

# **An appraisal of planning application 13/05724/OUT Hannick Homes - land south of Bradford Road, Rudloe by Paul Turner/Keith Chubb/Juliet Powell for the Save Rudloe Greenfield Campaign**

Scores of Rudloe residents have objected to this speculative application which is outside the existing development boundary. We urge the Northern Area Planning Committee to consider the many points raised in the objections which are summarised below. The three local, ex-MoD, brownfield sites are highlighted on this page. Why develop greenfield at Rudloe when there are so many brownfield sites less than a half-mile distant?



## ← **Copenacre - planning application N12.00836.OUT**

This 5.3 hectare brownfield site has planning permission (granted in Jul 2013) for 100 dwellings, hotel and old people's home. The site is one third of a mile, as the crow flies, from the speculative Hannick greenfield site where a similar number of homes is proposed.

## **Ex RAF Rudloe No 1 site (Rudloe Manor, shown below)**

7.3 hectares currently advertised by DTZ as Rudloe Campus with likely acceptable uses (subject to planning) for business, industrial, or storage (B1, B2 and B8), Less than a half-mile from the Hannick site.



## ← **Ex RAF Rudloe No 2 site**

Located just metres from the existing Bath ASU premises and 0.15 miles from the Hannick speculative proposal. This is an eight- hectare development site purchased by tender on 27 February 2014. The year-long roundabout construction in Westwells Road provides a new access to the site. This would be an ideal brownfield location for the 'pharmaceutical hub' proposed by Bath ASU obviating the sequestration of pastureland.







### **The ‘strategic gap’ between Rudloe/Hawthorn and Pickwick**

The aerial photo taken above Rudloe/Hawthorn looking east illustrates the strategic gap with Pickwick and Corsham in the distance. The fields in the foreground are the subject of the speculative Hannick proposal (13/05724/OUT); in the middleground, to the right of the B3109, is the field proposed for development by Redcliffe Homes and in the distance, ‘above’ the B3109, are the target fields of the Gladman proposal (13/05188/OUT). This strategic gap would be maintained through the expedition of developments on ex-MoD sites. The waiving of section 106 payments for brownfield sites could bring this about.

### **The Rudloe housing requirement**

In March 2013, Wiltshire County Council published the *Rudloe Housing Needs Survey*. The survey’s findings were based on questionnaires delivered to every one of the 565 households in Rudloe. The conclusion of this survey was that ten new subsidised homes and one new sheltered home were needed in Rudloe over the next three years.

GreenSquare housing association is acting on this requirement through a proposal to increase housing density on Rudloe Estate. Up to twenty new homes are proposed with preliminary work already having commenced.



### **More detail on the derelict Copenacre site**

The ex-MoD Copenacre site remains a blot on the landscape following its closure in 2010. Planning application 12/00836/OUT for up to 100 dwellings, old people’s home and a hotel was granted in July 2013. With so much speculation at Rudloe and Pickwick, it seems that the time is right to waive 106 payments for brownfield sites. This would:

- provide a significant incentive for developers
- enable unsightly derelict sites to be developed more easily
- more quickly create rate-paying communities and ...

**Hopefully save greenfield sites from speculators.**



### **The entrance to the Hannick housing development is dangerous →**

The proposed entrance, between two blind bends, to the housing element of 13/05724/OUT is not viable notwithstanding the proposed ‘visibility splay’. The entrance would join the B3109 at a point in centre-right of the photo.

This road is heavily used by 32-tonne motorway maintenance trucks, 44-tonne trucks delivering cereal to Nestle at Staverton, four service buses per hour, heavy agricultural machinery from Freemans at Box-fields and much more heavy traffic as well as passenger vehicles.

An illogical, ghost island, right-turn lane is proposed to this 88-home estate. Why not have such a lane at the 350-home Rudloe Estate entrance just around the corner?



### **← The site of the proposed entrance on a quiet Sunday**

The attractive canopy here is the only one of its kind on the Bradford Road between Pickwick and Bradford Leigh. It will be totally destroyed by the Hannick proposal.

The development is isolated from the pedestrian and cycle routes into Corsham. The Rudloe - Corsham path is on the opposite side of the B3109 from the development so whether using the proposed vehicular entrance (site shown in photo) or the ‘by-way’ entrance in Skynet Drive, the B3109 must be crossed twice (out and back) to get to/from Corsham.

As well as a vehicular entrance, an unregulated pedestrian crossing is proposed at this location, again necessary because of the site’s isolation. Worryingly, this is the site of an accident on 13 December 2013 when the road was closed for two hours.



### **The Skynet Drive entrance to Park Lane →**

The photo at right again serves to illustrate the proposed site’s isolation from the pedestrian and cycle routes to/from Corsham.

Cyclists and pedestrians must cross Park Lane on a blind bend in order to access or leave the footpath/cycleway. No provision whatever has been made for crossing this busy (at peak times) arterial road.

Indeed, this is the very spot where Mrs Kelly, a cyclist from Rudloe was killed some years ago.

The footpath/cycleway does, of course, lead to the ex-RAF Rudloe 2 site in Westwells Road, a brownfield site which has just been sold (on 27 February 2014) for development.







**2014 and work has just started on the access road for 03816/11 →**

No building work has yet been started on this substantive 2011 application. Moreover, unlike 03816 of 2011, 05724 is **not** a substantive application for business expansion, it is a speculative application, not from Bath ASU but by an entity by the name of Masrich Executive Pension Scheme (MEPS).

There is, apparently, an underlying objective for the creation of a pharmaceuticals or life sciences hub close to the existing Bath ASU premises. However, given the extremely slow progress of the substantive 2011 application, this ‘hub’ is a remote aspiration for the MEPS beneficiaries as landlords of the site.

With so much commercial property available for purchase/rent and brownfield available for development, Rudloe must not lose greenfield to speculation.



## ← Bath ASU

Planning application 03816 of 2011, which was not objected to by Rudloe residents, was for a substantive expansion of Bath ASU’s business. In that application, Bath ASU gave seven fundamental business reasons why the company could not operate over two separate sites. Application 03816 therefore specified a premises which would be **physically attached** to the existing premises.

Now, in 2013/14, Wilts CC Spatial Planning department, in its support of 05724 (the subject application), said: “*Bath ASU will be able to construct new facilities on the site to compliment their operations and support meeting the needs of their ongoing business growth*”. This statement has been echoed by others supporting this application, Corsham Town Council for example.



## ← There are many potential sites for a pharmaceuticals hub

There is no business or planning imperative to lose greenfield at Rudloe for a pharmaceuticals hub but there is an investment imperative for MEPS and its principals. We should not sacrifice greenfield to provide for executives’ pensions.

*Invest in Wiltshire* currently advertises 135,000 sq ft of commercial properties in the Corsham area. Brownfield sites are or will be available at ex-MoD sites at Rudloe, indeed one of these is just a stone’s throw from Bath ASU.

At Methuen Park South in west Chippenham (but in Corsham Parish) the pictured 1.3 hectare site (larger than the proposed Bath ASU greenfield site) has been vacant for years. The 2011 *Wiltshire Workspace and Employment Land Review* (the Tym Report) stated that any any undersupply in Corsham (not that there is!) could be met in Chippenham. This site is just 10 minutes away from Rudloe.