

Dear Simon

1. Thank you for your email late last Friday, 20 December 2024 [17:55], in which you say that an extension for response will be limited to seven days taking in to account the Christmas period, for consideration and respond to EEUK's amendments to its planning application.
2. We welcome your decision to grant an extension in principle, on the basis that further public consultation is appropriate, following EEUK's amendments and additional elements. However, I would respectfully ask that you provide us with a further extension until at least 15 February 2025, for the following reasons.
3. EEUK have submitted an extensive swathe of documents (amounting to many hundreds of pages), the vast majority of which are highly technical. EEUK's directors are fully aware of the Scheme's contentiousness, yet, no proper explanation, or any accessible explanation, of the effect of these new documents has been provided, which would have allowed the local communities to evaluate the amended scheme. This, despite the fact that EEUK was unable to prepare and submit their amendment documents until some three weeks after the Council's deadline of 29 November 2024, having already been given an initial period of three months or so to do so.
4. In any event, an extension limited to 7 days, i.e. until 9 January 2024 is not, on any reasonable view, sufficient to allow local communities to consider and respond to EEUK's amendments, bearing in mind their own professional and personal commitments. (N.B. I note you are yourself out of the office until 7 January 2025 for Christmas leave. I am copying in the Council's Chief Executive and Leader for that reason).
5. As to the ability of the Public to respond, I would add that:
 - 5.1. We are being asked to comment on a multitude of topics from drainage to landscape design to a rebuttal of agricultural evidence. There are many more topics across the 39 separate documents and the devil as usual is in the detail.
 - 5.2. Some of the responses will require professional input and in summary it is unreasonable to expect comments within the timescale given when legitimate concerns need to be addressed. For example, Mr Sewill has asked to visit Copplesbury Farm at the same time as the Council where the Water Buffalo herd are currently being housed and we hereby do so on his behalf.
 - 5.3. This is a reasonable and sensible request when the applicant has bought up 11 Farms locally yet is still asking to build a new farm on a valued landscape(report landscape

partnership) which is tranquil, unblighted without sight of any buildings, on grade one soil and still goes against the neighbourhood plan that is considered law.

- 5.4. EEUK has yet to provide any evidence in support of the question of the viability of the farm, long-term or otherwise.
6. As you know, EEUK's proposed scheme is highly contentious. The Council's decision will have far-reaching consequences for hundreds of people, within the local villages and communities affected and beyond, the majority of whom object. For one thing, it is now apparent that the proposed project covers an area equivalent to half the size of the village of Galhampton – on any view it is very large indeed. Those people who consider that they will be adversely affected by the scheme's implementation are entitled to be given a proper opportunity to consider and respond to EEUK's proposed amendments. In the circumstances, your decision on the length of any extension, albeit procedural, is of high importance.
7. In the event that the Council's decision on the Scheme is challenged by way of an application for judicial review in the Courts, it is inevitable that the fairness or otherwise of its decision-making process will be scrutinised. In my view your decision on the length of any extension, albeit discretionary, should be exercised in accordance with principle, taking into account the fact that:
 - 7.1. Those adversely affected by the proposed scheme will be materially prejudiced if they are not given a proper opportunity to consider and respond to these amendments, for the reasons given above;
 - 7.2. By way of contrast, there is no material prejudice to EEUK in providing an extension of 4 weeks or so (bearing in mind the delay in EEUK's submission of the documents referred to above); and
 - 7.3. The extension sought will not unduly delay the decision-making process.
8. If you disagree and decide not to grant the length of extension sought, please provide written reasons for your decision.
9. I trust I will again hear back straight away so that we may all go on holiday and perhaps start again in the new year.
10. I will be writing to you separately regarding concerns within the local communities that a practice has been adopted within the decision-making process of: (i) downplaying the weight given to "neighbourhood plans"; and (ii) determining key decisions by merely sending them back, or delegating them, to a single planning officer, without a decision of the planning

committee. I understand that this is what happened in the case of Lily Farm at Shepton Montague but please confirm, in the meantime.

I look forward from you shortly.

Yours

Debra

Debra Fox