

Statement made to the Beehive Centre redevelopment public inquiry on Tuesday 24 June

Coldham's Lane stretches from Newmarket Road at the northwest, which is part of the A1134 ring road, to the suburb of Cherry Hinton in the southeast, crossing the A1134 ring road again at what is often called Sainsbury's roundabout.

The portion I wish to discuss today is the portion in Romsey ward from just over the train line across from the Beehive Centre to Sainsbury's roundabout, and which is almost entirely residential, with a common and a playground, and also a school nearby.

Coldham's Lane is not part of the ring road; indeed it is not an A road or even a B road, but it has been neglected to such an extent that it has been allowed to become treated as an informal part of the ring road. This causes immense amounts of traffic and congestion, quite out of order for a C road, especially a residential one, and leading to large amounts of chemical and noise pollution, in addition to making it extremely hostile to active travel.

In this regard the proposed development could be beneficial, since it has the potential to significantly reduce vehicle movements to and from the site (though some may transfer to the Retail Park, which will have to be addressed in the planning process for that site -- I note in particular the risk that people will simply drive up Coldham's Lane to park in the Retail Park to access businesses in the redeveloped Beehive Centre).

So the very reasonable concerns of our neighbours in Petersfield ward notwithstanding, many residents of Coldham's Lane in Romsey might welcome the proposals in principle.

However, the practice may be different, depending on the implementation and the enforcement of restrictions. For example, my understanding is that the Beehive Centre did have planning restrictions such as a requirement for HGVs not to go over the railway bridge and hence not to rumble through Coldham's Lane in Romsey, but these have not been enforced or have not been enforceable.

Therefore residents of Coldham's Lane in Romsey (CLR) would like to request the following as part of the conditions, should the application be approved:

1) that the "management plan setting out designated construction traffic routes" include an explicit prohibition on use of CLR (not just a "preference" against use of CLR and a "focus" on the A1134 ring road), and a specific and effective mechanism for enforcement of this prohibition on all construction traffic

[and just to be clear, by "specific and effective" here and later I mean that there has to be a clear rule with an easy-to-assess test, and an enforcement mechanism, of a substantive financial or operational nature, that will compel compliance with the rule]

2) that the "management plan setting out [...] delivery and servicing details for the operational stage" include an explicit prohibition on use of CLR (again not just a "preference" against use of CLR and a "focus" on the A1134 ring road), and a specific and

effective mechanism for enforcement of this prohibition on all larger vehicles/HGVs (i.e. any vehicle above 7.5 t gross weight) and servicing traffic

3) that stronger measures than “travel plans” be used to effectively discourage use of CLR for car access to the redeveloped Beehive Centre, e.g. substantive bus and cycling subsidies

4) that the “parking management plan” include a prohibition on parking at the redeveloped Beehive Centre by anyone other than bona fide redeveloped Beehive Centre employees and blue badge holders, with a specific and effective mechanism for enforcement of this prohibition

5) that the “funding towards the introduction of controlled parking zones if needed” be guaranteed, with a clear and reasonable definition of “if needed”, and include CLR