

APP/20/00441 – Land West of Hulbert Road

Good evening Members. My name is Dr Chris Lyons, and I am a Director at Tetra Tech Planning consultancy, and I would like to start by saying thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about this planning application. As a former Planning Manager for the Council it is always nice to be back again.

The planning application in front of you tonight is an outline application for 100 new houses to be provided in a highly sustainable location and will provide significant benefits to the local area in addition to the new housing. We all know the Council has a difficult position to find more sites for an increasing number of new houses and so all of the 'easy' sites have already gone. However, this site can provide 100 houses and there have been very few concerns raised by local residents, which demonstrates how it can be developed with little controversy. Many of the issues raised in fact have been addressed by the application, such as claims the site cannot be cycled too or that the woodland will be at risk from the development. The development offers many benefits, and I will touch on those now.

The proposal includes a new lit dedicated footpath and cyclepath from Bedhampton up to the site which means residents will be able to cycle from the site to all of the nearby services and shops. For example, to the south of the site there are employment opportunities at the many shops and food outlets (Asda, B&Q, McDonalds, KFC, the industrial units by Asda for example), and there are bus stops only 300m from the site and Bedhampton railway station slightly further away.

Heading north from the site, there will be a new lit footpath going from the site up to the roundabout to provide access to Dunsbury Park and the job opportunities; within approximately 600m.

The site is therefore highly accessible with access to large shops, jobs, food outlets, schools, colleges, a pub, and all the facilities a community requires.

The site will also offer the policy requirement of affordable housing which as we know, are desperately needed in the area for young people to be able to get on the housing ladder. The location will be attractive with good access to Havant and Waterlooville and a short distance from Portsmouth via the A3(M), nearby buses or the train station.

It should be noted that there is sufficient capacity within the schools nearby and there will be a financial contribution towards health facilities to ensure there is no detrimental impact on those services.

The development will also result in improvements to the woodland to the north and south. The development is focused on the part of the site that is already open and while there are a few trees required to be removed to improve the access and to facilitate the new footpath, the majority of trees to be removed will have to be felled due to poor health anyway. The Trust will ensure the woodland is improved going forwards and there will be an increase in the number of trees to be planted as a result of the development rather than a loss.

The site itself is close to the A3(M) but the development proposes a 3m bund with a 1.8m acoustic fence on top to ensure the noise implications can be satisfactorily addressed and we believe this is a better relationship than other houses already built adjacent to the A3(M). The site is not dissimilar to others further south along the A3(M) and the Environmental Health team have confirmed they are happy with the proposals.

The Council Planning Officers accept in the report that it is sustainable development¹ and that the proposal will deliver significant social, economic, and environmental benefits. The new footpath will provide a safe route for existing residents to be able to walk from Bedhampton up to Dunsbury Park, the woodland will be improved, and there will be no detrimental impact on the school or medical facilities in the area. The site is highly sustainable and a good location for a new community in a woodland setting with good access to the existing community to the south and the facilities.

I recommend this application to you and trust you will agree with your officer's recommendation to approve the scheme and I would like to particularly thank Lesley Wells and Steve Weaver for their assistance.

¹ para (7.40(4))