

Cllr Tony Woods
Council Leader
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall, St Giles Sq
Northampton NN1

28.7.2007

Dear Cllr Woods,

Re: Dallington Grange

I am writing on behalf of many of my constituents who have strongly opposed the development of Dallington Grange about the proposals which are to be discussed at the Council Cabinet meeting on Monday evening. I understand that the recommendations to the Cabinet are to support partnership working with the developers and WNDC to progress the development of the site.

On behalf of my constituents, I am writing to oppose these proposals, and am dismayed to see that they have been brought forward so soon – just under three months - after the Council Elections in which many of your colleagues stood on a platform of opposition to development of this as of other sites. I had expected that this, along with the decisions taken by the earlier Labour Administration, to give low priority to Dallington Grange development, would have held off development of the site for a considerable period.

My objections to the development are on the following grounds:

- i) the infrastructure for the development is lacking, especially the road access. This was the case previously when the former Labour administration decided to give a low priority to the development of Dallington Grange. Since then planning guidance has increased housing densities. This will create more pressures on the infrastructure, and in particular create extra traffic and congestion problems.
- ii) There are renewed concerns about flooding. I understand that the flood plains have not been mapped in this area. There have been proposals that this should be left to the developers to do. However, the developers have a conflict of interests – I expect that the public would have more confidence in mapping done by a public authority, and would not expect to see planning consent given until the flood plain had been mapped and the flood risks fully understood.
- iii) The developers have undertaken some public consultation, and I understand that they have found that attitudes towards the development of some residents on Kings Heath estate have changed. However, the much stronger opposition was always from Kingsthorpe where residents felt they got all the disadvantages of

- the development – especially loss of amenity, loss of access to the countryside and increased congestion from traffic – without any of the advantages.
- iv) The particular impact of development on Harlestone Firs.

I am also very concerned at the lack of notice of this item going to Cabinet. I have undertaken two major surveys of my constituents views towards this development, and have consistently logged my objections. Despite this I had no notice from the Council that this was to go to Cabinet, and only heard about it informally on Thursday. This has not given either myself, or my constituents enough time to make proper representations.

This is also the peak of the holiday season, when most people will be going away, which again makes it hard for the public to become engaged in the process, and does not inspire public confidence in the transparency of council decision-taking.

Please could you make this letter available to the Cabinet meeting, and any other meeting that considers this application, along with the surveys which I have carried out into my constituents views on the development of Dallington Grange.

Everyone, I am sure, recognises that the planning process is a legal one. However, I would expect the Council to stand up for local people, ensure that they were fully informed about the decision making process and had every opportunity to make representations.

I am writing in similar terms to Mr John Edwards

Yours sincerely,

SALLY KEEBLE MP
NORTHAMPTON NORTH