

Phil Travis

I am 66 years old and was born in Oldham, Lancashire. I have two children, a daughter and son. I came down to the South-East when I joined ERA Technology in November 2000 and have lived in Dunsfold since December 2003. I have over 40 years' experience working in various contracts and commercial roles in defence, engineering consultancy and plant control systems with Ferranti, Syseca (a part of Thomson-CSF: now Thales), ERA Technology, Cobham and BAE Systems' submarine business. In October 2023 I became a director of Protect Dunsfold Ltd.

There are two main issues currently facing the village: development and oil & gas drilling.

The village cannot remain as is, "preserved in aspic" and some degree of development is inevitable. The benefits of appropriate development can be seen in Gratton Chase, a thriving community which has injected life and added vibrancy to the village. However, new development should not be excessive and should be in suitable locations.

As stated in the Dunsfold Neighbourhood Plan, Waverley BC requires the village to provide sites for a minimum of 100 new houses in the village and this cannot be avoided. Work started on that Plan in November 2017, with AECOM providing their Environmental Impact Assessment Report in 2018, however, after the AECOM report, everything seemed to slow down until relatively recently when, after several years of torpor, there appeared to be an almost indecent haste to push through that Plan. It may not be feasible, or indeed desirable, to re-open the Neighbourhood Plan, but the potential impact of and timescales associated with re-opening it are at least worth a discussion with Waverley. Relying on the proposed extension to the AONB is not a secure option. The final decision could be 12 months away and inappropriate development in that time may prejudice the AONB decision.

Good engineering practise requires stage gate reviews and learning from experience. The stage gate process is a series of properly documented reviews of the proposed solution and the documented decision of the reviewer at each stage gate. Learning from experience is a feed-back from participants of what was done well and what was not, with a view to making future projects better. Both principles can be, and frequently are, applied outside engineering, and a quick review of the village Planning Committee's process could well be of benefit, especially if it is determined that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot or should not be re-opened at this juncture. If nothing else, this could provide reassurance to villagers that proper process was followed in the decision making.

Regarding the oil & gas drilling, I attended the High Court hearing that was requesting a statutory review into the Government's decision to allow the UKOG planning application. Protect Dunsfold and Waverley BC were acting jointly in this hearing. The hearing was successful, in that Protect Dunsfold and Waverley were given leave to challenge the Government but, whilst several Waverley councillors attended, Dunsfold Parish Council was unfortunately unable to provide any support.

My interests include walking rugby, rugby coaching, cycling, small bore rifle shooting, reading and amateur dramatics with the Dunsfold Amateur Dramatics Society.