

From: Lyster, Dominic <DLyster@Fareham.Gov.UK>

Sent: 18 December 2019 16:18

To: Wright, Richard <RWright@Fareham.Gov.UK>

Subject: RE: Fareham Borough Council - Consultation: Land East of Posbrook Lane

Planning Application P/19/1193/OA
Land East Of Posbrook Lane Titchfield Fareham
Outline planning application for the erection of up to 57 dwellings, together with associated parking, landscaping and access from Posbrook Lane

Urban Design

This is a revised outline application for 57 dwellings following the previous recent proposal for 150 dwellings, which was dismissed on appeal.

I consider that there are two key issues:

- Whether development in this location is acceptable having regard to the recent appeal inspector's decision with respect to the valued landscape of this part of the Meon Valley
- Whether a reduced development of 57 dwellings in the form as illustrated is acceptable having regard to the above and whether the harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings is outweighed by any public benefits of the scheme.

In my view further landscape listed building guidance should be sought from relevant specialists.

Having regard to local and national design policies and guidance, including the recently published National Design Guidance, I find that the reduced scheme is not acceptable.

The Inspectors decision having regard to the previous scheme of 150 dwellings provides the relevant context. The site forms *'part of the broad visual envelope of the Lower Meon valley and part of the landscape compartment and therefore should be considered as part of the valued landscape'*. [para 28] In addition, the inspector states that the *'appeal site shares a number of those attributes [valued landscape] including the nature of the rural landscape and topography, its scenic quality and that it is representative of the valley sides character type'*. It is important to note that the Inspector makes no distinction as to whether parts of the site are less valuable or that do not share the same physical and scenic attributes such that the site could be disaggregated. Indeed, para 23 concludes *I was firmly of the view that the site was of an open character with little in the way of field boundaries, hedges or other landscape features to different areas of the site.....and that.... Whilst there was a break in the slope this was minimal and did not change the characterisation from a gentle slope. There were minor variations across the site and I was not persuaded that this was such a feature that would change the character type of the site.* Paragraph 24 highlights the *'lack of woodland with views across the valley floor and is generally pastoral'*.

The inspector concludes that the *'proposed development would result in the provision of a suburban housing estate of up to 150 units on an open field that would substantively change the character of the field'*. In addition, that the landscape and visual effects are concluded as *'substantial and harmful in the short to medium term.'* It should be noted that the Inspector states *'whilst planting would assist in reducing the direct line of sight of houses in the longer term there*

would still be effects from noise, activity, illumination in the evening along with the localised views that would inevitably and substantively change’.

In summary, from the recent appeal, it can reasonably be concluded that the site falls within a valued landscape; that major suburban housing has an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the valued landscape and that landscape screening is not overriding mitigation.

Turning back to the current proposal, this is for 57 dwellings. Whilst it represents a significant reduction in the number of dwellings from the previous proposal, the development site will still occupy a substantial (two-thirds) frontage to Posbrook Lane and continues to descend the natural topography towards the valley floor. It is still a suburban form of development that does not incorporate the PROW in a sympathetic rural manner. The substantial planting, whilst providing a soft edge in the longer term, will not disguise the development from light, noise and general activity. Indeed it provides a landscape form that could be regarded as inappropriate, taking account of the existing open, pastoral character of the valley side. I find therefore that the proposal would still represent an unacceptable development that would have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of a valued landscape.

The appeal decision addressed the matter of the planning balance concerning harm to heritage assets (Posbrook Farm, listed buildings, grade 2*) with public benefits accrued from a scheme of 150 dwellings. Paragraph 64 of the appeal decision concludes that the considerable importance and weight attributable to the ‘less than substantial harm’ identified, is not is not outweighed by the significant public benefits of the scheme. The identified harm relates to development within the rural setting of the listed buildings, which undermines its isolated relationship with the open agrarian landscape and its degree of separation from the village. The current proposal does not extend to the northern edge of the farm buildings, nor does it extend along the eastern edge as proposed previously. However, the extent of the development expands the suburban built form of the village within close proximity (some 50m) from the northern edge of the farm buildings and occupies two thirds of the road frontage to Posbrook Lane. This leaves a very minimal gap that does not provide the sense of isolation and separateness identified by the appeal inspector. In this regard, I find that the development would still have a harmful effect upon the setting of the listed buildings. The issue of planning balance would still need further examination but it should be noted that benefits accruing from 57 dwellings is substantially less than the original 150 dwelling proposal.

The above is an urban design perspective and I would advise that further guidance is sought from specialist landscape and listed building personnel.

Illustrated layout

If the application were to be recommended for approval in principle, I have the following comments to make regarding the illustrative layout:

- I find the general structure to be far too suburban which, whilst reflective of Bellfield, does not respond appropriately to the landscape context. I would suggest a much more organic arrangement of clusters of dwellings;
- The layout does not integrate the PROW along its existing alignment or in a way that responds to its rural context;
- Many of the units are set far too close to the access road leaving little space for robust, long term planting or sufficient spaciousness of plats that would create a more landscape dominant, sylvan structure;
- The triple tandem parking arrangements are inappropriate;
- The terraced units to the easternmost part of the site are awkwardly arranged in relation to the street, leading to strangely large front gardens for the southern end;

- 57 units may be possible, but not on the basis of the mix, form and structure illustrated.

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From: devcontrol@fareham.gov.uk <devcontrol@fareham.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 November 2019 15:20

To: Lyster, Dominic <dlyster@fareham.gov.uk>

Subject: Fareham Borough Council - Consultation: Land East of Posbrook Lane

I am writing to consult you on a planning application I have received (P/19/1193/OA). Details of the application and how to respond are in the attached PDF document.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this.

Richard Wright
Principal Planner (Development Management)
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