located approximately 3km west of the Site. Hemel Hemp- stead Station is c. 5km to the west of the Site. Both stations provide regular services between London Euston and Milton Keynes Central and on to stations to the north. Harpenden Station, located c. 5.5km north-west, is also accessible from East Hemel. It is a c. 15-minute journey along the M1 by car, or 40 minutes along the Nickey Line by bicycle.*

**Mitigation**

NMPC would like to request the removal of any reference to Apsley Train Station in the planning documentation.

**Why?**

* Whilst Apsley may be the closest geographically the route to this station is via small residential streets or country lanes.
* Apsley is a small train station that could not sustain such a large projected increase in users.
* The service is not suitable as this is not a main station and therefore the infrastructure does not support this as main travel hub.
* There is very limited parking on site which would add to on street parking stress in an area that is already suffering grave issues.
* The additional planning (approved and proposed) in this corner of Hemel Hempstead would also add to the usage at this station.
* On a basic level there is insufficient platform space, service provision and facilities to adequately cope with such numbers.
* NMPC would like St Albans or Harpenden Stations to be considered the most appropriate travel links.
* St Albans being nominated the most appropriate travel ‘hub’ would offer synergy with this proposal being mainly based withing the St Albans boundary.
1. **Bunkers Park /SANG**

*The report states:*

*"While the majority of the Site is located within St Albans City &District Council's administrative boundary, a small area at the Site's western boundary is located within Dacorum Borough Council's administrative boundary (see Figure 1 overleaf). As such, the EIA Scoping Opinion of both Councils as the local planning authorities has been requested. It is our understanding that a single, co-ordinated Scoping Opinion would be provided by St Albans City & District Council with input from Dacorum Borough Council."*

**Mitigation**

NMPC would like to request that the impact on the SANG at Bunkers Park and any additional SANG provision be considered with urgency and with reference to the expertise of the DBC SANG officer.

**Why?**

* Bunkers Park, the closest large green space is not referenced in the submission
* This site is in very close proximity, along with Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust land
* The impact of a large number of new users would have huge environmental impact on this protected habitat.
* The potential detrimental impact on this natural environment should be included in this scoping report.
* Currently Bunkers Park has insufficient parking provision for an influx of users.
1. **Bunkers Lane and Chambersbury Lane Traffic & Traffic Calming**

**Mitigation**

NMPC would like to request that the impact of additional traffic on these routes be considered at this stage and that traffic calming measures and width restrictions be considered at the earliest strategic opportunity.

**Why?**

* NMPC did comment on the ST Albans and Dacorum Local Plans prior to Reg.19 requesting that there be some reference to mitigation in these areas that are already experiencing issues.
* There appears to be no consideration that the additional residents will place more stress on a small residential road and a country lane.
* The potential for commuters using these unsafe routes to the train station or M25 have not been considered
* Residents have repeatedly asked for both traffic calming measures and width restrictions on these routes to no avail.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or assistance, and I look forward to receiving your confirmation of receipt

Kind regards

*Nikki*

Nikki Bugden **PSLCC**

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

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