

Comments for Planning Application APP/18/00672

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/18/00672

Address: Land off Westwood Close, Emsworth

Proposal: Erection of 46no. dwellings with associated parking, access from Westwood Close, diversion of Havant Footpath 73, landscaping and surface water drainage. Felling and works to trees within Area A1, subject to TPO 2071.

Case Officer: Daphney Haywood

Customer Details



Comment Details

Commenter Type: Complainant

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am writing to object to the planning application APP/18/00672 for 46 dwellings in the Land off Westwood Close, Emsworth. I grew up in Westwood Close and enjoyed a childhood exploring and playing in the proposed site and the surrounding fields and meadows. I feel incredibly lucky to have grown up in Emsworth, which has a fantastic combination of rural and urban connections.

I moved to London in 2009 for university, and still visit my parents' house in Westwood Close regularly. It has always been a pleasure on my return trips to listen to the cows mooing, the dogs barking excitedly as they are being walked, the sparrows calling from the hedgerows and most importantly to feel reconnected to the unique place I grew up.

Whenever there is heavy sustained rainfall, parts of our back garden become so marshy that, when I was younger, we would jokingly call it "the duck pond". As soon as my parents told me of the proposed Hampshire Homes development I thought of this and how absurd it would be to build on such a waterlogged piece of land as the field just a few metres away.

I now work for a landscape architect and have spotted several "red flags" in the planning application by Hampshire Land Limited. Firstly, whilst the planning application states that the development is not at flood risk, I wonder where the developer thinks the surface water is going to go? If Westwood Close gardens are already waterlogged when it rains continuously how bad is it going to be once 46 new homes, the new access road and parking spaces are all laid down?

The proposed development is within flood zone 1, but in incredibly close proximity to flood zone 3,

Flood defences are only present in the form of higher ground towards Westbourne Road, which the flood risk assessment acknowledges. Westwood Close and the field around it are left exposed. The soil in this area is largely clay-based, and drainage is very poor. I do not believe that in clay soil the proposed trees and hedgerow will be able to soak up enough of the surface water following heavy rainfall to prevent the development's neighbours from being negatively affected. Additionally, the landscape design statement includes wildflower seed mix suitable for floodplains and water meadows, acknowledging this is an area with a high water table. It is also worth noting that the New Brighton flood zone 3 has not been built upon.

Secondly, this development would transform Westwood Close from a secluded, quiet, communal street into a thoroughfare. Over the years many children, including myself, have used the Close to learn how to ride their bikes and to play. The older population living in the Close can also feel safe walking out of their homes. Until his recent passing a partially blind man lived on the street. I urge you to consider how drastically the traffic will change this special haven for the community.

The proposed development would also alter the Sussex Border Path to negative effect. The land is currently very popular with local walkers and ramblers, and I have enjoyed walking the field path myself as both a child and an adult. The landscape at this site is very special. You can walk from either end, feeling in close proximity to the nearby communities, then suddenly the field opens up to display the sparse and dramatic well-established trees right in the middle. The proposed housing scheme and footpath diversion would push ramblers to the edge of this field, remove these spectacular trees, and the view for walkers would only be of the strategically-planted trees and hedgerow, protecting the 46 new houses. This use of the site would entirely deter me from walking in this area again.

Should this housing development go ahead, I don't think my family would wish to continue living in Westwood Close. I sincerely hope that the environmental and social concerns that I and many others have about this uninspiring and poorly thought-out development will encourage the Council to reject this planning application.