



Cams Bay Map ref SU595055

During Lockdown I walked most days around Wicor recreation ground and Cams Bay. When I reached the gap in the trees and hedge row where the Romsey field is visible, (Map ref SU595055) I would always stop, take a deep breath, and rotate myself through 360 degrees, to enjoy the view from four aspects. This made me feel calm, peaceful and connected to the diverse aspects of this environment. I was able to enjoy the view of the recreation ground, the sea, the wooded area and the field which extends right up to Portsdown hill, to Nelson monument. It appears like open countryside, enabling me to forget about the pandemic and the loss of loved ones. I started to think that this area with quadruple diverse aspects was unique to Portchester and possibly to Fareham. It has Triple designation as a Ramsar sight, Special Protection Area and SSSI. It supports Brent Geese on their migratory route from Siberia both on the shore and field, other wading birds, badgers, foxes, deer, squirrels, slow worms, bats and pheasants.

I observed many members of the local community enjoying this area for a diverse range of activities from walking, running, cycling, family picnics, fun and exploration, beach combing, paddle boarding canoeing and dog walking. Since lockdown this area has seemed busier.

I wondered if other local people felt the same about this area. If it improved their mental wellbeing and how they would feel if the wildlife and view were destroyed by pastiche housing estate.

I thought about what mental wellbeing means. MIND states' Mental Health and wellbeing is not just an absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well being in which each individual realizes their own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make contribution to their community.

I read in, The People and Nature, Survey, led by Natural England that almost 9 in 10 adults in England said that being in nature made them very, happy. Four in 10 adult said they were spending more time in nature than before the coronavirus pandemic, with health and wellbeing cited as one of the main reasons for getting outside. Other key reasons for visiting natural spaces were for fresh air and to connect with wildlife and nature.

I decided to ask local people how they felt about this area. If was important to them and if they also felt it was a unique spot.

I sought views of almost 200 local people.

90% of people were aware of the area's triple designation status.

Almost 90% of people thought this area was a unique spot because without taking a step and turning on the spot you can see 4 diverse views including the bay, countryside, woods and recreation ground. They reported it was a rare place, sense of escapism, uplifting it felt beautiful and undisturbed, away from stress, families love to explore looking at wildlife and able to see farming a short walk or drive from home, overwhelming pleasure that Brent geese and wading birds are supported here and Portchester is part of their journey from Siberia. This is a very special place.

I asked local people how they felt when they stood in SU595055 and viewed the four different views. 90% reported they felt better. Expressing feelings of calm, relaxing, pleasure, respect for local environment, fortunate and privileged to have this natural and diverse haven within walking distance of home. Daily friend during lockdown, kept me sane. Uplifting, a big part of our lives. Realise that some things don't need to change and simple things in life like nature, make you happy. Free place to get away from roads, traffic, work. Children free and safe breathing fresh air and One lady who has recently had very serious lung disease said she felt, 'glad to be alive' being able to observe and experience the seasons of life through farming. Rare in an urban setting.

Nearly 100% stated that this spot was important to them during lockdown. Stating the importance for their mental health. People expressed they felt lucky to have this area to escape to. We are thankful for the diversity of landscape and wildlife. Amazing for the soul, pure therapy, crucial to the wellbeing of many people. Stopped me feeling trapped and kept my mental health at bay. We came every day and loved it. I feel renewed by my visits and I always feel improved and mentally stronger.

I asked local people how they would feel if the view from the foreshore was blocked by housing estate. Almost 100% said they would feel worse. People said they would feel angry, frustrated, devastated, depressed, claustrophobic, sheer pain, hemmed in, anxious, sad. It would ruin the area. Another 6 – 700 hundred homes to be built up the hill. We need this unique spot. It is such an area of outstanding natural beauty. I would feel pent up and devastated by the loss of this open space.

96% of local people sad that a housing development would negatively impact their enjoyment of this area. People went on to say. It would increase traffic. Noise and dust would affect wildlife and leisure activities. It would be a travesty. It would devastate wildlife. It would be devastating a travesty. People and children would lose the rhythm of the countryside which is precious in an urban area. It would make this small unique area claustrophobic. Everything on top of you. No where to escape. It is bonkers.

98% said proposed housing would negatively affect their wellbeing. Stating The impact on my wellbeing would be significant. To have such a beautiful community area destroyed is beyond comprehension. Let alone the on mental wellbeing given the magnitude of work, noise and dust over a long period of time. Absolutely my wellbeing would be affected. As I try to unwind and relax as I walk here. The impact on wildlife is distressing especially as it is SPA. I moved to this area because of Cams Bay. We all need places to go to unwind and relax. I went there to cry when my Dad died. He was a D Day veteran. Developers should not be able to build on SPA.

10% of people visited Cams Bay from outside of Portchester some from as far away as Lancashire Some from Gosport, Waterlooville, other areas of Fareham and Eastleigh. 90% of the respondents

lived in Portchester and some said they moved here because of Cams Bay and Wicor recreation ground. The youngest person was 3 and the oldest in her 90's.

I looked at the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF 2021 and found that the following 3 items are pertinent to local people's thoughts about Cams Bay.

Open Spaced - All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Heritage Coast - Areas of undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors.

Green Infrastructure - A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

183. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
1. a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life-
 2. b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
 3. c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

I wondered if local planning considered open space and mental wellbeing. I read Tony Hemenway's book about Permaculture. Tony describes a planning model which embraces interconnectedness, sustainability, thinking global, acting local and considering the social and environmental consequences of housing choices. The Permaculture model looks at planning in a holistic way,

Fareham Borough Councils local plan states in:

ENVIRONMENT 1.38

The Borough's natural environment is highly valued by residents and visitors. The value is reflected in the Borough's coasts, three main rivers, the woodlands and parks and six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and six Nature Reserves. The 200 people I spoke to agree with this.

VISION AND STRATEGIC POLICY2.3

Our vision for Fareham's future is based upon the assumption that residents want to preserve all that is good about Fareham,

VISION

The special environments and heritage assets of the Borough will continue to be appropriately protected.

Key Strategic Priorities

7. Create places that encourage healthy lifestyles and provide for the community through the provision of leisure and cultural facilities, recreation and open space and the opportunity to walk and cycle to destinations.

9. Protect and enhance the Borough's landscape features, valued landscape, biodiversity and the local, national and international nature designations.

12. Protect those things that are good and important to Fareham and its residents, businesses and visitors.

It seemed to me that the aspect by Cams Bay and the Romsey field met all of these criteria for FBC and NFFP and it is very clear that local people really appreciate this unspoilt area and their mental wellbeing would be impacted if the development were approved.

I am also mindful of, Sir David Attenborough's recent warning to the G7 summit that humans maybe, "on the verge of destabilising the entire planet."

Please save this unique open space for the residents of and visitors to Portchester. There is no other place in Fareham where you can literally be so close to the sea, farmland, woodland and recreational space without actually taking a step. Make us collectively feel 'lucky to be alive', connected to the landscape, nature and the environment in Cams Bay Portchester.