

Application No. 20 01421 VAR – Gridserve Electric Forecourt, Edison Way, Great Notley

Statement by Cllr Graham Butland
Member for Great Notley & Black Notley Ward.

“Madam Chairman,

Within your report at page 100 you will see a summary of my objections to the original variation application that was due to be considered by your committee a few weeks ago.

Although those objections remain extant I am pleased that the applicant has reduced the number of trees that it is seeking to remove. This will mitigate, to some extent, the detrimental impact on the wider landscape and character of the area. Further mitigation can be achieved if the “robust planting scheme” is implemented and actively maintained and monitored. As an advocate of the green environment I trust that the applicant will not merely pay lip service to this condition.

Since the site has opened I have received representations from local residents regarding the light pollution emanating from the site throughout the hours of darkness. I note that Condition 6 requires details of any proposed external lighting to the site to be submitted to and approved by the LPA prior to installation. The purpose of this is to minimise the pollution of the environment. I trust that this matter will be actively pursued by the Committee and its officers.

Madam Chairman, I remain very supportive of the overall development and indeed, I am proud that Great Notley is the first site in the country for this new technology.

Nevertheless I think that there is a learning point from this site for future similar developments by the applicant. That learning point is that improving the environment is not just about facilitating the use of electric vehicles in isolation. It has to be part of a co-ordinated approach that pays equal attention to the overall impact of any development.

Many people, not least several of my constituents, find it difficult to balance the loss of significant parts of the tree line, together with excessive lighting, designed mainly to support retail activity, with the concept of supporting the environment.

Madam Chairman, any efforts by your Committee to achieve a fair balance will, I am sure, be highly welcomed by local residents.”