

10/12/2020

## **APP/20/01031      50 dwellings on land south of Lower Road, Bedhampton**

### **Objection statement**

On behalf of **Havant Friends of the Earth**

We are submitting an objection to the appeal by the applicants mainly on these grounds:

- Environmental/ecological impacts
- Heritage/landscape protection needs

#### **Environmental and ecological**

The Ecological Assessment comprehensively lists ecological features and species of flora and fauna in the area of the site.

**Hedgerows and trees** which are earmarked to be destroyed should be replaced, in accordance with the Local Plan, and enhanced .

A careful choice of trees is called for in these circumstances: trees must be replaced in at least equal numbers ( and more, as developers have often planted and supported inappropriately, causing young trees to die), and enhanced by ensuring mature trees will be **large, mostly deciduous, broad-leafed, mostly native species.**

Hedgerows likewise. The importance and vitality of hedges and tree cover as **wildlife corridors** is undisputed, including all types of natural growth. See **E14, Biodiversity Strategy**, Local Plan 2036.

The applicant's assessment of the ecological value of the site is fundamentally unsound.

The Ecological Assessment also lists , that up until 2017, the noted '**birds of conservation**', included: swifts, hobbys, and song thrushes , amongst many. The applicant's statement in the face of such details is appallingly arrogant ( see Application Data, the applicant's response to question 12 ) – no species of flora or fauna is ' insignificant' if destroyed, particularly at this time of impending biodiversity losses, calculated by the most eminent environmentalists, ecologists and scientists around the world. **Developers are out of touch.**

We have noted and support and concur with many of the expert statements and local objections which fully explore the sensitivity of this site, and remark upon and reiterate that this is a flood plain, with all attendant concerns, and is grade 1 and 2 agricultural land – again, given current times, this may be of future importance that we guard good land.

We note also that this is a flood area, the Hermitage stream runs to nearby Langstone harbour and the land being only 8m above Ordnance Datum, all give rise to other wee-documented concerns.

There seem to be no improvements or enhancements made by the developers in their appeal and we fail to see how such destruction 'reflects, conserves or enhances the existing landscape' (Local Plan). Therefore, nothing could give cause for the authority to change their minds – they should stick to their admirable first decision to refuse., putting their belief in biodiversity loss and local heritage at the forefront.

### **Heritage and landscape protection**

The case has been made repeatedly, and comprehensively, in expert statements and objections that this development is not in any way in keeping with the local historical landscape, and we are in agreement . **It will** without doubt, whatever is done by the developers, **erode the character of an ancient landscape, of the heritage features and of biodiversity and wellbeing of its community.**

This contravenes HBC's Local Plan 2036, in so many points, we cannot list them all here.

And , note again, see **Outcome and Impact of the Consultation to the Conservation Area Review.** This development **will** impinge and impact destructively on the extended Bedhampton Conservation Area and Manor Farm. These are undeniable facts not matters of opinion.

We refer also to HBC's own Local Plan 2036, **E13, Historical Assets, and encourage the authority to uphold its own demands.**

Also, we remind you again of the Nature Design Guide (C2) aim 'to value heritage and local history and culture'.

Further archaeological investigations must be encouraged – of course evidence is not available when more work has yet to be carried out. These are necessary for the wider borough as well as the local community; research into ancient settlements could be beneficial to the borough in as much as making the area a valued site, a heritage attraction, a place of note instead of just another plain little housing estate. Such vision is important not only for research but for the equally important and very real, if less definable, sense of place.

In brief, your statement in E13 , 'where harm cannot be avoided, mitigation must be proportional to the impact', begs the assertion that harm CAN be avoided , by refusal, in this case and there is NO mitigation which can honestly be proportional to the impact of such harm as if this application goes ahead. This would be an **unmitigated disaster** and we ask that you consider very carefully the real and deep meaning of those overworked words. Above all, these houses are not necessary or vital in any way, to the economy, to the already adequate ( and numbers are debatable , particularly in rapidly changing times), housing market. Developers are out of touch.

This is a special environment which communities and councillors cherish alike.

**We ask that this appeal be refused .**

