

To:
Planning Policy Team
Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant
Hampshire
PO9 2AX

From:
14 Sinah Lane
Hayling Island
Hants
PO110EY
26/08/2018

Dear Sir or Madam

Ref: APP/18/00724 Response to the Barratt Homes proposal at Site: Land at Sinah Lane, Hayling Island. Proposal: Erection of 195No. dwellings, associated open space, pumping station, sub-station and formation of new vehicular access off Sinah Lane. Change of use of land from agricultural to a Wader and Brent Geese Refuge Area.

Whilst we understand the need for the Government to provide more affordable housing, especially for the first time buyer market and the need for HBC to fulfil its quota of new homes, there are very good reasons for preventing the development of an inappropriate and unsustainable residential development on land North of Sinah Lane, also known as UE18, H31 and H34C.

Other Site Refusals

Other sites on Hayling Island (HI) have had recent planning applications refused permission based on arguments by the council that we believe also apply in this case.

These were reasons stated by the council as to why the application at Land at Rook Farm, St Mary's Road, Hayling Island APP/17/00007 was refused in 2017:

"The proposed development has failed to demonstrate that it would constitute sustainable development as it does not adequately address the infrastructure requirements for the development by itself and in combination with other sites on Hayling Island. The suitability of the site for residential development has been assessed under the Local Plan Housing Statement and at this stage the site is classified as having uncertain potential for development due to sustainability concerns in particular in relation to Highway Capacity and the single access onto the Island, Flooding, Healthcare, Education and provision of Utilities. The consultation on the Draft Local Plan Housing Statement highlighted specific infrastructure issues on Hayling Island which will require further investigation before future development can be considered sustainable under the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal therefore fails to meet the three dimensions of Sustainable Development: economic, social and environmental as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and policies CS1, CS7, CS15, CS19, CS20, CS21, DM11 and DM12 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011, policy AL1 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) 2014 together with the Local Plan Housing Our Ref: APP/17/00007 Statement Guiding Principle 4 and the National Planning Policy Framework."

"The proposal involves development that cannot be reconciled with the National Planning Policy Framework in that the significant movements generated could not be accommodated adequately on the existing transport network. This would result in a severe impact on road safety and the operation of

the local transport network contrary to the NPPF and policy DM12 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011."

"The proposal involves development that cannot be reconciled with the National Planning Policy Framework in that there is insufficient provision of, or support for, sustainable transport options. This would result in a greater number of trips by private car which will create a severe impact on the local transport network and environment contrary to the NPPF and policies DM11 and DM12 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2014."

"...the proposed development would not represent an efficient use of greenfield land. This would fail to make the best use of a finite land resource and constitute an unsustainable form of development failing to address housing need in an efficient manner. The development would therefore be contrary to policies CS9 and CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework."

"The application site constitutes primarily Grade 2 and 3a land which is classed as best and most versatile agricultural land. Such land represents a valuable resource for local food production with associated economic benefits. The proposed development would result in the loss of a significant area of such land. Given that the development is not considered to meet the requirements of sustainable development the loss of this land to agriculture is not justified. The development is therefore contrary to policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and Our Ref: APP/17/00007 the National Planning Policy Framework."

As the reasons given for this recent refusal on HI apply to this site as well, we fail to understand how the council could put this site forward as suitable for development, let alone accept a planning application like this. To 'choose' to not apply the same reasoning to UE18/H31 would be inconsistent at best and would call into question the decision making process.

Transport Network

The greatest concern is the overall increase in traffic developing this site will generate for the already overloaded single carriageway A3023. We understand that this is subject to the ongoing traffic surveys which are likely to, assuming no significant improvements in infrastructure on the scale required to address the problems, result in a halt to any further building on the island.

New residential site development will also be contrary to Policy CS20 Transport and Access Strategy 2. which stipulates that new development should '*not increase congestion and promotes better use of existing transport networks*'.

We believe this could also be in breach of: DM11, DM12, DM15 and DM16.

The integrity of the bridge structure is an issue and there are questions as to whether it would stand up to further increases in traffic following new site development.

The majority of people moving to the proposed development would need to commute on and off the Island for work. This is due to the fact that HI does not provide enough work that pays enough to economically facilitate mortgage payments or rent on houses of the type proposed by Barratt Homes. Therefore the location of this site is significant in that it will force residents of the new development to rely on, and add the pressure on, the A3023. The government expects councils to focus significant

development *"on locations which are or can be made sustainable"* (Nation Planning Policy Framework 103) and this is clearly not possible for this site.

Nation Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 108 c) *"any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree."*

It is unreasonable and inconceivable that any infrastructure provision will be enough to have any significant impact on the extra traffic which comes with the new development as there is only one main road using one bridge.

The main Hayling road is already very busy throughout the day and there is consensus that traffic has dramatically increased over recent years. This single carriageway off HI will become significantly more congested due to the increase of hundreds of new homes.

With increased traffic, the ability of emergency services to access the island has become a major source for concern. The bridge is the only lifeline for services to access HI other than using emergency helicopters. If and when the area around the bridge is compromised by flooding, this considerably hinders the ability of emergency services to access the island at all.

People are moving off HI because their commute over the bridge has become so difficult due to existing congestion in traffic on the Island; further development will only make matters worse. Furthermore policy CS6 on regeneration recognises the need to reduce travel off HI by local residents for employment. People are missing appointments made in the middle of the day because of unpredicted traffic congestion on the Island. Also, people's frozen shopping has defrosted in their car as they return from Havant in the summer due to major hold ups on the Island transport network.

The congestion is not just affected by weather - with summer tourists in good weather and more car users in bad weather - or the rush hour. The build up of traffic can be at any time of day and the flow can be adversely affected by for example: one removal van, tractor, waste collection vehicles, cars turning right into or coming out of West Lane, road works, bus stops not to forget breakdowns, accidents and emergencies. Also, cars driving in and out of the Ship Inn car park disrupt the already hugely susceptible flow of traffic.

It is therefore obvious that increases in the volume of cars arriving to or leaving HI will make an already difficult situation unbearable to the extent that this could harm HI's tourism industry and quality of life for residents.

The single carriageway roads through West Town and the surrounding area are already congested with a variety of transport including builders merchant lorries, buses, cars, and cyclists. Car park spaces on the bend may also not be appropriate for elevated traffic flow and density. Traffic speeds up when it reaches Station Road - Sinah Lane after it has negotiated the obstacle course within West Town. Another road leading into this will increase the obstructions further still and add to the danger already present for cyclists, pedestrians, families, children and older people, many of whom use mobility vehicles.

Barratt Homes Planning Statement 5.125 *"The development would provide a financial contribution towards improving the Hayling Billy Trail, located 60m from the proposed site access. This route forms part of the NCN Route 2 and with improvements, should help to reduce the number of residents travelling by car."*

Barratt Homes say pedestrian site access is 60m from Hayling Billy Trail however the site access is on

the original trail but somehow the entrance to the Billy Trail has been recently moved in the winter months of 2018, 200m north of the original entrance with new signage. This was 'very convenient' for Barratt Homes. There is a question about the ownership of this 200m strip of land which Barratt Homes have conveniently requisitioned to their own advantage. How did they manage to do this? Also the new development would be vastly increasing the number of residents travelling by car by building 195 extra houses on the proposed development, not reducing numbers by improving the Billy Trail.

Barratt Homes' development of these homes would result in many more children walking to and from school along narrow roads with restricted pedestrian access e.g. Station Rd near West Town Pub and St Mary's Rd.

The pavements in the area around UE18/H31 and West Town are erratic, missing in several places and some are already very narrow. Recent work to widen them has caused pinch points around bends e.g. by Jaspers Restaurant and West Town pub, causing traffic to slow as they must allow larger oncoming vehicles, such as buses and lorries, to pass through prior to navigating such bend themselves. Traffic has already increased due to the Oysters development with a significant increase in cars, huge lorries and service vehicles.

The limited current access point to the field at UE18/H31 would need enough width for 2 way traffic and pavements. It opens onto Sinah Lane near to the Staunton Avenue Junction which also links the Hayling Billy Cycle Trail to the beach used very often by young families of cyclists. Traffic calming and a zebra/pelican crossing would be the bare minimum needed if development takes place in order to maintain the valued amenities that come from the recreational use of this part of HI and keep HI attractive to the essential demographic of young professional families.

Draft Local Plan 2036 IN3 a. *"The traffic generated by the development, taking into account any proposed avoidance and mitigation measures, would not result in severe cumulative impacts on the transport network or the environment."*

NPPF 109 *"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."*

The additional traffic generated by adding 195 new houses to the already overburdened A3023 would therefore put the new development at odds with council and government policy as it would clearly *"result in severe cumulative impacts on the transport network"* so obviously *"the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."*

The sustainability of the transport network is clearly threatened by such an increase in traffic and it is the council's duty to insure development is sustainable, according to government policy.

Health Centre Provision

The Hayling Island Health Centre is under huge pressure with an increasingly elderly population let alone further population increases. The Elms Practice states, in its August 2017 news letter, that GPs are consulting typically up to '80 patients a day'. What's more, there has been no support in developing the Hayling Island Health Centre over the past 20-30 years. This is unacceptable especially with the potential of a dramatic step up in population proposed by the DLPHS. This development quite clearly poses a massive threat to the viability of health provision on HI. The Health Centre is over capacity already for the type of population currently. The Primary Health care statistics, claiming that the ratio

of GPs to patients was adequate, does not address the ageing population and different and varied needs of the residents already on Hayling. Emergency services will be adversely affected due to increased traffic as Hayling has only a single access route and hospitals are off the Island.

The Character of Hayling and Amenity to Current Residents and Visitors

The increase in traffic volume as a result of the extra houses planned for HI could be ruinous to the Island attracting tourism. The Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment 2012 at 9H Hayling Island Coastal Plain 7.1 specifically mentions increased traffic as a 'threat' to the character/amenity that aids Hayling's reputation, a vital reputation that encourages tourism and quality of life for residents.

'Increase in traffic along the main road to the bridge (often busy with slow traffic)' and continues: this 'could affect the island as a tourist attraction and place to live'.

'Balancing tourism and residents development demands with retention of character of remaining rural areas'

In the Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment, February 2007 UE18/H31 falls within the 'LCA31' area of The Havant Borough Landscape Character Assessment Sensitivity Report 2007 (HBLCASR): Central Hayling plain. This clearly categorises UE18/H31 as sensitive to urban expansion.

3.15 states *'for Wider Landscape the score is high sensitivity; for the Havant Borough Ecological Sensitivity Study Assessment of Sensitivity is high; the biodiversity of this area is judged to be of high sensitivity to urban expansion within this LCA.'*

We also draw attention to another part of the HBLCASR:

'The Historical LC type is assessed as being of high sensitivity as it is the only example of this form of enclosure to exist not only on Hayling Island but also within Havant Borough. The small area of small regular parliamentary type fields (1.9) on Verner Common and the small rectilinear fields with wavy boundaries (1.16) at the southern end of the LCA are also both assessed as being of high sensitivity. Archaeological Sensitivity is also high where archaeological sites either extant above ground or buried have been confirmed as being in existence by previous observations.'

Therefore UE18/H31 is highly sensitive to urban expansion and should not be built on.

We reside on Sinah Lane and back onto the field. Not only have we, like many other residents along our road and North Shore Road, enjoyed the space and views for decades but have had planning permission to develop and adapt our houses and gardens to this end. Development in the field will considerably adversely affect the quality of life and character/amenity of our locality.

The residents around site UE18/H31 have all moved to this area (some only in the last year or 2) for the views, tranquillity, to enjoy nature and less pollution. Neighbouring properties are very concerned with issues including possible noise and disturbance from extra traffic, overlooking, loss of privacy and possible overdevelopment.

Any new development in the area should be very carefully designed. However, it is evident from current developments that there has been a lack of regard for the following policy:

Policy CS16 High Quality Design in which the new development *'draws inspiration from and respects local context'*.

We are very concerned that large expanses of housing development impact negatively on the character of the Island. Sinah Lane and North Shore Road are lanes of varying and unique housing and this quality in itself is a positive for the character of this part of Hayling. For Hayling Island in general, the HCICA stresses the importance of maintaining the character of Hayling: *'Retaining the winding historic lane character whilst looking at solutions to ease congestion could be a specific issue to influence transport policy on the island.'*

This is an area with, as agreed at a Consultation Meeting in August, individual and detached housing to which established home owners tend to move. The **HCICA 2012** explains the opportunity to: *'Emphasise the importance and contribution some of the original south coast properties with their large leafy gardens have to the overall quality of the built environment especially in the south west of the island'*. It goes on to express that: *'retaining the remaining open space landscape should be an important part of development on the island'*, classifying as a threat: *'inappropriate development within the setting of.... other buildings of architectural merit particularly in the south west of the island'*

The very new bland housing at The Oysters just being built in West Town at e.g. £280,000 - £380,000 is certainly not doing this. It is not 'in character' with the area or, indeed, the right price bracket for first time buyers. In addition many of these people also need to use the roads to get off and on Hayling for work and leisure hence increasing the congestion further still. There is no evidence of high quality design and inspiration in The Oysters or the other development in West Town.

Barratt Homes' Planning Statement states that:

"2.3 The majority of the dwellings in the vicinity of the site are detached and of unique design"

We believe, as evidenced by the adjacent Oysters development, that the Barratt Homes' proposal for UE18/H31 would result in extensive bland housing, totally out of character with the surrounding housing styles that Barratt Homes themselves acknowledge are of *"very wide variation in materials and architectural detailing"* at 2.3 of the Planning Statement.

At 5.97 of their Planning Statement, Barratt Homes' state: *"There will be no significant residual landscape or visual effects. The landscape concept and vision seeks to ensure that the new development sits within the existing mature landscape structure, retaining the site's relationship with the wider landscape. The layout has been designed to ensure that the existing trees and hedges are retained where possible to soften the development periphery."*

Existing views across to the harbour and S Downs beyond will be destroyed for existing residents. The *'existing mature landscape structure'* will be changed from farmland to housing, so how can this be *'retaining the site's relationship with the wider landscape'* as Barratt Homes say here.

In conclusion, the planned building of Barratt Homes' bland and non-unique houses upon this site will not only permanently change the character and amenity of the area for local residents, it further puts at risk Hayling's tourism industry which, as previous assessments have shown, relies upon retaining the current delicate character of the Island.

Conservation

Development of UE18/H31 with a location adjacent to and between protected areas of conservation would have disregard for the rich ecology of the area. Planners need to take this valued amenity of Hayling Island very seriously. Policies **CS11**, **CS12** and **AL8** make this clear.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The 'restricted' policy areas include sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directive, designated sites, including Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as well as locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion (footnote 9).

Development at UE18/H31 is likely to have a significant effect on sites protected under the Birds or Habitats Directive principally due to its vicinity to the Hayling Billy Track, which is a Statutory Designated Site in HBC.

DM8 Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features states that *'Development will only be permitted where it protects and enhances local habitats and landscape distinctiveness and which addresses all of the relevant criteria...*

1. Protects natural features of nature conservation and/or amenity importance on the site, for example trees, woodlands, hedgerows, soils, streams, stream corridors, springs, ditches or ponds from damage, destruction and a deterioration in quality....

4. Ensures sequences of green spaces are maintained and protects the attractiveness and visual amenity of all green open spaces that contribute to the identity of the borough'

Building in UE18/H31 will have detrimental environmental impact on the Hayling Billy Track and Nature Reserve. It already requires better maintenance as it is heavily used by walkers, dog walkers, cyclists, runners and horse riders. The contrasting change in land use within such close proximity to the trail (farm to housing) will affect the wildlife and the tranquil nature of this most valued asset to Hayling and visitors to it.

DM9 States that development *'has no harmful effects on nature conservation within the Chichester and Langstone Harbour SSSIs and SPA, Solent Maritime SAC and Ramsar site, or any SINC's and Local Nature Reserves.'* Surely this must be taken into account as these areas will be adversely affected by any more new development nearby. In the previous local plan ALP 2014, UE18/H31 was not considered for development due to impact on wildlife and its location adjacent to already protected sites.

There are protected species such as Brent Geese, Stag Beetles, Slow-worms etc. which use the field in which UE18/H31 is situated so building homes here is in conflict with council policies DM23 and DM24 and possibly illegal. This field provides habitat for a wide ecological system with a large range of flora and fauna.

The NPPF also reflects the Natural Environment White Paper - 'to contribute to sustainable development, planning should help to move from a state of net loss in biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature (Para 9) and recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services' (Para 109).

Many of the large gardens along with the Hayling Billy Track surrounding the field support the ecosystem and encourage the deer, rodents including shrews and field mice, adders, stag beetles, slow-worms, birds, butterflies, bats and insects. Some less common birds of prey have been spotted by local bird watchers such as osprey, red kite, sparrow hawk along side wheatear, spotted and green woodpeckers which have been seen from and in our garden.

There are informal paths used by residents along the edge of the field and on the western waterfront which need protection from flooding let alone from more use following the proposed residential development. Several metres of field coastline including their trees have been eroded by wave action in recent years.

Relating to council policy DM1 any development of UE18/H31 is very likely to be a threat to the mitigation for previous and current developments at The Oysters invalidating the DMP for this site. Does the Hayling Billy Track and woodland/hedgerows also provide a natural boundary and screen to allow mitigation and won't using UE18/H31 encroach upon this?

Draft Local Plan 2036 Policy E17 e. *"Refuge habitat for Primary Support Areas must be provided upfront with evidence to show it works prior to development taking place. It must also be supported by an agreed costed Habitat Management Plan and fully secured for 80 years by a legal agreement."*

Requiring 'evidence to show it works prior to development' suggests that the agricultural land currently in use must have to be changed prior to development with evidence *"for at least the number of Brent Geese and waders recorded on the site in terms of habitat type and area, timing and availability of habitat and quality of habitat"* – according to E17 d (ii) of the Draft Local Plan 2036.

This means that to allow development, a large area of currently in use, "best and most versatile", agricultural land will have to be converted to the refuge even before building takes place to provide the evidence that the refuge 'works'.

Are the council really prepared to allow this to happen to such good quality farm land just to provide evidence?

In the scenario that the birds do not use the refuge during this 'test period', evidence could not be provided to show the refuge had worked. Furthermore, this work would be at a cost both economically and ecologically to the area and be against the Oysters mitigation strategy and local and national laws for deliberately disturbing the areas which have been so recently proven to provide 'Primary Support' to the protected species of Brent Geese.

The comprehensive mitigation strategy agreed between Barratt Homes and Havant Borough Council for the Oysters development is a key reason why there should be no building on any part of H34C which includes UE18/H31. Barratt Homes have not, as agreed in the mitigation strategy for the Oysters, maintained the fences on the east side of UE18/H31 to deter dog walkers from regularly using the field for daily walks and scaring wildlife. They have only recently attempted to do this, coinciding with their application and some 5 years since the discharge of condition was agreed with the council. The fencing recently erected is a token gesture of a few small sections of mesh fencing stapled, in places, to a tree and is not attached to the original fencing but now encroaching on the trail itself. (See pictures) This has been pulled down by angry dog walkers already. The strategy also states that H34C, in which UE18/H31 is located, should be **continually** used for crop rotation to provide for the foraging and roosting of Brent Geese.

The change of land use is in direct contravention to the agreed mitigation for the Oysters related to the Brent Geese which stated that the whole field should undergo continuous crop rotation, not change the land use to housing and create a grassland refuge, which also is drastically reducing the space and surrounding environment which is necessary for the birds.

Tyler Grange Land off Station Road, Hayling Island Brent Goose Mitigation Strategy:

2.17 Brent geese prefer large open sites where they have clear sight lines (in order to best avoid predation)

The current land of H34C is large open farmland so the Brent Geese have clear sight lines, a major contributing factor as to why the geese visit it so frequently – even if they are actively discouraged by bird scaring bangers. Allowing the building of houses on the field of H34C would cause significant

reduction in these sight lines and as a result a negative impact on the Brent Goose – contrary to the requirements of council policy when dealing with Primary Support sites.

The Draft Local Plan 2036 5.226 *“Where a negative impact upon a Brent Goose and/or Solent Wader site cannot be avoided or mitigated, or appropriate replacement habitat is not or cannot be provided, the proposal will be refused.”*

This policy also states an *“appropriate **replacement** habitat”* would have to be provided – the refuge proposed by Barratt Homes cannot be seen as a **replacement** for the loss of the agricultural land to the south of the refuge due to the fact that this area plays a key role in providing the “clear sight lines” and will instead be replaced by houses. The refuge will not be replacing the “clear sight lines”, it will only be replacing land the geese **already** use in the area that the refuge would be situated; this therefore equates to a negative impact on the sites attractiveness to the geese.

Not only does the land south of the refuge provide “clear sight lines”, it is itself also used directly for foraging by the geese – this land will not be replaced, only lost, not to mention the 2.5ha of land that was lost from the “Oysters” development that H34C was, due to legal agreement, supposed to mitigate for. Furthermore, a large part of where the Geese have been proven to use this winter will not be replaced by a refuge suitable for the Geese, but by a large *“SuDS pond that will be utilised for drainage”*. This pond will clearly not be suitable for the Brent Geese and therefore equates to another direct loss of foraging land, not to mention the likely increase in human activity around the pond providing more disturbance to the Geese – something else that was supposed to be reduced as part of the mitigation for the “Oysters”. 2.4 *“Disturbance from recreational use as a result of uncontrolled access from the Hayling Billy Trail on to H34C will be reduced, thereby making it more attractive to geese and waders”*

On top of this, as the SuDS pond is to be used for drainage from the water displaced by the loss of surface water holding from the new buildings, this water will be full of pollutants/chemicals and substances from the properties that would make the area in and around the pond unsuitable for the birds to forage safely. This is therefore a further negative impact on the Brent Geese as currently they use the exact area where the SuDS pond will be to forage on agricultural land that is also used for crops, meaning that the land is managed in such a way as to provide crops that are safe for ingestion. To replace this area with a SuDS pond threatens the healthy environment the birds use to forage. Another impact of this contamination will also mean the permanent loss of even more greenfield.

Water treatments oils and pesticides used will flow into the drainage ditches and Langstone Harbour via tidal vents which are not maintained sufficiently and often blocked (see pictures). This would result in polluting the local sensitive ecosystem across the salt marsh and the spread to the harbour itself. The harbour water mixes with the groundwater especially during high spring tides and storm surges in the harbour and in the longer term with sea levels rising. Overall this would therefore create more pollution in the runoff compared with the pre-development situation.

Tyler Grange Land off Station Road, Hayling Island Brent Goose Mitigation Strategy:

2.3 H34C. *“It is identified as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) on account of its value to Brent geese, with 66 recorded using the field.”*

If the site is deemed a SINC after only 66 Brent Geese were recorded then it clearly has even more standing after 500+ that were formally recorded this winter so therefore the change in land use and the upsetting of the natural environment will have an effect on the Solent Spa as well.

Draft Local Plan 2036 5.214 *"Where the development would be likely to lead to a significant effect on the Solent SPAs and sufficient avoidance or mitigation measures of an appropriate type cannot be put in place, planning permission will be refused"*

Draft Local Plan 2036 5.223 *"Development proposed on Primary Support Areas need to include a particularly robust avoidance and mitigation package based on making suitable alternative habitat available to the SPA species in question. This must include either: a) The creation of new feeding and roosting sites (or 'refuges') on adjacent sites; or b) Improvements to the management of adjacent less frequently used sites to provide an equivalent level of resource, which can comprise of: i. Ensuring that a nearby Core Site is maintained permanently in favourable habitat; or ii. Upgrading a nearby Secondary Support Area or Low Use Site so that it can support an increased bird population, similar to a Primary Support Area"*

Barratt Homes' refuge proposal does not meet the criteria here - *"the creation of new sites"* is not met due to the site **already** being used by the geese in great numbers and therefore it is: not new; not adjacent to; not an improvement to adjacent less frequently used sites; will not provide an equivalent level of resource due to reduction in foraging land and removal of clear sight lines; does not upgrade other support Areas.

Therefore we suggest the council invokes their policy 5.226 in the Draft Local Plan which states: *"Where a negative impact upon a Brent Goose and/or Solent Wader site cannot be avoided or mitigated, or appropriate replacement habitat is not or cannot be provided, the proposal will be refused."*

Current Agricultural Land Use

Not only is the land north of Sinah Lane a green field site, it is currently used for agriculture and according to the SHLAA 10th Edition December 2017, is of grade 2, or grade 3a according the Draft Local Plan 2036. Either grade 2 or 3a classifies the land as "best and most versatile" agricultural land according to the government and keeping this grade of agricultural land for farming is a **priority**. As you are aware, the government and the council have many policies aimed at dissuading housing development on this type of site, especially if the site is currently used for farming.

Havant Borough Council Core Strategy 2011

CS11 10 *"Protects the best and most versatile agricultural land that has the greatest potential for local food security."*

In fact, any development at UE18/H31 goes against the Core Strategy 7.20 in which the council will *'balance the need to allocate land for new development with the protection of the best agricultural land'*.

The best agricultural land, including UE18/H31, should therefore be protected by HBC.

With an uncertain future, food security is also of major importance; the replacing of continually farmed agricultural land in UE18/H31 with residential development is counter to this.

'Agriculture shapes the landscape character of the non-urban areas and provides land to produce food. Local food production and security were reasons why the planning system was set up after World War II and the principle of protecting the best and most versatile land remains important, as set out in PPS7. Government is again asking about our food security and is developing policy (Defra Food Security Assessment).'

A lot of what is deemed 'best agricultural land' in North Hayling is currently used for horse paddocks and grazing. UE18/H31 is only used for crops and therefore should be prioritised by the council for protection.

Barratt Homes say in their Planning Statement:

"5.106 ...due to the Brent Geese and Waders present on the site, the crops are utilised as a food source for these species. Whilst it is accepted that there would be a loss of "very good" agricultural land, the change of use to a Wader and Brent Goose Refuge area is a positive benefit for the environment and enhances biodiversity with the provision of a "core site" for Winter Birds."

The crops are not *only* utilised as a food source for Brent Geese and Waders, even though there is a requirement due to the discharge of condition mitigation for the loss of winter birds grazing land from the adjacent "Oysters" development. The site is farmed year round with only the winter being used to maintain the primary support for the protected winter bird species. Furthermore, Barratt Homes' argument that enhancing biodiversity will somehow compensate for the loss of "best and most versatile" agricultural land is entirely flawed. It is inappropriate to compare agricultural losses with untested biodiversity gains so the use of this very weak argument by the developer illustrates that there is no real answer for the loss of this high quality agricultural land. In fact, losing the entire sites' agricultural contribution and permanent loss of greenfield land mainly for housing, surely cannot be "a positive benefit for the environment" as Barratt Homes state.

The NPPF states under 15. *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment:*

170. *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;"

This clearly shows that the best and most versatile agricultural land itself should be recognised as of benefit to the environment adding greater weight against the argument made by Barratt Homes in their Planning Statement at 5.106.

In conclusion, we see no arguments of any merit that support the loss of grade 2/3a "best and most versatile agricultural land", especially as the land is: continuously farmed; of primary support for protected species; brings economic and food security; adds to the "intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"; is a **key** part of the discharge of condition for the mitigation for loss of grazing land for Brent Geese and Waders due to the adjacent 'Oysters' development.

As stated in recent Government initiative this quality of arable farmland should be protected at all costs for food production post Brexit.

Flooding and Poor Drainage including Sewerage and Waste Water

The maps of flood zones and vulnerable areas do not include the field at UE18/H31. However, it is imperative that the council recognises that UE18/H31 is already prone to severe flooding, in the form of surface water, in the winter due to current drainage rate.

Suitability of new site development at UE18/H31 must be scrutinised applying the following policies:

PUSH Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – 2016 Update Guidance Document: Havant Borough Council
'Hayling Island is the most sensitive area to sea level rise, particularly the southern half of the island. With much of the island low-lying, predicted sea-level rise could result in extreme tidal events inundating more of the island. In addition to this effect of rising sea levels, it is anticipated that climate change will result in an increase in fluvial flood flows...'
'To sustain future development ...particularly on Hayling Island, significant investment in flood defences and flood defence infrastructure will be required.
*When undertaking a site specific FRA for a large development site, consultation with Southern Water should always be undertaken to investigate whether **the proposed development will have an adverse impact on the local drainage system.**'*

Policy CS15 Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk

'All development will be required to ensure that there is no net increase in surface water run off....Where Suds are provided arrangements must be put in place for their whole life management and maintenance.
They must ensure that development avoids areas at risk from coastal erosion and coastal flooding and that areas required to offset coastal squeeze and prevent habitat fragmentation, to allow species to adapt to climate change, are identified and protected from development.'
'...moderately permeable superficial deposits overlie the majority of this permeable layer, reducing its permeability in terms of surface water runoff generation. This may make the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) difficult,'

These policies give weight to the fact that UE18/H31 is not a suitable site based on its extensive surface water flooding. This area is already prone to severe flooding in the winter after the many storms and high tides. This regularly leads to the field draining into our gardens. We have photographic evidence of this (see pictures).

The water table becomes very high and will even rise and fall with the tide. This renders the soakaways in our garden (the recommended drainage option in this area) useless once the field has become flooded. We have personally experienced this when we dug, cleaned up and checked our soakaways in a vain attempt to improve our own garden drainage.).
There would be huge cost to developers and HBC in order to address the drainage not just of this field but also the run-off into the surrounding gardens after more hard and impervious surfaces are added.

Whilst digging a soakaway in our garden at Sinah Lane, which backs on to UE18/H31, we reached water at about 1 metre down. On observing this for over a week we noted that the level went up and down with the tide. The level is at a higher level at high tide and lower at low tide, just below the surface. We are sure Barratt Homes have recorded this.
This will thus be a problem as sea levels rise and as the dynamic water table is connected underground to the harbour and sea.
If, as proposed, water is pumped from UE18/H31 at the surface or below into a reservoir above ground then:

- a) The reservoir will contain salt, oils and other surface chemicals, which will subsequently be discharged into surrounding ditches to be run into the harbour through tidal vents, which are often blocked for long periods. This will inevitably pollute and change and threaten ecology of the saltmarsh.
- b) Pumped water will be replaced, partially or completely, by water flowing in underground from the harbour to a level which will increase in future years placing a greater and greater burden and reliance on the pumping process. This will generate a continuous cycle of flow polluting the land further and have a great negative on local wildlife.

Also, has the council assessed the potential risk to buildings, new and old, if there is continuous flow in, and pumping out, of water with a system like this? We are concerned that such continual underground action over such an area may destabilise/unsettle/undermine the structural integrity of foundations of buildings and roads as it would no doubt cause some sort of movement and even erosion of underground terrain.

This pumping scheme may well be viable in the centre of a landmass remote from the sea. However we are extremely sceptical as to whether this engineering solution is appropriate and effective when involving water tables that are heavily influenced by tidal processes encountered at UE18/H31. The effects will magnify during atmospheric low pressure and storm systems coupled with spring tides. Who will fund maintenance and repair subsequent ecological damage caused by this ill-advised scheme? In their Planning Statement 5.133 Barratt Homes state *"The proposed onsite surface water pumping station is to be offered for adoption as part of an adoptable surface water drainage scheme and thus will become the responsibility of a Local Sewerage Authority."*

Barratt Homes will have moved on after releasing their profit. It will be the taxpayer, local council and residents of Hayling Island who will bear the cost both financially and with loss of quality of life.

Looking further ahead, why are we considering building more homes on land likely to be adversely affected by sea level rise as tidal movement just below the surface will emerge above the surface at some time in the future? In the short to mid-term this tidal action may well compromise the SuDS especially at spring tides combined with low pressure storm systems.

Nation Planning Policy Framework 149 *"Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure."*

The western coastline just north of North Shore Road and adjacent and nearby to UE18/H31 is 'particularly vulnerable to managed coastal retreat' and has suffered significant erosion in the more frequent winter storms with poor maintenance of flood defences along this part of the coast. This area will require significant and costly work on the coastal defences regardless of any new developments.

The northern part of this proposed development is right on the edge of a Zone 3 flood risk area; however currently the land is used for agriculture so there is local economic incentive for managing this northern area privately. If the proposed development goes ahead, the northern area will require some form of management in terms of flood risk otherwise it would itself become more susceptible to issues that concern Zone 3 areas. It is unclear where such management would come from and who

would pay for this. If left unchecked it would gradually decrease the area that is put aside for the Brent Geese and Wader refuge, impacting ever more negatively on already dubious mitigation proposals for these protected species.

Barratt Homes Planning Statement 5.68 *"Proposed soft landscaping with a diverse mix of grasses and native planting species proposed within the open space and SuDS features to increase habitat types and provide ecological improvements;"*

Ironically, another unintended but foreseeable consequence of creating a SuDS pond will be the creation of the perfect habitat for mosquitoes. As we have a significant mosquito population on Hayling and in this area in particular, a large additional still or stagnant body of water above ground would be disastrous as well as any insecticide treatment runoff to adjacent land and waterways and change to the ecology of the area. This does in fact pose a health risk due to diseases that can easily develop or spread via these insects.

Barratt Homes Planning Statement 5.128 *"...The areas are reflective of localised low points within the site and the risk to the future development can be mitigated through the detailed design of the finished ground levels of the development."* This sentence from Barratt Homes is virtually asking us to blindly trust that Barratt Homes' *'detailed design'* will mitigate any risk. This is surely more evidence that the surface water mitigation proposed need's more scrutinising by the council who's own Draft Local Plan 2036 identifies at 6.146 that the site is currently "affected by tide locking, coastal change and tight levels".

Barratt Homes will no doubt try to raise the ground levels across the area to avoid the localised groundwater flooding which is larger than they allude to. This will have major effect on the flooding in adjacent gardens which already suffer from runoff from the field when it floods (see pictures). This needs much more scrutiny from HBC. The flood risk assessments are from generalised average data and take no account of this localised groundwater flooding which is affected by rain, harbour tidal water and runoff from the South Downs. Foundations for any new buildings would have to be laid seasonally.

This proposed development will also add massive pressure to current mains drainage systems during rainfall as the field currently acts to hold a vast quantity of water after heavy downpours. Instead of the field holding this water and draining slowly, (not to mention evaporation) this rainfall will enter the various drainage systems at the same time as water from currently developed areas causing greater surges and peaks that will not doubt stretch current infrastructure to its limit. It is therefore not a sustainable solution and thus goes against many council and government policies.

The Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment 2012, Hayling Coastal Plain (HCICA 2012) has recognised the threat of *'breaching and dilapidation of sea defences, and flooding of former salterns and coastal grazing marsh and other important coastal habitats.'* It explains that *'sea level rise and policy towards sea defence' is a major issue.'*

This coastal erosion combined with sea level rise will require review of UE18/H31 in 5, 10, 20, 50 years. Is it therefore realistic when the lifetime costing of all proposals needs rigorous scrutiny to insure that future generations are not paying for inappropriate and hastily considered plans to meet a national housing need?

Nation Planning Policy Framework 155 *"Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).*

Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere."

Are the current facilities for sewerage adequate for Hayling Island and UE18/H31 especially if new development takes place? The Adopted Local Plan 2014 suggests it is not: ALP: 3.18 *'It is recognised that 'some localised wastewater infrastructure in parts of the Borough has limited capacity and may require mitigation or improvements to best serve some of the allocations.'*

In spite of assurances by Southern Water, there is evidence that pumping stations are already over capacity and often break down as all the sewerage needs to be pumped off the Island across waterways. Any further break down creates yet more health risk to the increasing population. This will occur more frequently with the stormwater runoff through the drainage system and more storms due to climate change. This cannot be a sustainable solution for this area. Southern Water has previously denied responsibility to maintain the proposed systems. Barratt Homes even suggested a private contractor at the expense of the taxpayer. The promises in the new proposal need more scrutiny and thoroughly checking out by the council as Barratt Homes were clearly not being completely honest in their original proposal.

Conclusion

With all the concerns stated above, we feel that the proposal for UE18/H31 site Land at Sinah Lane, Hayling Island cannot possibly be a sustainable development and that the building of houses on this greenfield land cannot be justified by the need for new houses.

There is powerful evidence within the issues surrounding groundwater flooding, biodiversity, protected species, character, amenity, tourism and health/emergency services to prevent any further new residential development on this site. The arguments regarding the transport network infrastructure should be sufficient to prevent further development on Hayling Island alone.

Furthermore, in addition to the lip service paid to binding legal agreements for previous mitigation, the timing of this application by Barratt Homes raises questions about their integrity. It is the holiday season when many residents are taking vacation with families and unavailable to make comment within the timescale set and this appears to be another tactic of the Developer to slip this application in, under the radar, in full knowledge that the results of the work of the Infrastructure Group or the traffic surveys, have not yet been finalised.

We hope Havant Borough Council and the Planning Department will treat this application with the same scrutiny as they have done for Rook Farm APP/17/00007 in 2017.

We trust each point and question we have raised is given very serious and full attention and anticipate a detailed response.

Yours faithfully

Rosie, Graham and David Law



18th March 2018 – Brent Geese in area of proposed SuDS pond and evidence of high water table in field



December 2003 - groundwater flooding in our back garden



January 2010 – groundwater flooding across UE18



September 2012 – Soakaway in back garden showing water level in September



December 2013 - groundwater flooding across UE18



December 2013 - further groundwater flooding across UE18



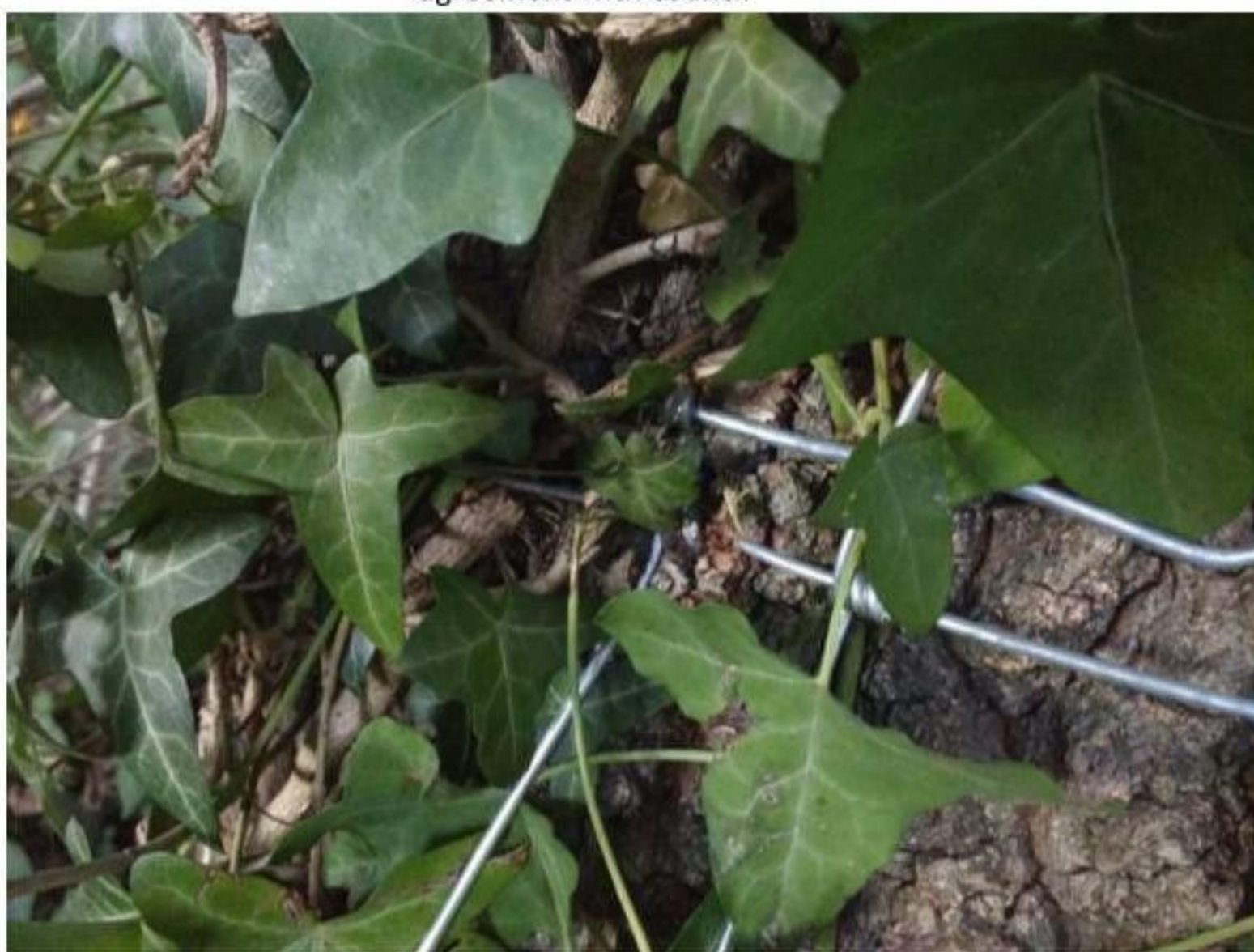
November 2017 - Shingle blocking drainage channel west side of Hayling Island



December 2017 – groundwater flooding this winter



July 2018 - Fencing put up to try and show compliance with Oysters mitigation 5 years after agreement with council



July 2018 - Mesh fencing simply stapled to trees in some areas