

From: malcolm belcher

Sent: 11 May 2021 13:47

To: Salter, Tim <TIM.SALTER@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

Subject: Planning application P/18/1073/FP, Land to the South of Romsey Avenue

Dear Mr. Salter

Reference: Planning application P/18/1073/FP, Land to the South of Romsey Avenue

I am writing to you on behalf of AFC Portchester FC and to appeal to you in the strongest sense possible to reject the above application. I will try to set out my independent position on this application. I won't try and give you a technical statement of why the housing development shouldn't go ahead as I am not an expert in this area, but I will try to appeal to your safeguard of our community football club as a local professional and as a local resident. I live within walking distance of the club and am a regular user of its facilities in particular with the youth football. I am also a local Chartered Surveyor who has acted on behalf of the club on numerous occasions to assist with the clubs development and growth.

I trust as part of your due diligence into the review of this application you will of determined, no doubt, the absolute lifeline that AFC Portchester provides and serves to the community of the Portchester and the wider area. The facility is not only the centre of the local grass roots football which I have been privileged to participate in but is also central to a wide range of social gatherings including weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and of course for funeral wakes. The club is hugely supported by many local businesses and individuals giving up their time and resources to help maintain and enhance the facility for the enjoyment of all. The club is represented by a wide diversity of the community from the very young to our senior members. In addition to the traditional events the club organises and runs all sorts of entertainment such as music bands, comedy nights and celebrity speakers which are very popular and hugely successful.

AFC Portchester is continuing on its journey of development and growth whether this is with the stadium or the pitch or the facilities. It's what the community wants and it's what the club continues to deliver. You will be aware of the planning history of the AFC Portchester including the current plans to deliver a 4g pitch for the first team and the youth teams for extended daylight use. You will be aware the traditional grass surface allows for limited use. The club has a huge demand for a 4g surface but needs local conditions to facilitate this for example to be located within the community, to serve the community and not to *fall foul of a developers demand for higher profits*.

It is the genuine fear by the club and many local residents who have no doubt presented their objections to the application, that the granting of permission to this application will seriously affect the long term viability of the football club and its ability to serve the community. You will be aware the close proximity of the new development to the existing club will result in complaints of the 'normal' noise and 'normal' light from the club and as such the club could be subject to enforcement action or possibly closure, this is not fair and is not right. The granting of permission of this application will at a stroke of your pen permanently restrict the club from any, yes I must repeat, any future growth and/or enhancement. I would urge you to consider the impact of this on the club and

the community. There will be no chance of a 4g pitch, no chance of increased capacity and probably no chance of celebrations such as the weddings. Other events such as the annual firework display will have to be cancelled due to the proximity of housing and no doubts complaints from the new residents that don't want such an event on their 'doorstep'.

I accept the need for housing as does the community, and your decision will be based on a careful balance of local housing and community needs. However, you will be aware the applicant to this application is a hugely successful developer whose growth and value has been built on developments which return the highest profits. You will be aware Portchester is an affluent area with a very strong local housing market, perfect conditions and opportunity you would say to 'throw' up a few more houses and grab some high returns.

You will be in possession of all the relevant data, the demographics, infrastructure and how the development meets the local plan. These will be strong supporters and persuaders of the application and I fully appreciate the difficult decision you are faced with and you will make this decision with the information to hand.

Please can I finish on this note Mr. Slater. AFC Portchester is much loved and a very important part of the community especially now with a new post-lockdown world we will all learn to live in, the need for the club will be even greater now as we try and do as much of the normal things we were used to pre-pandemic. Community facilities must be allowed to survive and strive and to bring the community together for the good of the community. I appeal to you to think about the impact this development will have on our community football club and make the decision to reject the appeal and thus the application.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Malcolm Belcher MRICS
Director Vivid Surveyors Limited