

Romsey Avenue Appeal

Thank you Madam Inspector for allowing us to make a representation. This is a joint statement from Cllr Nick Walker and Cllr Sue Walker, we are the Ward members for this area. A number of local residents will make representations to you and we would like to add our support to them and the Borough Council against this development.

A bit of background information. In September 2018 Foreman Homes submitted their first planning application for the land south of Romsey Avenue. In October 2018, one month later the land was redesignated and upgraded by Natural England and became a Primary Support Area for Brent Geese and Wading Birds. Fareham is not short of land for development to ensure it meets its housing numbers, and Fareham will soon be sending its draft local plan to the Planning Inspector for his or her consideration. The land at Romsey Avenue does not form part of this new plan.

Natural England have objected to the application. They state that the application is likely to have a significant effect on the Portsmouth Harbour SPA and SSSI.

The objection from Natural England states that Primary Support Areas are land, that makes an important contribution to the function of the waders and brent goose ecological network and support the special protection areas. The preferred approach is for development to be located outside the network of these important sites. We have to take into consideration when looking at suitable sites, the impact those sites will have on our wildlife - Foreman Homes have made no attempt to find suitable mitigation off site for this very important area, and there is a reason for this in our view, there is no mitigation land close by that would be suitable or available.

We are sure when you look at the site and view the many pictures which form part of the comments and representations submitted for this Appeal that this area is a haven for wildlife, it also has to be remembered that now the 120 new homes at Cranleigh Road are built out, the dispersed wildlife has moved to a safer haven which is the land south of Romsey Avenue.

There are concerns about the lack of detail within the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to the reptile receptor site and the impact on badgers

The site comprises Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land and building on this land would be contrary to policy. If this appeal is allowed we will see the loss of another piece of farm land which provides agricultural produce which undoubtedly contributes to the ability for this country to grow its own produce. We are somewhat surprised that DEFRA make no comments on the number of good agricultural land and farms that are being lost not only in this area but across the country.

We now turn to highways - the desk top study really does not show the reality of life in our road systems. There are a significant number of houses in Beaulieu Avenue and Romsey Avenue which do not have onsite parking, they park on the road. As life has changed for many over the past months more people work from home, more people arrange for goods to be delivered to their homes. Add that to the very busy school route to Wicor and Cams School - the roads around the site are congested. Children are encouraged to walk to school and the impact that this development will have on their safety and air quality will be great with many many more cars being added to an already tight road structure. The road access to the site is totally

inadequate for not only the potential of the vehicles movements for a development of 225 dwellings but also for the construction traffic.

HCC have already confirmed that Beaulieu Avenue is close to the maximum parking capacity of 14 vehicles throughout the day. The entrance to the field is full of parked cars on a regular basis as is Romsey Avenue at the lower house numbers. The entrance to the land is described as "through a gate". There is also a dwelling access and egress on the junction of the southern spur and Romsey Avenue. In fact even the farmer does not use this gate entrance to work the land!

At the planning committee the officer recommendation was for refusal, and all members voted against the application and the reasons for refusal were laid out very clearly in the officer report for refusal.

Madam Inspector I will forward a copy of this statement to Mr Salter for ease of reference.