

**Observations to present at Public Inquiry**  
**APP/W/21/3283643/3284532 Land to south of Funtley Road, Fareham**

I am a Committee Member of the Fareham Society and am authorized by them to speak on their behalf at this Inquiry.

The Fareham Society was established in 1976 and has approximately 600/700 Members. The Society aims to encourage the interest of Fareham people in their Borough, to ensure the conservation of the environment and ensure high standards in planning.

Full observations on this appeal were made in the Societies letter to PINS of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Those concerns are maintained in full, with the exception that it is accepted that surface water drainage issues have been resolved. The Societies concerns on the proposal for housing are on three grounds:

1. Harm to the character and appearance of the area.
2. The unsustainable location of the site.
3. Highway safety and the free flow of traffic.

**Character and appearance**

Having read the cases of both parties I remain firmly of the view that the appellant has significantly downplayed the visual attraction of the site and the surrounding area. The open undulating nature of the site is most attractive as any site visit will show and any buildings on the land are limited in number and generally well screened from view.

I would draw the Inspector's view to our observations on the Council's 2017 Landscape Assessment which clearly indicates the importance of this area as part of the Borough's landscape resource.

Given this the Society was strongly opposed to the development for 55 houses on the site. The current proposal with its vastly increased housing numbers would be even more harmful. As we have set out this is demonstrated by the illustrative masterplan. The preponderance of terraced and semi-detached houses required for the 125 houses would result in development of a form and density wholly at odds with its surroundings. The scheme in the masterplan could never replicate attractive Meon Valley villages as the applicant suggests. The attraction of those villages lies in their growth over time and the way they fit in with their river valley settings.

**Unsustainable location**

The Society was firmly of the view that the site was unsustainably located even with regard to the permitted scheme on the site. The proposal for 125 houses on the site is thus even more unacceptable in this regard. It is a concern substantial enough even taken individually to justify dismissing the appeal.

Inadequate consideration has been given by the appellant to the steep slopes that would need to be cycled or walked up to gain access to Highlands Road shops and the primary school. We urge the inspector to walk up the newly created path to experience this. And even if an alternative path from the

development as shown on the masterplan was provided there would still be a very steep incline. It is simply unrealistic to see great use being made of the paths to access facilities. Limited public surveillance of the paths, clearly identifiable by a site visit would make it highly unlikely they would be used by unsupervised primary age children.

Furthermore, it is clear from the applicant's reports that to bring Henry Cort school within a reasonable walking or cycling distance would require the use of rural paths with awkward gradients and lack of surveillance. It is thus unlikely that pupils would walk or cycle to this school, even with the suggested improvements, adding to the unsustainability of the location.

The suggested financial contribution to facilitate a bus service past the site would only assist for a limited period. There is no guarantee that in the long term provision would remain. Little weight should be given to the suggested shop on site as there is no substantial evidence that this would be viable even with increased housing numbers

### **Highway safety grounds and the free flow of traffic**

Our concerns on this matter are set out in full in our letter of 10<sup>th</sup> November. In this regard we urge the Inspector to look closely at the railway bridges to the east and west of the site that would be used by traffic moving to and from the site and of the heavily parked up nature of Funtley Road to the east of the site.

Finally, it is considered that our concerns, set out in full in our letter, on the Kiln Road/Park Lane/Old Turnpike junction have not been satisfactorily addressed.

It is urged that the appeal be dismissed.