

Speech by Len Gates in objection to Planning Application 12/02497/OUTN  
Northern Area Planning Committee 12 February 2015

“This application was withdrawn from a previous meeting because of concerns about traffic. I will not dwell on this point as it’s obvious the development will generate an increase of 10 – 15% in traffic on Smannell Road and this is detrimental to the best interests of the area. No amount of cosmetic addition of pedestrian controlled traffic lights will change that.

But, far more important than traffic is the officer’s own admission that this development is contrary to policy SET03. The development is in designated countryside. There is no overriding need for this development nor is it an appropriate use of the land.

The local plan identified this land be reserved for possible development as a secondary school. There was no need for an additional secondary school in Andover when the plan was drawn up, or in 2010 when the county said they did not want to build or even now. This is not a matter of an additional school. It is a matter of reserving land for a new and better school for future.

This principle was established and confirmed by the government inspector that land should be retained for a school site. This was an integral part of the new community planned and promised to residents. The report refers to “detailed discussions with the community in the knowledge that the land would be available.” These discussions never took place. To permit building now is a betrayal of the council’s local plan and of residents’ hopes and aspirations.

The officer’s report states quite clearly that the proposed housing is not needed. The borough already has more than 5½ years supply of housing land. It has been shown that this site cannot deliver housing at the rate needed.

Granting permission benefits no-one except the developers seeking to maximise the return on the land. We have already seen on other sites in the area how overdevelopment has resulted in traffic problems, parking issues and pressure on community facilities. This application is a perfect example of such overdevelopment and will have the same net effect.

The site is open countryside; development around it doesn’t change that. To fill it with houses means it will be lost forever to the local community and no other use is possible. Other uses are possible. Andover should be more than just wall to wall housing.

In summary the development is

- Contrary to policy
- Not required
- Not in the spirit of the local plan
- And against the best interest of the local community

You have an opportunity tonight to protect this land for the future. This application should be rejected.”