



PRESS RELEASE

Haddenham 'Say No to Mereham' Group Update

Date: 24th September 2007

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Since its establishment the Haddenham 'Say No to Mereham' Group has been active in supporting opposition to the planned development of 5,500 houses (long term plan up to 7,500 houses) at the Mereham site between Wilburton and Stretham on the A10. The Developers, Australian company Multiplex Stannifer, have huge resources available to them to fight for planning to be granted - all we have are our voices and (very limited) time, plus whatever donations we can obtain from the local community. The following is an update on the actions we have taken and which are in progress. We would like to encourage as many people as possible to support us.

Petition:

The petition stand on Ely Market on Saturday 22nd September generated constant support and interest throughout the day from local people and tourists alike. We collected 420 signatures, which is a rate of one signature a minute. Thank you Ely. Thank you to Waitrose for offering refreshment to our volunteers. We will be there again next Saturday 29th September.

Our unaudited petition total, paper and 10 Downing Street web site combined, now exceeds 2,500 signatures. Well done everyone – keep on signing.

Paper copies of the 'Say No to Mereham' petition have been circulated to shops and other businesses in Haddenham, Wilburton, Stretham, Little Downham, Cottenham, Earith, Witchford and other surrounding villages. We will continue to collect completed pages over the coming weeks in order to maintain a current count of signatures.

We do need more volunteers to take signatures at key locations and to help place paper petitions in more village shops.

The petition on the '10 Downing Street' website is at: <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/SAYNO2MEREHAM/> or it can be accessed from the Haddenham website: www.haddenham.org.uk.

Our petitioning is not just aimed at the Inspector presiding at the Public Inquiry. It is also aimed at Secretary of State Hazel Blears, so petitioning will continue during and after the inquiry until the Inspector completes his report.

Haddenham Public Exhibition:

The exhibition held at The Arkenstall Centre on Saturday 22nd September enabled c.200 visitors to see and collect:

- Development plans from Multiplex
- Template protest letters to send to MPs & The Secretary of State
- “Say No to Mereham” car stickers & posters provided by The Ely Standard
- “Say No to Mereham” T-shirts (available for a donation of £5.00)
- A2 weatherproof “Say No to Mereham” signs
- A4 “Say No to Mereham” window signs
- Information on how to help the campaign

Letters:

Template letters to the Secretary of State, objecting to Multiplex’s last minute changes to their plans for the Mereham site and the A10, have proved very popular and printed and electronic copies have been widely issued. We hope the in-tray in Bristol is filling up fast.

We have asked as many people as possible to contact Multiplex’s Agents to ask why they have not been “consulted” by Multiplex about their proposals for Mereham. Multiplex are claiming in their proposal that they undertook “extensive local consultation”.

The Agents are:

The Barton Willmore Planning Partnership
1 High Street, Chesterton, Cambridgeshire CB4 1WB
Tel: 01223 345555
Fax: 01223 345550

Signs:

The signs campaign is proceeding well but we still need more.

All residents are being encouraged to download and display the window sign from www.eastcambs.gov.uk/mereham. If people don’t have a computer, they should contact Julie Parr and we will provide them with a pre-printed sign.

The concerted effort to erect A2 waterproof signs, especially in Haddenham, Witchford, Wilburton, Stretham, Cottenham and along the A10 is going well. A further supply of signs with some different slogans is available.

In Haddenham signs can be obtained from Julie Parr - 01353 741380.

In Wilburton these can be obtained from Maureen Harrington 01353-741175.

We also have volunteers who will put up signs for people. They should just tell Julie or Maureen where and, for a small donation to cover the costs, signs will be there.

Public Meeting:

Any East Cambridgeshire residents are still being encouraged to register to speak at the Public Enquiry in the Arkenstall Centre on 9th October. They should pre-register with the appointed meeting programmes co-ordinator - at:

Lynette Duncan

Programme Officer ~ Mereham PI

Persona Associates

West Point, Springfield Road, Horsham, W. Sussex RH12 2PD

Email: LynetteDuncan@personaassociates.co.uk

Telephone: 01403 217799 & Mobile: 07855 649904

PLEASE email or write to Lynette Duncan NOW. We have learned from the Pre-Inquiry meeting held by Persona Associates at ECDC on Monday 17th September that priority allocation of speaker slots will be given at the enquiry to people that have pre-registered.

New Planning Application

Stannifer Developments Ltd have given formal notice of appeal on the two key issues that will be under discussion at the Public Enquiry. These notices have been published in the local papers.

Application APP/W0530/A/06/2014216/NWF relates to the application refused by South Cambridgeshire District Council to carry out highway works on the A10.

Application APP/V0510/A/06/2014221/NWF relates to the application refused by East Cambridgeshire District Council to carry out the Mereham Development.

The formal notices include notification of changes to the original plans.

Persons wishing to make representations about these proposals should make them before September 28th to the Secretary of State at the Planning Inspectorate, Room 4/04, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN.

There is a template letter available on the Haddenham and WAGONS websites objecting to these proposals. It has also been distributed as a leaflet in Haddenham and Wilburton. PLEASE ensure you sign and post a copy well before the 28th September deadline and that you encourage all your contacts to do the same.

If people need a template letter they should contact Julie Parr - 01353 741380 or via the Haddenham web site.

Co-ordination:

There is a Public meeting in **Wilburton** Village Hall on 28th September at 7.30 p.m.

Did you Know Number 5?:

We are analysing the Mereham proposal in its entirety with the objective of exposing the planning gobble-de-gook it includes. We will be regularly keeping you amused with 'facts' from the application in a 'did you know?' format. The fourth is printed below.

Did You Know No. 5

According to Multiplex Stannifer in their transport plans for Mereham:

“In terms of travel time, it was assumed that the priority measures provided {for buses along the A10} would result in the following approximate journey times from the development:

Milton - 14 minutes

Cambridge City Centre - 28 minutes

Ely - 11 minutes

These times were assumed for both peak and off-peak conditions and therefore imply strong priority policies and measures, particularly on the approaches to, and within, Cambridge city centre. For comparison, the assumed journey time of 39 minutes between Ely and Cambridge is 11 minutes faster than the existing service in the off peak and 21 minutes faster than in the peak.”

In other words, according to Multiplex Stannifer’s transport consultants, the 12,000 extra people living at Mereham and the extra people already planned to live in Ely will be able travel from Ely to Cambridge 21 minutes faster than they did in 2005 because the extra bus lanes at the Cambridge end and a few priority traffic lights will make those buses FLY. So do pigs.

Ends.