



**Deputation in support of APP/20/00757 – Southleigh Park House
Development Management Committee 10th December 2020**

Good evening Chair and Members

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you this evening in support of our tree works application.

As your Officers have correctly identified, the extent of the tree removal required was agreed and, is defined by, the approved landscape and tree removal plans listed within the hybrid decision notice. At the time of granting the original planning permission your Officers advised

*“Whilst it is very regrettable that the proposal would require significantly more tree loss than anticipated, this must be weighed with the facts that the scheme would meet the majority of the requirements as set in the draft policy for the site and **would contribute to the Borough's pressing housing need numbers.***

*Moreover, it would **secure the long-term protection and maintenance of the group of important heritage assets within the site, whilst protecting the setting of the main house.** Therefore, the proposal has been through a thorough assessment of whether the scheme represents sustainable development. Very much on balance, **it considered that the loss of trees on the site is outweighed [by] the benefits the scheme would bring to the Borough and as such can be recommended for planning permission, subject to the completion of a S106 agreement.**”*

[Bold text our emphasis. Extract from Executive Summary of Officer Report to Committee, 5th April 2018]

The site will be vacant from tomorrow and we are committed to ensuring that the listed buildings within the site are protected and enhanced. We have significant concerns that a vacant site will attract anti-social behaviour and vandalism which will be to the detriment of these important heritage assets.

Our investment in ensuring the future of these listed buildings is guaranteed forever through their conversion works and restoration, is in the region of seven million pounds. We will implement the conversion ahead of any of the timescales listed in the legal agreement accompanying the existing planning permission. We are only able to do this because of the significant financial backing and ethos of our Parent Company, Vivid (a registered charity and Housing Association), who own over 1,200 homes in Havant and 30,000 throughout Hampshire.

In relation to the new build element, which will be the subject of a separate Reserved Matters Application, we will also seek to voluntarily deliver twenty percent of those new build homes as affordable, where none was proposed as part of the original permission. It must be appreciated that commercially efficient and timely delivery of the new build element financially underpins the cost of works to the listed buildings and delivery of the proposed affordable housing units.

In order to do this however, we need to undertake a significant amount of site preparation in order to deliver this complex scheme. The original permission, largely in outline form, could not have envisaged the scale and complexity of the pre-implementation works. As a regional high-quality developer, owned by a Housing Association, this will take a significant mobilisation of our resources to deliver. The details of these early site works are detailed in paragraph 7.4 of your Officers Report.

The principal constraint to the timely delivery of the site is bird nesting season. As a responsible developer we can only fell these trees until the end of February 2021. If we are not able to fell these trees in this timescale this will delay the project by a further twelve months, with a consequent risk to the listed building because it will remain vacant during this time as

we will not be able to mobilise on site until we know we have consent to fell these trees.

We appreciate that at the time of granting the original permission the end developer was not known and that the Council wanted to retain a high degree of control given the sensitivities of the listed buildings.

I hope that despite the brevity of this deputation, you are re-assured that we are committed to delivering a high quality development and we look forward to working with Officers and Members over the coming months to deliver a high quality development.

Thank you for listening and I would urge you to endorse your Officers recommendation and grant permission for these tree works which will enable us to deliver above and beyond the requirements of the existing permission.

Thank you Chair and Members

Paul Thomas MRTPI

Head of Planning

Bargate Homes