

Community Action Team Meeting (CAT)

Monday 23rd May 2016

Who was there?

Present: Chairman Cllr Arthur Mandry, Executive Leader, Cllr Seán Woodward.

Residents: 110+

What was talked about?

Executive Leader, Cllr Seán Woodward gave a brief introduction about the IFA2 planning application.

Mark Wyatt, Principal Planner Strategic Sites (Development Management) gave a presentation outlining the IFA2 planning application and some of the key issues that the Council would have to consider.

Following the presentation, the Chairman opened the floor for questions.

- **You say that full planning has been applied for Chilling, and only outline planning for Daedalus. Can you tell me to what extent the full planning being agreed for Chilling will effect on the full planning later being agreed for Daedalus, because it would appear to me that the cart is going before the horses here.**

It is all part of the same planning application so it all needs to be determined at once. Part of the application is the full planning for Chilling, and also for the cables running from Hill Head to the proposed converter station and outline planning for Daedalus which will all be dealt with at the same planning meeting.

If it is granted, another planning application with more detail would have to be submitted for the building at Daedalus. I imagine why they have made it a full planning application for Chilling is that the building there very small and simple and nothing like the scale of the converter station at Daedalus. The cables running under the car park at Hill Head require a simple planning application. Daedalus is highly complex, they haven't got the building design yet, all they have given us is a height and some illustrations, so I imagine that's why that is an outline planning application. But of course, if they do get permission for all elements of plans, it does not move the project forward any quicker. Until they have planning permission for everything, nothing can happen.

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- **Surely if you own the land as the Council, isn't there a conflict of interest?**
There is no conflict at all because the decision in terms of the Council acting as landlord is subject to the planning consent. The Planning Committee is there to determine the planning application, and they are not there as landlord. The Council is acting in two different respects.
- **I notice when you spoke about the other sites of interest e.g. Fawley, it had been discounted due to risks and uncertainties, but there was nothing to say what they were.** Planning Officers have to concentrate on the application that is in front of them. In regards to Fawley, it is not available to National Grid as N Power who owned the land sold it to a house builder.
- **The photos you had up there do not show the scale properly. The building did not look 22metres high in that picture, and my concern is that a lot of people are not going to see the trees in 15 years. So we are going to have to put up with it until they grow?**
It's a very fair point. That's why they need to put in an environmental impact assessment; what's it going to look like on day one through to 15 years in the future. The Planning Committee will take these factors into account when making its decision.
- **I suppose in 15 years, we will know what the health implication are won't we, by the time the trees are grown.**
We had the situation 20 years ago when every mobile phone mast was put up and there was a great deal of public concern and uproar, and now there is a situation where everyone wants mobile phone coverage and more masts. Things change, but health concerns are very, very relevant, and we will be consulting with Public Health England because we don't claim to be experts on electromagnetic radiation or noise.
- **You are a Hampshire County Council (HCC) Councillor; please outline how you represented the Borough regarding Chilling?**
When it was considered by the county council, the decision was made by the HCC leader, who was given a request from National Grid to make a decision as landlord.

In Fareham we make a decision with a panel of councillors, the way the county council works is that decisions are made in the main by individuals. The report went to the HCC leader and he made the decision on the advice of officers that the county council should not sell land at Chilling to National Grid. The other issue would have been if they had sold Fareham Borough Council as planning authority would have been concerned about such a proposal at Chilling. I was fully supportive of the decision made not to sell the land at Chilling.

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- **Could you tell me what notifications were sent about the meeting for tonight?**
Nearly 5,000 letters were sent out with a mention of this meeting, along with a press release.
- **You have mentioned about the EMF to nearby homes; this is an untried building, do you feel that this is safe for our children?**
Personally I don't feel qualified to judge. The Planning Committee will need to take into account the relevant expert advice it receives about what emanates from that building because those things are critical. Fareham Borough Council does not possess expertise in electromagnetic fields and will need to take advice from organisations such as Public Health England.
- **We are strongly opposed to IFA2 and have applied to get National Grid's application to be called in by the Secretary of State. In regards to the location of the cables, what effect would this have on aircraft compasses, parked cars, beach huts or people sunbathing on the beach? Would the project recommend sunbathing on top of the cables? How far apart would the cables be? How many warning signs will there have to be? What effect will the cables have on the sensitive electronic aviation work on the defence and aviation businesses that are being encouraged to the Solent Enterprise Zone? Will the IFA2 converter station cause disturbance to appliances?**

Thank you for those questions, those are ones that I and other councillors have already posed and many more besides and we expect to have satisfactory answers for all of them. As landlord, we will not allow anything to adversely impact the operation of the airfield. We didn't take on the runway and spend £1.5m on resurfacing it to then have something go up which will have an adverse effect upon it. Clearly there is going to be some effect, but as landlord, we will make sure there is no adverse impact. With regard to the request to the Secretary of State to call in the planning application, my understanding is that the Secretary of State will not make any decision at this time. When the planning application is considered by the Planning Committee is when the Secretary of State is most likely to decide whether he will call in the planning application or not.

In deciding whether or not to call in planning applications, the Secretary of State will take into account whether the proposal: may conflict with national policies on important matters; may have significant long-term impact on economic growth and meeting housing needs across a wider area than a single local authority; could have significant effects beyond their immediate locality; could give rise to substantial cross-boundary or national controversy; could raise significant architectural and urban design issues; or may involve the interests of national security or of foreign Governments.

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- **Can you outline what the financial benefits will be for Fareham Borough Council and whether as Council tax payers we may expect a reduction in what we have to pay?**

We are already paying one of the lowest council tax rates in England. In terms of how the Council would benefit, we do not have precise figures because there are none. There would be a one off premium to be paid for that land, plus National Grid would be expected to contribute to service charges any other company that is resident at Daedalus would pay. There will also be a community infrastructure payment including payment for the public open space to bring it up to a good standard. There will also be contributions to some off site works as well.

- **Can the outcome of the EU referendum affect this project?**

No.

- **Daedalus has an allocated public open space. Why are you changing it to allow building on this open space?**

The initial plans for Daedalus had an acreage for public open space around the north of the site. The plans with the interconnector on site would mean a larger area of public open space would be provided than that which was in the original plans. The public open space is part of the application so this is the time to comment.

- **I understand this is the first and only converter to be built to date in a residential area and on an operation airfield?**

Yes. I have seen other converter assemblies; none of them as far as I am aware, are housed within a building.

- **Where this is a bespoke design and if it is not successful and comes with no guarantee as an experiment, will it impose a risk on the local population and the Enterprise Zone and the college? Once this interconnector is built, it will be there forever; it will never be taken down and will become outdated?**

We are doing everything we can for the Enterprise Zone. I believe the idea of an interconnector is to bring about security of energy supplies. The energy policy in this country is not the best and there could be problems in the future. The effects that the building may or may not have, is where the Planning Committee needs to be properly advised. If the building goes up and there are problems with what emanates from it, then that is not the end of the story, that is what we have an environmental health department for. If there is a problem which is not being mitigated by the design of the building, then they mitigate it or stop their process. The Council has the power to deal with things like that.

- **You mentioned Fawley, who is the developer who has purchased the site?**

I can't remember the developer's name but it is a residential and marina development.

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(Post Meeting note – Long Harbour Financial Group purchased the power station. They are working with Fawley Waterside Management Company to develop the site).

- **I have looked at the documents, including the flood risk assessment which says there is no risk of flooding. I use the airfield and there is regular flooding, especially in the winter. The field next door to the proposed site floods too which is a serious issue.**

Those are useful comments and I hope you will make them to the planning officers for the application. Electricity and water should be an issue for National Grid as well.

- **Council officers have said that Daedalus is the appropriate site as it has been previously used for commercial purposes. Is this the airfield or the camp? What were the previous commercial operations taking place on the airfield? I was only aware of previous aviation commercial operations at the airfield.**

The site of Daedalus has planning permission as an employment zone. Daedalus has large buildings which have been permitted to be built.

- **Is this a good trade-off? Will IFA2 provide jobs? Will it encroach on the airfield?**

Daedalus is not only for aviation, there is advanced engineering including marine, CEMAST and aerospace is also permitted. There were proposals to build houses as well as gravel extraction and lose the airfield which Fareham Borough Council rejected as we wanted to maintain it as an airfield. £1.5m has been spent to take care of the runway at Daedalus, as it would have closed otherwise

- **In regards to noise, what is an acceptable noise level as it has been said to be 30-90 decibels? At the previous consultation, National Grid said it would be 28-32.**

The applicants have measured existing background levels at night which is when it is quietest. The applicant's aim is to make sure that any noise heard at the closest homes, will not exceed the existing background noise levels in the middle of the night. The building should be capable of the necessary insulation to achieve this

- **Are Fareham Borough Council in mind to accept?**

No. As owner of the site, the Council are prepared to lease, subject to assurances and planning consent that there will be no adverse effects on the airfield.

- **Are Fareham Borough Council a co-sponsor on this? Is money the key as it feels that you are in on this?**

It is a commercial lease, so we expect an upfront payment. As the land owner, we can still control the land and what goes on.

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- **There could have been more notice regarding this CAT meeting. At the National Grid consultation meeting exhibit, I found it offensive that they were asking us about the colour of the proposed building!**

It has not been done in a rush, the application has yet to be determined and comments are to be taken into consideration until September. If we need to do another meeting we will have another meeting. The consideration for the planning application will take as long as it needs to take.

- **Have you studied the Kent area? There has been an interconnector in Kent for 30 years and the IFA2 will make the same noises as this one makes.**

No I haven't, thank you for that.

- **What will be the impact on the beach huts, beach and sea area when it is completed? What will happen when construction takes place? What will be the effects on the beach and the environment? Could the work take place during the winter months?**

The Council has an interest in the beach huts and clearly there would be major disruption for that period and when the cables go through. We will make sure that it will be back to normal, if not better after completion.

- **What will be the number of full time jobs on the site as I was told there would be a total of three. I ask as the Council as a landlord, is it appropriate to lease the land? Could you not lease to alternative commercial and offer more jobs to local people?**

During the construction period there will be many jobs, but afterwards, there wouldn't be. Fareham Borough Council own 269 acres of Daedalus and we are going to make sure we can get as many jobs as possible in the Enterprise Zone. IFA2 would not be on the Enterprise Zone.

- **What is the financial benefit of the one off payment? Is this a potential revenue stream for Fareham Borough Council and the public?**

The building will need to pay business rates which are currently collected by the Council and they are sent to the central government. Then we would get back an amount that the Government sees fit. In time we may get to keep all the business rates however we would lose other sources of income from the Government.

- **Daedalus is at a high risk of flooding, what else is going to interfere. Will this interfere with the airfield?**

Reports will be submitted to the Planning Committee, and we will get answers before the decision is made.

- **Is this meeting being transcribed?**

Yes, it will be on the website and become a matter for public record.

- **Given the response, would it be worth having another meeting? I am from Lee-on-**

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the- Solent and have grave concerns and would welcome another opportunity to understand issues with proper representation.

We felt it was important to tell our residents and we will have a think about holding another meeting. (post meeting – an IFA2 update will take place at the CAT Meeting taking place on Tuesday 28 June at Holy Rood Church, Stubbington 7pm-8.30pm).

- **How much land does HCC own up at Chilling?**

I don't know, quite a bit.

- **What will be the impact once the trees have grown? Why put it at Daedalus?**

The land at Chilling has environmental designations which would mitigate against any development there.

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