



Registered Charity No.271344

The Fareham Society
12 High Street
Fareham
Hampshire
PO16 7BL

18 December 2019

Mr. Richard Wright
Fareham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Civic Way
Fareham, PO16 7PU

Dear Mr. Wright,

**Land East Of Posbrook Lane, Titchfield.
Outline Application for the Erection of up to 57 Dwellings, together with Associated Parking,
Landscaping and access from Posbrook Lane. (P/19/1193/OA)**

The Fareham Society strongly objects to this application.

On 12th April this year an appeal (APP/A1720/W/18/3199119) was dismissed for a development of up to 150 dwellings on land incorporating the current appeal site. This decision was welcomed for the support it gave, amongst other things, to protecting this part of the Meon Valley. In that decision the Inspector held the site to be part of a valued landscape and that it formed part of the broad visual envelope of the Meon Valley. In so doing he did not, correctly in The Society's view, seek to differentiate between parts of the site. These findings are thus equally applicable when it comes to assess the value of the landscape that would be harmed by the current proposal and the impact of development upon it.

The current application, although for fewer dwellings and on a smaller area, would still be a substantial incursion into this part of the Meon Valley. Subdividing the large field in which the site lies would, in the way proposed, appear most incongruous and out of keeping in this setting. The proposed development would, especially in the winter months, be clearly seen from footpath 48 running parallel to the Titchfield Canal, a footpath popular with many walkers at all times of the year. It would also be intrusive in views from footpaths 34 and 39. Currently attractive views from these paths to the south and east over the Meon Valley would be lost where these paths would be subsumed within the proposed development. This would result in a substantial loss of amenity for those living nearby and of those many others who greatly enjoy the undeveloped Meon Valley landscape.

The applicant has sought to justify the proposed development by the fact that it in part abuts Bellfield and that it would provide an improved landscape screen to the urban edge. A similar justification was roundly rejected by the Inspector in the previous appeal who said that any such benefits would need to be weighed against the creeping urbanization of the area and the effects of noise, activity and illumination. The same would apply also in relation to the current proposal.

So strong are the concerns of the proposed development on the Meon Valley landscape that these alone firmly indicate that permission should be refused.

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However, The Society also has one other ground of concern. That is the impact of the proposal on the setting of the Grade II* listed buildings at Posbrook Farm. With their Grade II* listing these buildings are in the 5-6% of listed buildings in the Country and are a significant and invaluable resource. In the previous appeal decision the Inspector found that the wider setting of these buildings within a rural landscape and their separation from the built up part of Titchfield contributes towards their overall significance. The current development of Bellfield, in bringing development closer to these buildings, has already been undesirable. Thus further development towards these listed buildings would add additional harm.

The current proposal, with its larger gap between the proposed development and the listed buildings than the earlier scheme, would be less harmful to a degree. However, in the Society's view it would, given the notably high value of the listed buildings and that development would extend towards them, cause more than just the minor degree of harm that Historic England is alleging in its consultation response. The Society is well aware of the problems caused by the absence of a 5 year housing land supply and of the tilted balance that therefore applies. However, it is The Society's firm view in this case that the harm that would be caused would outweigh the benefits of the scheme. It is noted that recent appeal decisions have resoundingly shown that, even in the absence of a 5 year housing land supply, unacceptable schemes should still be refused.

It is welcomed that the Council has long held protection of the Meon Valley landscape to be of the greatest importance. The Society strongly urges that a most robust approach be taken in this case and that permission be refused.

Yours sincerely,

B.M. Clapperton

Mrs B.M. Clapperton, MBE
Hon. Secretary