

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
LAND EAST OF NEWGATE LANE EAST, FAREHAM
APPEAL REF: APP/A1720/W/22/3299739

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL REBUTTAL PROOF

1. In their evidence, the Appellant has sought to undermine the conclusions of the September 2020 Technical Review of Areas of Special Landscape Quality and Strategic Gaps (CDG.6), for example in paragraph 8.33 of the Appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which states that *"the robustness of the overall conclusions should be carefully considered"*. This point is referenced again in paragraph 6.4 of the Appellant's Proof of Evidence on Landscape and Visual Matters.
2. Since the submission of my evidence for the above appeal, a Decision (CDJ.33) has been issued in relation to a recent appeal relating to land east of Cartwright Drive, Fareham (Appeal Ref. APP/A1720/W/22/3296756). This appeal related to an outline planning application for the construction of up to 46 dwellings in the Meon Strategic Gap, adjacent to an existing vegetated urban edge.
3. Inspector Holden dismissed the appeal, for which two main issues were the effect on the character and appearance of the landscape, and on the Strategic Gap.
4. In making her Decision, Inspector Holden (in paragraph 22) supported the recommendations of the Technical Review, underlining the continued relevance and robustness of this document.
5. This Decision of Inspector Holden supports the Decisions of Inspectors Jenkins (CDJ.7) and Jones (CDJ.1), who have considered appeals in the vicinity of the appeal site, and who have not called the findings of the Technical Review into question, as set out in paragraph 8.3 of my Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence prepared on behalf of the Council.
6. Inspector Holden also considers the matter of scale and sensitivity in relation to Strategic Gaps in paragraph 24 of her Decision, stating that *"Even though the loss to the width of the valley would be small, the sensitivity of its location would give rise to a disproportionate effect on the perception of the strategic gap as a whole."* As the Fareham Landscape Assessment (CDG.20) and my own evidence has found, the current appeal site lies in a location highly sensitive to development.
7. This sensitivity is challenged by the Appellant in paragraphs 5.60-5.63 of their Proof, which conclude that *"It is reasonable to assume that the landscape sensitivity defined by the FLA might need to be re-considered and moderated"*. In contrast, my position has been supported by both Inspectors Jenkins (CDJ.7 paragraph 29) and Jones (CDJ.1 paragraph 22) in their previous consideration of adjacent sites, as described in paragraphs 1.11 and 1.16 of my Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence on behalf of the Council.

8. Given the substantial difference in scale between the appeal scheme and that considered by Inspector Holden, it stands to reason that a development that occupies the majority of the width of the eastern part of the Fareham-Stubbington Gap would result in a substantially higher magnitude of effect upon the integrity and perception of the Strategic Gap, resulting in harm in contravention to local planning policy determined by Inspectors Jenkins and Jones. Specifically, Inspector Jenkins found (CDJ.7 paragraph 83) that the proposals before him, approximately half of the scale of the appeal scheme, would in that case cause *“significant harm to the integrity of the Fareham-Stubbington Gap and the physical and visual separation of settlements”*. Inspector Jones found (CDJ.1 paragraphs 31-33) that whilst the proposals before him, approximately one quarter of the scale of the appeal scheme, would not result in a significant effect on the integrity of the Gap, he nonetheless determined that the effect upon the physical and visual separation of settlements would be *“reasonably significant”* and that the 99-unit scheme would *“harm the character and appearance of the area, including in terms of the Strategic Gap”* and as such determined that the scheme failed to meet the requirements of Local Plan policies CS22 and DSP40(iii).

9. I therefore conclude that the Decision of Inspector Holden supports the findings of Inspectors Jenkins and Jones, is relevant to the current appeal, and supports my own evidence.

Ian Dudley BSc(Hons) MICFor CEnv CMLI
26th September 2022