

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk: Mrs Ruth Clifford

Office Hours: 10am to 1pm



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N Brown Esq
Development Officer
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices, London Road
Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER

Dear Mr Brown

**UTT/2384/11/FUL – TVR Site, 2 Lower Street, Stansted
To retail space, medical centre and 14 apartments, car parking and
highway arrangements**

At a meeting held on 16 May, the Parish Council agreed to comment as follows on the above planning application.

Members reluctantly decided not to object to the principle of the mixed use scheme but would seek several conditions being attached to any consent which might be granted:

- 1] Church Road to be widened from the proposed mini roundabout up to and including the railway bridge.
- 2] The number of parking spaces provided is considered inadequate to serve this development and allow growth into the future.
- 3] Commuted payments must be paid to UDC by the developer for the commercial use of the public car park. This sum of money should then be pumped back to ensure adequate provision of parking for this scheme.
- 4] Improvements to safety of pedestrians within the car park. It would be unacceptable to have lorries delivering and unloading in the Lower Street car park just at the point where the public will be entering the health centre/retail areas. Pedestrian safety of youngsters visiting the skatepark is also considered inadequate.

Although support for the proposed mixed development scheme was forthcoming, this stance was adopted only out of fear that, if the application was refused, then this community might lose the opportunity to achieve desperately needed health facilities to replace the wholly inadequate premises at Redlands in St John's Road.

As such major concerns over this proposed development, which are listed below, were sublimated to this one objective. If there had been any confidence that the Primary Care

Trust would come forward with alternative proposals then the stance of the Parish Council would have been different. The concerns, which have been expressed both by councillors and parishioners, are as follows:

- *Design* - The very modern design stands in sharp contrast to all the other buildings in the surrounding conservation area and is out of character.
- *Over-intensive development* - The 40,000 sq.ft. occupies the whole site and exhibits considerable bulk and by any definition, with no car parking or turning space on site, is a substantial over-intensification.
- *Concerns over traffic* - The Council retains concerns that the increase in traffic at this critical junction will raise problems although it is unable to challenge the conclusions of Essex Highways that the mini roundabout albeit not up to modern standards, will not worsen the present situation.
- *Parking is severely inadequate* - Despite the revised layout of the publicly owned car park showing an increased number of spaces, once the requirements of the health centre, flats (only one space per luxury apartment) and retail (which is ignored in the application) are taken into account, there will be a marked reduction in the number of spaces for existing users. The car park is at present frequently full, not least serving visitors to Stansted Castle.
- *Turning circles for delivery vehicles* - The two locations are not segregated and will mix large vehicles either with visitors to the proposed development or will take the vehicles into the vicinity of the skatepark. Pedestrian safety should be a priority.
- *Positioning of the health centre* - Despite the provision of lifts, it is far from ideal for the health centre to be located on the first and second floors and is unusual.
- *Loss of on-street car parking spaces* - The nature of retail business on Lower Street and Chapel Hill depends upon customers "popping in" and there are fears that the more difficult this becomes the less likely it is that customers will bother. There is, however, a school of thought that the health centre will generate more custom.

In order to have the new health facilities whilst limiting the potential problems, it is considered that the following steps would be beneficial:

- Reduce the uses in the building possibly by cutting down the number of flats and thus reducing the height of the building.
- To require the applicant to fund an increase in car parking spaces on the Lower Street car park and for this scheme to be agreed and implemented ahead of any operation.
- To improve Church Road in terms of width up to the railway bridge, thus easing traffic issues.
- To seek a condition that no grant of planning would be issued until the applicant has demonstrated the viability of the scheme.

The Parish Council is conscious of the objections raised by English Heritage and believes these views should be given serious consideration.

If there is any further information which would be of help, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth A Clifford, Clerk