



# The Knowle Society

[www.knowledgesociety.org.uk](http://www.knowledgesociety.org.uk)

*Established to maintain the character of the Village*

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1 August 2009

COUNCILLOR S DAVIS,  
Chairman Planning Committee  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough  
PO Box 18,  
Council House Solihull,  
B91 9QS

Dear Councillor Davis,

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR MARINAS IN KNOWLE**

You will be aware that Knowle Society Planning Committee monitors all planning applications that could impact on the character of Knowle or on the residents' peaceful enjoyment of their surroundings. We always try our best to come to a balanced view of such proposals, recognising that change is not necessarily a bad thing and that enhancements are seldom without some disadvantages.

We have recently been paying much attention to the proposals for marinas/moorings on the Grand Union Canal at Knowle. (Applications 2009/494, Stripes Hill Farm and 2009/1028, 'Jacobean Moorings'). Both of these are major developments in the Green Belt, having the potential to significantly affect the amenity that the canal provides to the residents of Knowle. We understand that the former is likely to be considered by your committee in the near future and we therefore wish to comment specifically on that application now. We will comment in detail on the latter in due course. It is unfortunate that the provision of suitable sites for marinas has not been established through the Core Strategy, so we will have to deal with them as they arise. We would ask whether you have been provided with evidence from the British Waterways Board of the known demand for moorings in Solihull and specifically in Knowle.

We have not yet had a full opportunity to study the (numerous) papers submitted for the latter. However, it is our clear view that both these applications should be considered by your committee in concert. They are similar applications, both being intended to provide 'off-line' berthing for canal boats alongside the Grand Union Canal in Knowle and in similar proximity to the village. The differences between the applications are only of detail. The clear view of Knowle Society is that, while one of these developments *might* be acceptable, that is the limit

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of any such development that should be allowed. The grounds for this view are that such over-development would have a serious and deleterious impact on the Green Belt and on the amenity that the canal landscape provides. In addition we have concerns that the intensification that such multiple developments would represent is, in itself, a threat to the very existence of the Green Belt and would necessarily increase the already high traffic levels in Knowle.

## STRIPES HILL FARM MARINA (2009/494)

We have found difficulty in dealing with this application as it is submitted in outline but with access and layout to be considered in detail, although we think the level of detail is lacking. However, on the information available, we object to this application as it stands on the following grounds:-

- The proposed entrance to the access road off the Warwick Road is unsatisfactory and unsafe.

The location of this entrance is close to the bottom of Stripes Hill. While this stretch of road is subject to a 40mph speed limit residents will be very aware that this is observed more in the breach than the observance. The applicant's own survey in the transport supporting statement shows that 63% of southbound traffic (coming down the hill) exceeds 40mph and 5% exceeds 50mph. This situation must be acknowledged. The entrance, even with the proposed widening, will not allow a vehicle coming down the hill to move entirely off the road if a vehicle is waiting to exit the site. You will of course be aware that this exit will be used not only for the proposed marina, but also for Stripes Hill Farm and that it lies directly opposite the access to Lansdowne Farm. We propose that a short exit lane is built on the north side of the entrance, where there is space available, to allow traffic to pull out of the running lane.

- We are also concerned that the promoters of the marina have indicated on their website (<http://www.knowledgelocksmarina.co.uk/facilities.htm>) that:-

**We also hope to include the following:**

- Brokerage office and boats to view for new and second hand boat sales
- A resident boat hire fleet with booking office



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This indicates a significant increase in the commercial activities on the site, which in itself would change the character of the development. The latter proposal would also indicate a significant increase in traffic flow into the site, especially on Sundays, when the base flow would be highest anyway. It would also go against the statement in the application that:-

**Access:** Access to the site will be restricted to marina users only. Gates are to be placed near the entrance to the marina which can be opened only by key fob or by staff on site. The site is not to be made available for access to the general public in order to ensure site security and health and safety.

([http://www.solihull.gov.uk/PlanAppDocs/2009/0494/0494\\_site\\_management\\_plan.pdf](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/PlanAppDocs/2009/0494/0494_site_management_plan.pdf))

- The application includes a statement that residential use of the site is to be restricted to 2 boats for use of staff. If planning permission is granted we would ask that this be made a legally enforceable condition, as mentioned in the above site management plan.

## JACOBAN MOORINGS

As indicated above we have not yet had the opportunity to fully study this proposal, but will do so and comment in due course.

I trust these objections and observations will assist your Committee in their deliberations.

Leighton Jones  
Chairman,  
Knowle Society Planning Committee

Copy to:-

Gary Palmer, SMBC;  
Councillor Diana Holl-Allen;  
Councillor Jeff Potts;  
Councillor Alan Robeiro