

Local Plan for borough essential

WITH reference to the Dunsfold Park New Town development.

Your headline last week has alerted readers to the application now before Waverley Borough Council for a significant new town, to be sited at the former Dunsfold Aerodrome, and your leader comment challenged councils to act with transparency.

The Dunsfold application is not a response to an established need, nor is its location evidently sensible and sustainable. It is an opportunistic commercial venture that inappropriately aligns itself with the arbitrary house building targets the government is imposing on Waverley Borough Council.

Were this to go ahead, the proposed minimum 1,800 new homes and 72% increase in business and industrial development within the site, which includes a significant proportion of warehousing, would generate a substantial increase in demand on infrastructure, in particular road traffic including HGVs.

The ripple effects, in particular on the already congested road network, will affect not only those living around the immediate area of small villages such as Dunsfold, Alfold, Hascombe, and Chiddingfold, but also residents of Cranleigh, Godalming and as far afield as Farnham would not be immune.

Those using, working or living within the already congested A281 corridor, including Bramley, Shalford and Guildford would inevitably suffer directly, but so would villages such as Shamley Green, Rowly and Milford, as cars sought alternative routes in greater numbers than at present to by-pass congestion and access distant railway stations.

Furthermore, the developer's stated intention is to expand the number of new homes beyond the current application for 1,800. We fear this application is the thin end of a wedge that would result not in a 'village' but a moderate-sized industrial new town and would set a dangerous precedent for other parts of the Borough.

The local planning process is at a crossroads. The public needs to know that the Dunsfold Park development is not a foregone conclusion. Reassurance is required that borough councillors are fully engaged and have at their disposal all relevant data to reasonably and responsibly determine this application.

To that end, a group of like-minded local residents has established a campaign

group - Protect Our Waverley (POW Campaign), with the intention to represent the widest possible constituency of people who care about the long-term plans for development in this beautiful part of rural Surrey. While we are concentrating our campaign on a robust response to the application for Dunsfold Park, we are mindful that this is part of a much wider picture.

It is essential that the borough adopts a credible, integrated Local Plan and challenges the government's housing target.

If you want to know more, or be part of the campaign, please contact POW Campaign at info@powcampaign.org.

**PROTECT OUR WAVERLEY
CAMPAIGN**
via email