

Deputation / statement on application APP/21/00605 (Forty Acre Farm, Bedhampton)

Jon Gateley, for Barratt David Wilson Homes Southampton
9 November 2021

Good evening Councillors and my thanks to the officer for his thorough report.

Firstly to recap on the background. You'll recall that this site has been in the Council's plan for over 5 years, originally as part of the *Local Plan Housing Statement*. Our original application was for 320 dwellings, along with a care home, which this committee approved in 2019. Construction is now well under way following officers' helpful support for various minor amendments.

As the report explains, this application increases the total number of homes on the site by just over 10%, but within all the key parameters of the original permission. This includes:

- Containing the additional homes within the same built-up area;
- Keeping the same points of access;
- Keeping the same overall limit on building height;
- Generally using the same house types as previously approved;
- Using the same palette of materials;
- Retaining the care home;
- Increasing the number of parking spaces in proportion to the additional units, in line with parking standards;
- Maintaining the Habitat Mitigation Zone and areas of public open space in full.

Generally the extra units are achieved by substituting larger units with smaller ones, on smaller plots, which are laid out in a more regular geometric pattern than the original consent. Most of the increase in unit numbers is located within the eastern portion of the site, bringing it up to a similar density to the rest of the site. It's important to note that none of the changes relate to the land adjoining Westways.

The application has been subject to extensive consultation, and we have made various adjustments to detail in response to planning officers and consultee advice. There are no objections from any of the statutory consultees or specialists, including ecology, landscape, highways and drainage, and I should reinforce that all the same controls will be sustained over development by way of planning conditions.

I would like to highlight a number of key benefits to the scheme.

- Firstly we will be providing an extra 10 affordable housing units, which with a small additional commuted sum to deal with 0.6 of a unit, will be policy compliant.
- Secondly the site will attract a significant extra sum in Community Infrastructure Levy contributions.
- Thirdly the site will provide various other Section 106 contributions in proportion to the uplift. These include
 - o A contribution towards Health of £5,440

- Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy contribution of £26,605.85
- A contribution towards a Community worker of £8,500

There have been a handful of objections, but these generally repeat grievances from the original development and so with respect I would ask members to be guided by the officer and to look objectively at the bigger picture. Central to this is the urgent need to provide housing in sustainable locations. The recent Inspector's findings on the Local Plan have undermined much of the Council's future supply of housing, making it all the more important to make the best use of the deliverable sites that it does have.

Approval of this application would be barely noticeable by residents, but the extra 34 units would be an important first step towards getting housing supply back on track, reducing the Council's exposure to losses at planning appeals on sites that it does not want.

To conclude, I fully agree with the officer in his recommendation that the site represents sustainable development, and would ask members to grant planning permission.