

Inquiry starts at the Arkenstall Centre in Haddenham on 9th October

The fight against Mereham continues

The last three weeks have seen intensive work in the continued fight against the Mereham development.

A team of planning officers and legal experts have been putting together the case against the development to concentrate on the areas which they believe will defeat the appeal.

East Cambridgeshire District Council is going to focus on four main areas.

1) Mereham is simply not necessary. The District is on target to reach its' allocation of new homes as part of the Local Development Framework, the forward plan for East Cambridgeshire. Over 8,600 homes are already planned for the district by 2021 which meets growth rate requirements set by Central Government. The 5,000 new homes at Mereham are therefore not needed.



Looking towards Haddenham from the River Great Ouse

2) Mereham would bring an estimated 12,000 people to the district and an additional 14,500 vehicles to our roads. The Developer has failed to show that the proposed infrastructure improvements are realistic and adequate to cope with the increased numbers of people and traffic generated as a result of the development. Their plans will

simply result in local roads being clogged with additional traffic with no outlet onto major routes or a dedicated transport system such as the train or guided bus.

3) The location of Mereham is entirely unsuitable for a development on the A10 corridor. The aim of new large scale developments should ►

be that they are close to the centres of employment areas, have good transport links and are sustainable. Mereham meets none of these criteria and far from improving the economy of East Cambridgeshire, it will blight it.

4) The East of England Plan or Regional Spatial Strategy

as it is also known, is the document that all authorities in the region must work towards for the future. Nowhere in this plan is there reference to a need for a new development on this scale in East Cambridgeshire; Mereham is therefore unnecessary and contrary to wider plans for the development of the region.

These main arguments together with more detailed points will form the basis of the Council's fight against the Mereham development. Numerous businesses, organisations and individuals support the arguments put forward by the Council and will attend the Inquiry to make their views clear.

How will Mereham affect your drive to work?

Driving to Cambridge on the Twenty Pence Road is going to be a whole new congested experience if the proposed Mereham development wins its appeal.

The latest figures reveal that on an average weekday, over 5,500 cars use the B1049 between Wilburton and Cottenham – this quadruples to over 24,000 as vehicles pass through Histon and Impington. Even the stretch of road between Haddenham and Wilburton carries 9,400 cars every working day. Multiplex Stannifer have made only minor provisions in their planning application for improvements or changes to the Twenty Pence Road, one of which is signage at the Wilburton junction to direct Cambridge traffic onto the A10!

Whether it is a route to work, a shopping trip or a short cut to the A14, many residents of Fenland and East Cambridgeshire will find their journeys will become subject to heavier and increasingly slow and jammed traffic.

This is due to inadequate transport provision made by the developers of Mereham to develop the road network to take into account the proposed increase in traffic which 5,000 new homes would create.

Mereham's own website says: "The conclusion of the traffic modelling is that only the Stretham Roundabout shows any additional congestion as a direct result of the development of Mereham and this is not significant. All junctions analysed will still experience a degree of congestion after Mereham has been completed, but delays in general will be kept at or below the levels which would be experienced if the new community did not go ahead. "

The website goes on to suggest potential 'traffic calming measures along the B1049 Twenty Pence Road



at potential hazard locations' which would drive more vehicles onto the heavily congested A10.

Councillor Bill Hunt, District and County Councillor for Stretham and Haddenham, said: "I estimate that if Mereham went ahead, it would take at least ten years to complete. That could be ten years of hell for local residents. Just imagine how many eight-wheel lorries bringing gravel from Block Fen Mepal would have to come through Witcham Toll, Haddenham and Wilburton. I estimate that traffic levels for HGVs bringing aggregates through the villages could hit at least ten per hour."

Join the fight!

- Sign the Downing Street Petition by following the link from www.haddenham.org.uk
- Register your objections to the proposal by writing to the following:
 - 1) Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government:
Hazel Blears MP, Jubilee House, 51 The Crescent Salford, M5 4WX
 - 2) The Planning Inspectorate, Room 4/04 Kite, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN
 - 3) Editor, The Ely Standard, 38 Market Street Ely, Cambs, CB7 4LS
 - 4) The Barton Willmore Planning Partnership
1 High Street, Chesterton, Cambs, CB4 1WB
(Multiplex Stannifer Agents)
- Sign the petition in post offices at Wilburton, Stretham, Haddenham or on the Ely Market stall on Saturday September 22nd and 29th
- Register your wish to speak at the Inquiry by emailing Lynette Duncan at LynetteDuncan@personaassociates.co.uk or by calling her on 01403 217 799
- Download, print and display a Say NO to Mereham poster at www.eastcambs.gov.uk/mereham
- Buy and display a Say NO to Mereham sign by calling Julie Parr on 01353 741 380 or Bill Hunt on 01353 663 732
- Collect and display a car sticker from the Ely Standard office at 38 Market Street, Ely
- Volunteer your services to help with the various demonstrations or take on campaign tasks by contacting Julie Parr on 01353 741 380

Together we will win

Tell Gordon Brown what you think of Mereham

The Haddenham 'Say no to Mereham' group have registered an online petition on Number 10 Downing Street's website in the fight against Mereham. Click on www.haddenham.org.uk and follow the links to register your support for the fight against the development.

Members of the Public can also contact their Parish Councils who should be able to supply them with 'Say No to Mereham' signs.

Developers submit new evidence with weeks to go

Multiplex have submitted over 300 pages of extra information on their proposals with only one month to go before the Inquiry.

The extra evidence has only just been made public and means that the District and County Council will have to examine the new documents in the remaining days before the 9th October.

Councillor Phillip Read, Chairman of the Planning Committee at East Cambridgeshire District Council, said: "It is unbelievable that the developer should submit so much evidence with so little time to go before the Inquiry begins in October. There are over 300 pages of detailed information which officers and lawyers are now having to work through.

"This is simply not good enough. Whether the developer thinks this will put them at an advantage I don't know but everyone fighting the Mereham development will make sure they are ready to go come the 9th October."

Your guide to appearing at the Inquiry

Appearing at a Planning Inquiry can be a daunting experience for anyone whether they are an experienced lawyer or a local campaigner. The most important thing is to get your message across in the best way possible.

To do this you should first register your intention to speak with the Programme Officer for the Mereham Inquiry at: lynetteduncan@personaassociates.co.uk.

Once this is done you will be given a time slot during the Inquiry which is expected to last six weeks.

It is important that the argument you present

addresses areas that are relevant to the decision and that the Inspector can take into account. It should cover the impact the development will make on your lifestyle, home or business. It is important that your argument is not lost in emotion – that will not win the case against Mereham – cold hard facts will.

The Inspector will not want to hear a repetition of arguments but will be looking for different reasons from people as to why Mereham should not be built. Ideally, this means speaking to people you know are also giving evidence or talking to your local Parish Council and

seeing if there are others who will be sharing your argument.

If this is the case you should discuss your planned arguments to see if one person speaking would be more effective. Make sure that whoever does the speaking makes it clear that they are representing a number of people – the more people the better!

The key thing to remember is that you are entitled to have your say. Be clear, concise and informative and try to remain factual rather than emotional.

Contacts

East Cambridgeshire District Council: Telephone number: 01353 665555

Giles Hughes, Head of Planning and Economic Development: giles.hughes@eastcambs.gov.uk

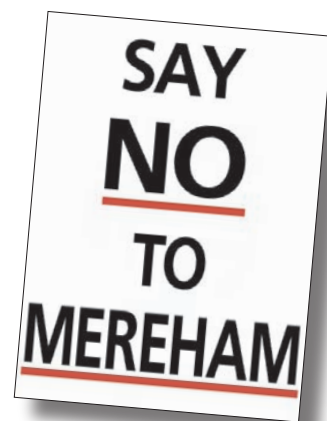
Councillor Philip Read	- Sutton ward	- 01353 778603
Councillor Bill Hunt	- Stretham ward	- 01353 663732
Councillor John Seaman MBE	- Stretham ward	- 01353 740477
Councillor Ian Allen	- Haddenham	- 01353 664993
Councillor Gareth Wilson	- Haddenham	- 01353 740617
Councillor Pauline Wilson	- Haddenham	- 01353 740617

Cambridgeshire County Council: Telephone number: 0845 045 5200

Mark Vigor, Head of Strategic Planning: Mark.Vigor@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Planning Inspectorate: The Customer Support Line on 0117 372 6372

To gain your right to speak at the inquiry, email the Programme Officer who has been appointed for this inquiry, Lynette Duncan at Persona Associates at: lynetteduncan@personaassociates.co.uk.



Date	Event
15 th September	Second Mereham newsletter issued
17 th September	Date of second Mereham administration meeting. This is a purely procedural meeting. It is not to hear evidence.
1 st October	Third Mereham newsletter issued
9 th October	Planning appeal by Multiplex, at the Arkenstall Centre in Haddenham begins
1 st November	Fourth Mereham newsletter issued