

SILCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL

Member of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils

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Mr Justice William Davis
Queens Bench Division
The Royal Courts of Justice
Strand
London, WC2A 2LL

27th March 2017

Dear Mr Justice Davis,

Between Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and Alexander Thompson, Mr Samson Black, Mr Callum, William Connor and persons unknown.

Planning Ref: EC/17/00053/UMCU1: Land At Rampiers

In my capacity as Chairman of Silchester Parish Council I have been in regular contact with the enforcement team at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) since the occupation of land off Little London Road, RG7 2PP by members of the traveller community.

The Parish Council and the residents of Silchester were delighted to hear that the court was able to issue an injunction with regards to this issue so quickly and we were hoping for swift enforcement. I am informed today, however, that the court has required BDBC to re-serve the injunction on the grounds that the defendants were unaware of the terms of the injunction.

If this is indeed the case I would like to express the grave disappointment of the Parish Council and make a respectful request that the court re-considers its position. Furthermore, we request that the court reinstates the date of the original injunction and takes enforcement action based upon that date for which we have provided BDBC with evidence of multiple breaches.

The Silchester Parish Council held an Extraordinary General Meeting in the Silchester village hall at 7.45pm on the 28th of February 2017. Approximately 238 individuals attended this meeting in total including three gentlemen from the traveller community who introduced themselves to me as Alex, Sam and Callum (three of the names listed on the injunction). They were joined by a gentleman from the Gypsy Council by the name of Joseph Jones who had previously called me to ask if he may attend the meeting as the representative of the Silchester traveller group. His name and attendance are shown on the minutes of the meeting which I have attached to this letter.

At the meeting, I read out a statement of fact (also attached) from Gregg Chapman of the BDBC enforcement team which clearly stated that an injunction had been served and also gave details of the terms of its application. I explained that the injunction meant that no further

caravans or hard core could be brought onto the site and to do so would represent a breach of the injunction. During the course of the two hour meeting (the four gentlemen from the traveller community were present throughout the meeting) there were multiple references to the injunction and further discussion about the potential consequences. The representatives from the traveller community freely participated in this dialogue and many of their comments and responses were recorded in the minutes. An audio tape of the meeting was also taken and I would be happy to provide this to the court if required.


Based on the discussions held at this meeting we find the assertion that the defendants were unaware of the terms of the injunction to be completely implausible. If required, I am confident that we can provide written statements from a number of residents that were present at the meeting stating that the nature of the injunction was made abundantly clear to everyone as well as the fact that continued activity on the site could potentially be in contempt of court.

The traveller community have acted extremely quickly in occupying the land. As such, we believe that the laying of hard core and tarmac as well as the occupation by new caravans is largely complete. We therefore believe that delaying the date of the injunction notice will be counter-productive in allowing the BDBC enforcement team to do their job.

We believe that there are multiple reasons why this site should not be occupied, including the fact that it is partly on a site of special scientific interest, has involved the unlawful dumping of waste materials on a flood plain and represents a genuine hazard to highways. Given this and the evidence based in the minutes we would greatly appreciate you reconsidering your position.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Mahaffey', written in a cursive style.

Simon Mahaffey
Chairman, Silchester Parish Council.