

BGNB RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION 2013

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (SoCE)

Report to Residents' Association on outline planning documents (13/00140/OUT)

Statement of Community Engagement (SoCE)

Section 1 Introduction		
P1	Retention of significant green belt.	Site size is 51 Ha (126 acres) -Flood risk assessment report. 50% of site is to be built on, therefore a loss of 25.59 Ha green belt. This is significant.
P20	States 28 Ha to be built on	Flood risk assessment report is based on 25.59 Ha (63.2 Acres) being built on and not 28 Ha (69.1 acres). Why is there a difference?
P1	Subsidise sports facility at football club	Subsidise is not 100% funding, and for how long anyway? 114 of 240 responders to questionnaire (p42 SoCE) felt that an all weather floodlit sports pitch was unimportant and 56.25% of web based feedback (appdx F, SoCF) strongly disagreed that developers should provide community facilities as part of their plans.
Section 3. Methodology		
P5	Engage the widest number of residents	Meridian wrote to some residents re the public exhibition indicated on a map held by Meridian . It was discussed at Meridian's meeting with the Residents Association on 15 th January 2013 that a large number of households in the area indicated on Meridian's map had not received letters. David Newberry of Meridian said that he would follow up on this. Despite this, no letters have been written to those households by Meridian.
P6	Engender engagement with groups such as young families and first time buyers	It is not clear how this was achieved, if indeed it was.
P7	Stakeholder workshop	2 hours were given to this on 15 th May 2012. Residents were not invited yet residents are the largest stakeholder.
P8	Public Exhibition. 11 th July 2012 5-8pm and 12 th July 10am-4pm	A total of 9 hours (midweek). This was insufficient opportunity for working households as the daytime session was therefore unavailable, and many people get home from work quite late. Fails to engage the widest number of residents which was an

		objective given on p5 of the SoCE.
Section 5: Key Outcomes from Public Consultation		
P10	Feedback forms	These implied that the development was already approved and were geared towards acceptance
P10	Key themes	Vague and general language used in the SoCE. Abstract nouns such as 'many feel', 'some feeling', some concern', do not adequately interpret the data collected via the feedback forms or website (p 42 and 60 of the SoCE).
P11	Some concern over rail infrastructure relating to perceived overcrowding of commuter services	A dumbing down of concerns of actual overcrowding. Whilst it is not within the interest of Meridian to involve itself with public transport, we would challenge them to ask a commuter (in a carriage of their choice) at 18:00hrs (let's say Limehouse), if the individual 'perceives' themselves to be overcrowded, or on the Tilbury line at 08:00, say Dagenham Dock. Please refer to Appendix D of the Residents Association (RA) summary of Transport Report for actual data collected by the RA.
P11	Identified need for additional community facilities	Fails to state what and how identified, and by whom. 102 responders (n=240) indicated that new community facilities were not very important (p42 SoCE)
P11	Best opportunity for a residential neighbourhood	Agricultural land and a change of use provides an Opportunity for profit.
P11	Enhance life locally	The appendices to the SoCE clearly show resident feedback as being negative with a variety of comments but a recurring theme is a loss of the rural environment and sense of village identity. Hardly an enhancement of the lives of the villagers that the document purports to.
P11	Drastic improvement by re-routing Pound Lane through the heart of the development.	There is no demonstration that this is an improvement. Journey time via Pound lane will be lengthened. It will not encourage traffic to use the A130/ A13/ A127. If that was a viable alternative for a particular journey, then drivers would already have made that choice. The sole purpose of re-routing into the development is to force drivers into the centre of the development and to provide the proposed facilities (e.g. shops etc) with a steady stream of users. Without this traffic diversion, the commercial aspect of development would be unviable, an appendix stuck on the side of Bowers Gifford

		and a dead-end.
Appendix D Exhibition Feedback		
P36	<p>'Heart of the village'</p> <p>*Design and Access Statement 5.0 Initial thoughts and ideas, p 27 <i>'lacks a heart'</i>. 7.0 Developing the Masterplan p 41 <i>'heart of the community'</i>. 13.0 Parameter Plans p 56 <i>'creating a true heart to the village'</i>.</p>	<p>This phrase was quoted in the feedback and refers to Meridian's aim to create a 'heart' to the village, as Meridian fails to recognise that the villages of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet already has a 'heart'. The Benbow provides a central focus and it hosts a variety of events (see separate Character Assessment). Community events are also held in Westlake Park. There are various references in Meridian's documentation (Design and Access Statement*) which demonstrate that it is attempting to reinvent/displace something that already exists and serves this community well.</p>