

**FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL: LAND SOUTH OF FUNTLEY ROAD, FUNTLEY
APPLICATION REF: P/20/1168/OA**

SUPPLEMENTARY LANDSCAPE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Introduction

This is a supplementary note to my original Landscape Consultation Response prepared on 3rd March 2021. It has been prepared in response to the Further Landscape Response prepared by Turley Associates on behalf of the Applicant, dated 26th March 2021.

In the Further Landscape Response, concern was raised that I had not visited the site in the preparation of my original report, and one factual issue was highlighted.

I have subsequently visited the site and its wider landscape setting prior to the preparation of this supplementary document, and photographs of my visit are presented throughout this note at key points.

Since the preparation of my original Landscape Consultation Response, the Applicant has also submitted a revised Parameter Plan, which adjusts the extent of built development to fit within the boundary of the emerging HA10 housing allocation within the draft Local Plan.

This supplementary note therefore seeks to respond to these points.

Errata

The Further Landscape Response correctly points out an error within my original Landscape Consultation Response, that the southern boundary of the proposed development was in fact located 40m to the south of the consented scheme as opposed to the 100m suggested in my report.

The following section of the Further Landscape Response goes on to state in the next paragraph, however, that the gradient of the slope becomes more pronounced at the 30m contour. I would question with this point, as an inspection of the Ordnance Survey mapping for the area, reproduced as Figure 1 below, shows the gradient to uniformly rise above the 25m contour (shown more darkly on the map), and this was confirmed by my site observations.

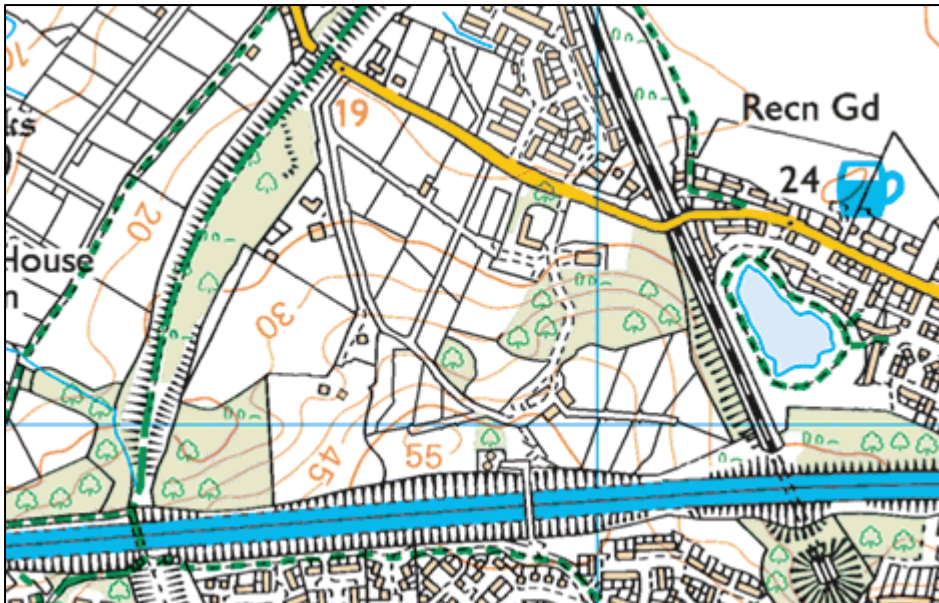


Figure 1: Extract of Ordnance Survey Explorer Map showing contour alignment

Site Observations

My survey of the site itself reinforced my opinion of its character and composition as set out in my original Landscape Consultation Response.

In particular, I examined the topography of the site and determined that it is relatively level between Funtley Road and the 25m contour, which is mostly located a short distance to the south of the access track that runs through the site between paddocks in a north-west to south-east direction, although the contour begins to bear southwards at the western end of the site, as shown on Figure 1 above and Plates 1 and 2 below. It therefore remains my opinion that any development should generally only extend as far as the 25m contour to avoid unacceptable landscape impacts.



Plate 1: View across the site from Funtley Road showing the land rising beyond the track in the centre of the Site

In terms of the site's visual environment, my survey confirmed that panoramic views are available from the upper (southern) parts of the site, where public open space is proposed. These views extend across the tributary valley form in which the site is located, towards the forested western slopes of the Meon Valley and the rising arable land to the east of Knowle, as illustrated by Plate 2 below.



Plate 2: View across the site close to the permissive path entrance in the south, illustrating views across the Meon Valley. The site can also be seen to rise to the left of the track that bisects it.

Filtered views of the site from the Deviation Line and its associated public bridleway are intermittently available from the bridge over Funtley Road, and the stretch that extends northwards to the former junction with the current main line railway as illustrated by Plate 3 below. The length of the Deviation Line that runs directly to the west of the site is separated by woodland, to the extent that views of the site are largely unavailable.



Plate 3: Filtered view across the site from Deviation Line (Public Bridleway 084/515/1) at bridge over Funtley Road.

To the north of the site, views of the rising land are available from Funtley Meadow, an area of open amenity grassland owned by the Council and subject to permissive public access. From this location, framed views along the axis of the 'Funtley Triangle' are available, terminating at a wooded horizon provided by the combination of Great Beamond Coppice and the southern site boundary as illustrated by Plate 4 below. These views have not been recognised within the Appellant's submissions to date.



Plate 4: Framed view of the site looking south across Funtley Meadow. The site is located to the right of the pylon, with Great Beamond Coppice to the left.

My survey of the landscape surrounding the site also revealed views of the site from Public Footpaths 084/86/2 (Fareham Parish) and 251/15/1 (Wickham Parish), which are located on the rising agricultural land to the north of Funtley. These long-distance views further emphasise the importance of restricting development to the lower slopes, as shown on Plate 5 below. These views have not been considered within the Appellant's submissions to date.



Plate 5: Filtered view towards the site from Public Footpath 251/15/1 on facing valley slopes

Revised Parameter Plan

Since the preparation of my original Landscape Consultation Response, the Applicant has submitted a revised Parameter Plan, which addresses some of the concerns set out in my original document.

Most notably, the extent of the developable area within the scheme has been reduced, by adjusting the southern boundary to fall within the area of the proposed HA10 housing allocation within the emerging Local Plan. In comparison to the Parameter Plan submitted by the Applicant for the existing planning permission, this still extends an estimated 30m further to the south and west (upslope) in the western part of the scheme, however.

In addition, a small amount of the 'landscape buffer' on the western part of the scheme has been altered to developable land.

Potential for Increased Development Capacity

Whilst I remain of the opinion that the proposed capacity of up to 125 dwellings is excessive for this site and would generate inappropriate densities for this village edge location, having visited the site I consider it possible to increase upon the currently approved 55 dwelling capacity of the Site if the Applicant is willing to supply additional information and commit to several positive design measures. This is taking account of the modified built development boundary as presented in the revised Parameter Plan, which goes some way to addressing my concerns regarding the wider visibility of the proposed dwellings and impacts upon the landscape character.

In terms of additional information, it would be helpful to understand the implications of the Applicant's revised development boundary upon the site's landscape setting and visual envelope, since this still differs from the original application. To this end, I would recommend that the Applicant supplies the following wireframe visualisations, produced in line with the latest Landscape Institute guidance:

- From the permissive path as it enters the southern part of the proposed public open space;
- From the northern end of Funtley Meadow;
- From Funtley Road looking east from the junction with Honey Lane, illustrating the proposed set-back from the public highway; and
- From Public Footpath 251/15/1 illustrating the likely effect upon the facing valley slopes.

In terms of positive design measures to reduce the anticipated development impact, it may be possible to build at a higher density in the northern part of the scheme, reflective of the existing and emerging development on the northern side of Funtley Road, but it will be essential that the southern built edge is of low density. I recommend a 'feathered edge' of single storey dwellings on this boundary, separated to allow some visual permeability between structures, with individual properties aligned towards the park to present a positive and active frontage. This will reduce the interception of views by the most elevated dwellings and will encourage a positive relationship between the village edge and peri-urban open space.

With regard to the north-south aligned open space corridors that have been retained through the scheme, the former and revised Parameter Plans for the development both show these to be approximately parallel. Whilst the eastern corridor would experience views of the open upper valley slopes, the western corridor is aligned towards an existing property and is unlikely to serve the original landscape-led purpose of these corridors, which is to preserve a relationship between Funtley Road and the elevated land to the south. I therefore recommend that the western corridor be realigned to a similar alignment to that within the original masterplan, to maintain the connection between Funtley Road and the point at which users of the permissive path enter the site.

Conclusion

Since visiting the site, my interpretation of its character has not changed, although I now have a greater appreciation of its topographic character. I have also identified two publicly accessible viewpoints within the wider landscape to the north that I consider to be important, but which have not been considered within the Appellant's submissions, either for the previous 55-unit scheme or the current 125-unit scheme.

The Appellant has adjusted their Parameter Plan to retain built development within the boundary of the proposed HA10 housing allocation, which is a positive measure, although this still exceeds the extent of development within the currently consented scheme.

I remain of the opinion that a scheme of up to 125 dwellings is not appropriate in this village edge location, although having visited the site, I consider that it may be possible for the revised site boundary to accommodate a greater number than the current consent without unacceptable landscape and visual harm. This would be dependent upon the submission of a set of wireframe views to demonstrate the extent of visibility within the wider landscape, and also the commitment to a small number of positive design measures to seek to minimise landscape harm, as current policy requires.

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4th May 2021