

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Land at Newgate Lane (North)

Fareham Land LP September 2018

BRS.4989

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OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 75 DWELLINGS, OPEN SPACE, VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM NEWGATE LANE AND ASSOCIATED AND ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE, WITH ALL MATTERS EXCEPT ACCESS TO BE RESERVED

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

LAND AT NEWGATE LANE (NORTH), FAREHAM

ON BEHALF OF FAREHAM LAND LP

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED) PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

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PLANNING | DESIGN | ENVIRONMENT | ECONOMICS



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report accompanies and supports the outline planning application submitted on behalf of Fareham Land LP for the development of up to 75 no. dwellings on land at Newgate Lane (North), Fareham.
- 1.2 The outline planning application is submitted in tandem with an outline planning application for the development of up to 125 dwellings on land at Newgate Lane (South), immediately south of this site.
- 1.3 The two proposals were originally conceived as a single application for up to 200 dwellings and community consultation has taken place on this basis. The two applications are now being progressed in tandem but separately for commercial reasons, however the developers remain committed to early delivery once permission is secured.
- 1.4 It is important to stress that the content of the proposals has not been amended. The principle of development, quantum of development and the design principles of the wider site proposals remain unchanged, albeit they are now brought forward as divided across two planning units.
- 1.5 The two application proposals have been conceived to achieve a cohesive new development across the wider site with strong linkages between the two parcels and a joined-up masterplanning approach, whilst ensuring that each is technically deliverable individually.
- 1.6 The importance of effective community involvement in planning has been emphasised through the Government's localism agenda and through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.7 The planning system should serve an important role in encouraging civic renewal and empowering local people to shape their surroundings. The Localism Act 2011 introduced the requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments, giving people the chance to comment when there is still scope to influence proposals.
- 1.8 As part of the Local Development Framework process introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, local authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to 'front load' the planning system so



that the concerns of the community are addressed earlier in the plan making process, with the intention that they are committed to the adopted policies of the LDF. The content and form of the SCI has implications for any public consultation undertaken by a prospective applicant or developer as the SCI should explain the process and appropriate methods for effective community involvement in the determination of planning applications.

1.9 Fareham Borough Council's SCI was adopted on 6th March 2017. Chapter 11 of the SCI states:

"Applicants or developers are expected to consult with the local community before submitting major planning applications which are large scale or likely to generate wide public interest. Consultation before major planning applications are submitted must be of high quality, accessible and clear for the whole community to understand. If a major planning application is submitted, but consultation with the community has either not been carried out, or has not been carried out appropriately, the Council may decide to not to accept the application until it has been done."

1.10 Appendix D of the SCI sets out the level of consultation that will be required for large scale major applications (i.e. those which would generate wide community interest). This table is repeated below.

Approach	Application		
Community engagement to be undertaken by applicant	Large scale major applications (likely to generate wide community interest)	Major applications	
Public Meetings	•		
Public Exhibition	00	•	
Workshops	0		
Press notice/adverts	0	0	
Notify and consult with neighbours	00	00	

FIGURE 1: FAREHAM BOROUGH SCI - TABLE 1



1.11 Taking into consideration the NPPF, Localism Act and Fareham Borough Council's SCI, the applicant has undertaken a programme of pre-application consultation with the Local Planning Authority and the local community. This report explains the pre-application consultation process followed by the applicant; provides a summary of community comments / views received, and demonstrates how they have been taken into account in finalising the submitted scheme.



2. CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- 2.1 The NPPF identifies that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Paragraph 39 makes clear that good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.
- 2.2 A pre-application submission was made to Fareham Borough Council on 26th February 2018, following which a meeting was held on 23rd April 2018. Key matters discussed included:
 - the capacity of the site and the appropriate housing density;
 - the landscape treatment to the relief road boundary;
 - the location and design of the children's play facilities; and
 - the role of the River Alver and the existing vegetation within the proposals.
- 2.3 Fareham Borough Council are yet to provide their collated written advice. However, responses have been received from the Council's ecologist, the Environment Agency, Environmental Health, Highways and Natural England.
- 2.4 The applicant and members of their consultant team also met with Hampshire County Council Highways on 10th April 2018 to agree the scope of the Transport Assessment. Informal discussion with both parties have been ongoing thereafter.



3. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The importance of relevant pre-application consultation with the local community at an appropriate scale is recognised by the applicant.
- 3.2 It was considered that a drop-in public exhibition would be the best mechanism through which to engage the community in dialogue and request views and feedback. The advantages of this method of consultation are that it:
 - provides the opportunity for the public to interact with the development team face-to-face, creating two-way information exchange;
 - provides an open forum for discussion;
 - provides information in an accessible, easy-to-read format;
 - provides the opportunity for the submission of comments; and
 - promotes inclusivity by creating an informal, relaxed and open forum at a time and location that is as convenient as possible for local people.
- 3.3 A public exhibition was held between 3pm and 7pm on Tuesday 22nd May 2018 at St Matthews Church, Wych Lane, Bridgemary, PO13 0JN, located approximately half a mile from the development site. The ward councillors and planning committee members were invited to attend from 2:30pm to provide a dedicated session, if they wished to do so. Representatives of the project team including the Planning Consultant, Urban Designer, Transport Consultant and Drainage Consultant were present to assist attendees. The venue was selected for its proximity to residents most likely to be affected by the proposals, and had sufficient space to accommodate the expected volume of people.
- 3.4 Pegasus Group also set up a dedicated website so that the consultation boards could be viewed online (www.newgatelanepegasusgroup.co.uk) alongside a dedicated email address where responses could be sent.
- 3.5 In order to publicise the event, approximately 300 flyers were sent to residents in surrounding area. The flyers included the aforementioned website and email/postal addresses alongside details of how residents who were unable to attend the event could still participate in the consultation.

APPENDIX 1: PUBLIC EXHIBITION FLYER



3.6 At the exhibition, display boards provided information about the site and the draft proposals. Copies of the information displayed on the exhibition boards are included at Appendix 2 of this report. Members of the project team attended the exhibition and were on-hand to answer questions and discuss the proposals.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC EXHIBITION BOARDS

3.7 Attendees were invited to provide feedback on the proposals via email (as detailed on the consultation flyer) or via a comments form which they could either complete at the event or return by post. A copy of this is attached at Appendix 3.

APPENDIX 3: COMMENTS FORM

- 3.8 Whilst a return by date was not specified on the consultation flyer, a cut-off date of 1st June was applied for the purposes of writing this report. This gave respondents approximately 10 days to respond following the consultation event and 21 days from when the flyers were issued to residents on 10th May.
- 3.9 The responses to the event are considered in detail within the following chapter.



4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ASSESSMENT

4.1 In total, 380 responses were received from members of the public. Of these, 342 responded via email to the address provided on the flyer and 35 responded via the written forms provided at the consultation event. A single, stand-alone letter was received by Pegasus Group on 20/05/2018 and two emails were received by Pegasus directly, separate from those sent to the email address on the flyer (i.e. not to newgatelane@pegasusgroup.co.uk). A breakdown is included in the table below:

Response Type	No of Respondents
Responses to newgatelane@pegasusgroup.co.uk	3421
Hand written forms	35
Direct emails to Pegasus Group	2
Hand-written letter	1
Total	380

FIGURE 2: RESPONSE TYPE BREAKDOWN

4.2 The format of each response differed and, as such, it was not possible to analyse the responses collectively. Therefore, each of these response types is addressed separately below.

Responses to newgatelane@pegasusgroup.co.uk

4.3 The vast majority of consultation responses were received via the dedicated email address set up by Pegasus. Aside from 22 responses which simply stated non-specific objections and those offering support, the vast majority raised a number of issues relating to the proposal. These are tackled in turn below.

¹ There were a handful of duplicated responses received; however, as these were from the same postcode and always came in pairs, it is presumed that the same response was received from more than one person at the same household. As such, duplicated responses were not excluded from the assessment.



Increased Traffic/Congestion

- 4.4 By far the most pertinent concerns of residents related to the increase in traffic and congestion within the surrounding road network (cited in 272 responses). Residents cited long standing issues in the area which have not been resolved through the development of the Newgate Lane by-pass ('Newgate Lane West') and concerns that the proposed development, coupled with the draft allocation to the north east of the by-pass, would exacerbate the issue in the area.
- 4.5 On the topic of transport more generally, seven respondents also requested or highlighted the need for public transport improvements.
- 4.6 A handful of comments were also received in relation to highway safety (3 respondents), the proposed access (3 respondents) and parking provision (1 respondent). However, it was clear that the principal concern in transport terms related to the impact of the proposed development on congestion.
- 4.7 The accompanying Transport Statement, prepared by Pegasus Group, sets out the current status of the surrounding road network and considers the impact that the proposals will have on it. In short, the Transport Assessment demonstrates that the proposals would have no unacceptable impact upon Newgate Lane West's functionality and/or safety. Furthermore, the statement also highlights a reduction in vehicular traffic along Newgate Lane West will result from the delivery of the Stubbington bypass which will take vehicles directly from the Gosport peninsula out onto the M27 and into Portsmouth and London via the M3, removing the need to travel through Fareham.
- 4.8 The Transport Statement is also accompanied by a Travel Plan which sets out initiatives and measures to be provided before the development is occupied to maximise the opportunity to influence new residents' travel patterns.

Impact on Local Services and Facilities

- 4.9 A significant number of responses raised concerns relating to the impact of the proposals on health (89 respondents) and education (90 respondents) facilities within the surrounding area.
- 4.10 Residents often cited concerns that local schools are already at, or close to, capacity and/or have problems in booking appointments at GPs surgeries.



- 4.11 Seven residents cited resources for policing as being a concern in the area and the potential for the proposals to put further strain on them.
- 4.12 In addressing these issues, the proposal will provide contributions to improve and enhance services and facilities in the locality through the delivery of CIL payments and/or S106 contributions. Further information on the developer contributions to be delivered from the proposals is included within the accompanying Planning Statement.
- 4.13 Two respondents also pointed to a lack of retail facilities in close proximity to the site. The sustainability credentials of the site, including its access to retail, leisure and other facilities is detailed within the accompanying Planning and Transport Statements.

Loss of Green Space/Buffer/Strategic Gap

- 4.14 17 responses highlighted the fact that the site was part of a strategic gap/buffer (the Meon Gap) or took issue more generally with the loss of green space.
- 4.15 The justification for removing the land from the strategic gap is set out within the accompanying Planning Statement. Furthermore, the accompanying Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) sets out the reasons why the proposal is acceptable in landscape terms.

Loss of Wildlife

4.16 A small number of concerns related to the loss of wildlife that would result from the development of the site. The preliminary Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Ethos, has confirmed that there is some potential for protected species on the site. Further surveys will be conducted to understand the implications of developing the site and what mitigation, compensatory and enhancement measures will be required. These will be implemented accordingly to ensure that any loss is kept to a minimum and the environment is enhanced for such species where possible.

Affordable Housing

4.17 Some respondents also raised concerns over the provision of affordable housing, namely over its affordability and/or in the form of scepticism that any would be delivered.



- 4.18 The applicant intends to provide a policy compliant level of affordable housing as part of the scheme, with the type, size and tenure mix to be agreed and committed to through a S106 agreement with the Council and other relevant parties.
 - Impact on Gosport Residents/Services
- 4.19 A number of respondents also raised concerns with the impact development will have on the amenity, services, facilities of/for residents in Gosport. This issue was often linked to comments relating to the impact on local services and facilities more generally which has been addressed above.
- 4.20 Again, the applicant would stress that, CIL and S106 contributions will be made to mitigate the impact of the development on such facilities to make it acceptable in planning terms. Where contributions are made for services managed by Hampshire County Council (e.g. education) these will be directed to them, not Fareham Borough Council. In such instances, residents in Gosport should, theoretically, be able to benefit from the development equally with those in Fareham.
 - Adverse Impact on Amenity and Pollution
- 4.21 A handful of responses raised concerns relating to the amenity of existing and future residents, specifically citing the site's proximity to an existing sewage treatment plant and air quality as key issues.
- 4.22 Two responses also highlighted the need to protect the amenity of the existing dwelling at the site who will ultimately be enclosed by the proposed development.
- 4.23 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) has been carried out to show that pollutant concentrations will remain below the air quality levels and, therefore, the proposals will require no mitigation from the nearby sewage treatment works, as requested by the Environmental Health Officer in their pre-application response.
- 4.24 The impacts of traffic on the amenity of future residents is afforded consideration in the accompanying Planning and Transport Statements. Furthermore, due consideration will be given the to the amenity of existing and future residents in terms of privacy, overlooking, overshadowing etc. when the layout is finalised at the Reserved Matters stage.



Lack of Employment

4.25 A small number of residents raised concerns relating to the lack of jobs/employment opportunities in the area.

Flooding

4.26 A very small number of residents raised concerns related to flooding in the area and the potential for the development to increase this risk. The site lies in Flood Zone 1, the area least at risk of flooding. Furthermore, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) accompanies the application and the proposals will incorporate features to manage surface water run-off and ensure the site can be drained appropriately.

Loss of Agricultural Land

4.27 Residents also raised concerns that the proposal will result in the loss of agricultural land. As set out within the accompanying Planning Statement, the land is predominantly classified as Grade 3b Agricultural Land with some Grade 3a around the farmhouse and extending to the north-eastern part of the site. The Planning Statement goes on to justify the loss of this land which is mostly not 'Best and Most Versatile' (BMV) land when assessed against policy CS16 of the Core Strategy and weighed in the planning balance.

Comments of Support

- 4.28 A number of comments in support of the application were also received. The majority of these supported the principle of delivering houses in an acute area of need. Caveats were occasionally attached to comments and related to the provision of affordable housing or certain types of dwelling, but were, nevertheless, supportive of the principle of developing the site.
- 4.29 Other comments related to the economic benefits of the delivery of new homes through the boost to the construction industry. The Economic Statement accompanying the application sets out the full benefits that the site's development will bring to the local economy.



Hand Written Response Forms

- 4.30 Members of the public were also invited to fill out a response form which had a number of questions relating to the proposal and a section for additional/more general comments. In total, 35 response forms were filled out. Unfortunately, many of these were often incomplete with respondents often choosing only to respond to a small number of questions.
- 4.31 As such, it is difficult to draw trends or conclusions from the responses to numerous questions due to the limited data that was provided. However, a few key conclusions can be draw which are discussed below.
 - Question 1: Do you support the provision of new homes in the area?
- 4.32 The vast majority of respondents did not support the development of the site with only a handful offering their 'in-principle' support. The majority of respondents were local residents with one response received from a local councillor and one response from a local business owner. The majority of residents and the councillor objected to the proposals, however the business owner supported the proposals, recognising the economic benefits to the development.
 - Question 2: What type of housing do you think is most needed in the local area?
- 4.33 There was broad support for a variety of home types (Question 2) with starter homes for young people being slightly more popular than the other types listed. A small number of respondents simply stated a desire for Affordable Housing/Council Housing in general, suggesting no particular preference either way. One respondent requested bungalows for elderly individuals also be included in the housing mix.
 - Question 3: Do you support the provision of a 'LEAP' and public open space on the site? Do you have any design suggestions for these areas?
- 4.34 Question 3 was poorly responded to generally. Nevertheless, where respondents did engage, there was a desire to include sensory areas/elements for disabled/physically impaired people.



Question 4: What would be your priorities for the scheme in respect of local traffic and travel?

- 4.35 Responses to Question 4 reflected concerns relating to traffic raised in the email responses, with all but one of those who did respond citing a desire to minimise the effects of congestion as far as possible. A degree of support was also shown for good pedestrian connectivity and the maximum parking provision for new homes.
- 4.36 Additional comments in relation to this question tended to state the status quo should be maintained (i.e. no development should take place) or that further improvements were required to the road network (e.g. improving connectivity to the motorway and the A32 out of Gosport).
 - Question 5: What is most important to the overall design?
- 4.37 Of those who did respond, the majority wanted to see the existing trees and hedgerows protected/incorporated into the design of the scheme, alongside strong support for limiting the height of development to protect views.

Other Comments

- 4.38 A space was provided at the end for additional comments. The comments provided did not raise as extensive a set of issues as the email responses and indeed the majority chose not to provide any comments at all. However, the following issues were raised within the additional comments section:
 - Too many houses in area currently;
 - Pressure will be placed on Gosport Services;
 - Objection to development on the strategic gap;
 - Conflict with run-in to the airfield to the south;
 - Direct development to the north of Fareham;
 - Congestion is an issue;
 - Pollution;
 - Lack of employment;



- Loss of wildlife; and
- Capacity issues with local services.

Direct Emails to Pegasus

- 4.39 Pegasus received two emails directly from local residents rather than via the dedicated email address set up. One resident objected to the proposals citing a number of issues considered previously (congestion, loss of strategic gap and loss of wildlife). They also lamented the further loss of land that was previously part of Peel Common.
- 4.40 To clarify, the site has not been common land for a considerable amount of time. The accompanying Heritage Assessment provides a comprehensive assessment of the site's history. To summarise, the site was enclosed at some point during the early 20th Century and therefore ceased to be 'common land' some time ago. This is noted by the respondent in their email. As such, this does not
- 4.41 Another resident highlighted the impact that the proposed access would have on their amenity, being located directly opposite their house. The applicant has agreed to relocate the access to ensure that the amenity of this resident is sufficiently protected.

Hand-Written Letter

4.42 Finally, a hand-written letter from what was, presumably, a local resident (they did not specify) made comments relating to congestion and the impact on local services.



5. APPLICANT'S RESPONSE

- 5.1 As shown in the previous section, the majority of objections received related to the impact of the proposals on congestion and local services.
- 5.2 The former issue is addressed within the accompanying Transport Statement which demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity within the surrounding road network to accommodate additional development in this area. Aside from the provision of an appropriate access, extensive upgrades to the surrounding road network are not required to make the proposals acceptable. In any case, this issue cannot be addressed through alterations to the scheme's design as it relates to the principle of developing the site.
- 5.3 The latter issues are addressed within the accompanying Planning Statement and will be dealt with via CIL and S106 contributions where agreed with the Council.
 Again, alterations to the scheme's design/fundamental principles will not be able to address this issue as they relate more fundamentally to the principle of developing the site.
- Alterations to the scheme's design/fundamental principles are also limited in the extent to which they are able to address other key issues raised within the consultation exercise (e.g. loss of land from the strategic gap, loss of agricultural land, etc).
- 5.5 However, where possible, the applicant has taken on board comments from the consultation and incorporated the following changes into the proposal:
 - The treatment of the southern boundary (with Woodcote Lane) has been carefully considered. The hedgerow will be strengthened and a generous offset between the nearest habitable rooms will be provided (relevant to Land at Newgate Lane (South);
 - The southern vehicular access has been moved approximately 20m north to protect properties on Newgate Lane from direct views of turning traffic (relevant to Land at Newgate Lane (South));
 - The Landscape Strategy makes provision for community-led landscaping to respond to a diverse range of needs such as for those with memory or sensory impairment, to be designed at reserved matters stage (relevant to both Newgate Lane (North) and Newgate Lane (South);



• The indicative location of the pedestrian link has been amended to reduce footfall on Woodcote Lane (relevant to Land at Newgate Lane (South).



6. THE 'WHEATCROFT PRINCIPLE'

- 6.1 Since the pre-application consultation with the Local Planning Authority and local community has taken place, the proposals have now evolved, for commercial reasons, to be progressed as two separate planning units known as Land at Newgate Lane (North) and Land at Newgate Lane (South).
- 6.2 It is important to stress that the content of the proposals has not been amended:

 The principle of development, quantum of development and the design principles of the wider site proposals remain unchanged, albeit they are now brought forward as divided across two planning units.
- 6.3 The two application proposals have been conceived to achieve a cohesive new development across the wider site with strong linkages between the two parcels and a joined-up masterplanning approach, whilst ensuring that each is technically deliverable individually.
- 6.4 In the 'Wheatcroft'² case, the High Court considered whether it would be reasonable to allow the introduction of amendments to the planning proposal during the appeal. It concluded that the decision should be premised on the test as to

"whether the development is so changed that to grant it would be to deprive those who should have been consulted on the changed development of the opportunity of such consultation".

6.5 Whilst the Wheatcroft principle applies directly to appeals, it also provides a clear rule of thumb in the context of this consultation process. The community consultation for the "up to 200 dwelling" proposal at the combined site, consulted upon the same location, type, quantum and scale of development as now proposed across the two separate proposals, with the same masterplanning principles enshrined. It is therefore clear that the local community has not been prejudiced by the consultation process as a result of an amended planning/administrative process to divide the applications in response to commercial needs.

 $^{^2}$ Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v SSE [JPL, 1982, P37]. This decision has since been confirmed in Wessex Regional Health Authority v SSE [1984] and Wadehurst Properties v SSE & Wychavon DC [1990] and Breckland DC v SSE and T. Hill [1992].



7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The purpose of the pre-application public consultation undertaken by the applicant was to build understanding and awareness of the project by explaining the draft proposals to local people and the local planning authority and to seek feedback to be used to shape the scheme.
- 7.2 Local people have had the opportunity through various methods of engaging with the proposals. The level of response from the community has been notable and from across a range of individuals, thereby demonstrating that the applicant has been successful in canvassing views across local people.
- 7.3 The comments and feedback received during the pre-application consultation with the local community have been reviewed and fed into the scheme proposals subject to this planning application.
- 7.4 The applicant has noted the strong level of objection from the majority of respondents for the reasons outlined in Section 4 and has sought to address these issues in depth within the accompanying suite of technical documents, namely the Planning and Transport Statements.
- 7.5 Where possible and feasible, changes have been made to the scheme design to address comments provided by the local community and LPA These changes have been outlined within Section 5 of this Statement. Accordingly, the proposals should be looked upon more favourably by the Local Planning Authority (NPPF, paragraph 66).
- 7.6 In summary, the applicant considers that the pre-application consultation undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective. The requirement to consult has clearly been satisfied.



APPENDIX 1 PUBLIC EXHIBITION FLYER

LAND AT NEWGATE LANE CONSULTATION

Fareham Land LP is proposing to build up to 200 new homes at Newgate Lane. This key location is sustainably located and well placed for access to workplaces, local services, shopping and leisure facilities in both Fareham and Gosport, with good public transport links via the Speedfield Park commercial area.

We are holding a public exhibition on

Tuesday 22nd May, between 3-7pm, at

St. Matthew's Church, Wych Lane, Bridgemary, PO13 0JN

We will be displaying our proposals and answering your questions.

PLANNING HISTORY

AND CONTEXT

Fareham Borough Council published its 'Draft Local Plan 2036' for consultation in October 2017 which seeks to identify sites for the delivery of new housing over the plan period. These include the site known as Peel Common (or HA2) located to the west of Bridgemary which is anticipated to accommodate up to 475 homes. Land at Newgate Lane would provide a natural extension to this proposed new community, which will allow the Council to secure up to an additional 200 homes to contribute towards its 5 year housing land supply.

The new bypass known as Newgate Lane East opened in April 2018. It provides the additional vehicle capacity required to support the new housing and serve to ease congestion in the area.

