

APP/18/00672 Land off Westwood Close, Emsworth

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am absolutely outraged that Havant Borough Council should even consider building houses on this field. It is acknowledged that communities need to have their own physical identity, and developing this field would further narrow the already thin strip of green between the communities of Emsworth and Westbourne. Furthermore, the proposed site meets all the criteria to become a designated green space and this is what should happen.

It would be a sin were we to lose one of the few remaining country walks through open fields. The well-known Sussex Border footpath is well used by ramblers, not to mention dog walkers, joggers, and those out for a gentle stroll. Relocating the footpath next to the River Ems, in Flood Zone 3 would most definitely make it unusable in the winter months.

As somebody who uses the footpath on a regular basis, as well as the field as a whole, I am acutely aware of how wet it is for several months of the year. It is a natural soakaway for the surrounding area and is often waterlogged. Developing the field can only increase the risk of flooding not to mention potential contamination of the River Ems, a clear chalk stream that clearly needs to be protected.

Protection is also essential for the four species of bat, two of which are endangered, and which feed above the hedgerows which would be removed. Water voles and salmon, which also use the River Ems, are also deserving of protection.

Being the Chairman of neighbouring Westbourne Parish Council, I am more than aware of the pressure that it being placed on LPAs to find land for further housing. However, in my mind, and that of many who have no wish to stand in the way of necessary development, I am convinced that this site should not be developed. HBC already have sufficient sites to meet their housing requirements and, even were this not the case, a slight increase in density on the strategic site at Southleigh Road would mean that it is unnecessary to destroy any more of our green and pleasant land. HBC rejected this site in 2013 and should do so again.

