

## **LAND EAST OF POSBROOK LANE, TITCHFIELD**

### **LANDSCAPE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

PINS Ref: **APP/A1720/W/20/3254389**

#### **The Appeal Site and its Context**

1. The appeal site is approximately 4ha in extent. The area which would be occupied by the proposed 57 new homes, roads and gardens is 1.61ha in extent.
2. The appeal site is currently occupied by horse-grazed pasture, and is crossed by two footpaths, numbers 34 and 39. The northern edge of the appeal site is defined by fencing and vegetation, and the western boundary is defined by a hedgerow on Posbrook Lane. There is no existing boundary at the southern and eastern edges of the appeal site.
3. The proposed housing area is immediately to the south of the existing residential area at Bellfield, which comprises two storey properties on Bellfield, Ransome Close and Hewett Road, but also some three storey flats at Hewett Close. There is also an equipped play area to the south of Bellfield and immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the appeal site, and also an area of garages surrounded by an area of hardstanding and grass, accessible from Ransome Close.
4. To the west of the appeal site is Posbrook Lane, and there are two two-storey homes to the west of this road.
5. To the south of the appeal site is open pasture, and further to the south is the farmstead of Great Posbrooke, which includes two listed buildings.
6. To the east of the appeal site is the south-eastern corner of Bellfield, and further to the east open pasture fields slope down into the Lower Meon Valley.
7. The appeal site slopes from approximately 18m AOD at the western edge, next to Posbrook Lane, to approximately 10m AOD at the eastern edge of the proposed housing area. The lowest part of the appeal site lies at approximately 5m AOD.

#### **Differences and Similarities between these Appeal proposals for 57 Homes and the previous Proposals for up to 150 homes**

8. The illustrative area of proposed new housing, gardens and roads has been reduced from 4.23ha to 1.61ha.
9. In the previous proposal for up to 150 homes proposed new homes extended continuously along Posbrook Lane between Bellfield and Great Posbrooke. In the proposal for 57 homes a distance of approximately 80 metres along Posbrook Lane would be left free from development. Similarly, in the refused proposal for up to 150 homes there was a gap of approximately 84 metres between Great Posbrooke house and the nearest elevation of the proposed new homes; whereas in the

proposed development the distance between Great Posbrooke house and the nearest proposed house would be 135 metres. In the refused appeal proposals proposed housing also extended to the east of Great Posbrooke; whereas in the revised proposals for up to 57 homes the proposed area of new homes would extend no further east than the south-east corner of existing properties at Bellfield, and 2.6 metres further south.

10. Both the refused proposal for up to 150 homes, and the proposal for 57 homes, include proposed new areas of woodland, along the southern and eastern edges of the proposed development. A native tree and shrub buffer would also extend along the eastern edge of the existing settlement at Bellfield, and to the north of the existing trees at Great Posbrooke. The dimensions of these areas are illustrated on the attached dimensions plan.

### **Designations and Landscape Value**

11. The appeal site is not located within a statutory or non-statutory landscape designation. The nearest landscape-related designations are the two Grade II\* listed buildings at Great Posbrooke Farm and the Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve to the south-east of the site.
12. The appeal site is within the Meon Strategic Gap, but this is a planning designation relating to the physical separation of settlements.
13. The appeal site forms part of a valued landscape, (in the sense of paragraph 174 (a) of the NPPF), which extends from the edge of Bellfield and includes the Lower Meon Valley.
14. In the emerging Fareham Local Plan (Regulation 22) the appeal site is included within the Meon Valley Area of Special Landscape Quality under Policy DS3.

### **The Character of the Site and its Context**

15. At a national level the appeal site is classified as part of National Character Area (NCA) 126, South Coast Plain.
16. In the Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment the appeal site is included within the Meon Valley character area (3E), and in the Coastal Plain Open, and River Valley Floor landscape types.
17. In the Fareham Landscape Assessment (LDA, 2017) the appeal site is included within Local Landscape Character Area 6.1, the Lower Meon Valley. At a further level of detail the appeal site is included within area 6.1b.
18. The Fareham Landscape Assessment also includes an analysis of landscape types within each character area, and the appeal site is located within an area classified as being Open Coastal Plain: Fringe Character, which is described as parts of the coastal plain that are influenced by adjacent urban development. However, it was concluded by the Inspector at the previous appeal that this assessment was based on historical data from the 1996 Fareham Landscape Character Assessment and that the previous appeal site is more reflective of the Open Valley Side landscape type.

19. The character of the appeal site is open, gently sloping grassland, juxtaposed by the existing settlement edge at Bellfield, to the north and east.

20. There are open views to and across the Lower Meon Valley from the appeal site.

### **Methodology for Assessing the Landscape and Visual Effects of Development**

21. The *“Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment”*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, (GLVIA3) provides best practice and widely accepted guidance on how to carry out landscape and visual assessments.

22. Additional guidance on the value of landscapes outside of national designations has recently been published by the Landscape Institute (Landscape Institute’s Technical Guidance Note 02/21 *“Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations”*).

### **Strategic Gap**

23. The appeal proposals represent a minor extension to the existing settlement at Bellfield which would have no significant nor material effects upon the functionality and integrity of the Meon Strategic Gap.

### **The Landscape and Visual Effects of the Appeal Proposals**

24. The visibility of the appeal site to the north and west is relatively limited.

25. The proposed new woodland planting to the south and east of the appeal site, and on the edge of Bellfield, would improve the appearance of the settlement edge.

### **Areas of Disagreement**

26. The appellant agrees with the previous Inspector’s description of the existing settlement edge as being *“harsh and readily visible”* (paragraph 23), but the Council’s witness does not agree with this.

27. The extent to which the existing settlement edge influences the character of the Appeal Site.

28. The value, susceptibility and the sensitivity of the Appeal Site.

29. The effect of the proposed development on the character and visual amenity of the Lower Meon Valley.

**Agreed by**



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**Jeremy Smith**

**(for Foreman Homes Limited)**



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**Ben Croot**

**(for Fareham District Council)**