

Application No: O/24/98619

Address: Land South of Mortimers Lane, Fair Oak

Description: Outline application with all matters reserved (apart from access) for the construction of up to 245 dwellings (Use Class C3) and up to 350sqm multi-functional building (Use Class E – commercial, business or service or Use Class F2 – Community), with associated open space and play area, landscaping, SuDS, infrastructure, mobility hub and vehicular access off Mortimers Lane.

RESPONSE BELOW FROM UPHAM PARISH COUNCIL:

Upham Parish Council represents all residents of the Parish, both those whose homes are within the South Downs National Park and those outside it.

In August 2024 we responded to the Bloor Homes Consultation on this site, as below. Since then we have received no response from Bloor Homes. Their statement of community involvement concludes 'all of the feedback received has been reviewed, considered and responded to by the applicant' Bloor's response to the many concerns expressed by local residents and other consultees about the traffic problems such a development will cause, appears to be a travel plan with the objective Of reducing private car movements by 10%. In other words, were this travel plan to be wholly successful, the impact of this development would be 'only' that of a 220 home development. This is a derisory and totally insufficient attempt to deal with the issues this development would create should the application be successful.

We agree with the sentiments of many that this application is an attempt to upset the democratic process of the local plan review and circumvent the proper planning process. We object in the strongest terms to the application. The grounds for our objection are set out in our original response to Bloor homes, as follows: The change from 250 homes to 245, and the introduction of the Travel Plan, are a totally inadequate answer to our original concerns.

Response to Bloor Homes Consultation August 8th, 2024

Proposals for a Strategic growth Option in the Option C area (stretching from Mortimers Lane to Crowd Hill) were dismissed by the Inspector at the Examination in Public in 2020. We are aware that Eastleigh Borough Council are reviewing their local plan as they are required to, but they are at the very early stages of looking at their options. These will come forward for consultation at the end of this year. We are therefore very disappointed that you are asking for consultation on proposals which go against the current plan, which was finalised as revised by the Inspector for clearly established reasons, at this early stage in their review process.

As a community adjoining the Eastleigh Borough, our prime concern is with the traffic impacts of your proposals and the erosion of the gap between Fair Oak and Lower Upham.

In 2020 the Inspector noted in her letter to EBC of 1/4/2020 (paragraphs 23 to 25) that

The proposed SGO is close to the South Downs National Park. Paragraph 115 of the Framework is clear that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of

National Parks. The Council has a statutory duty to have regard to the purposes of the National Park, which include to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, as well as promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park. The evidence notes that the selected option would generate a greater increase in traffic overall on the rural roads within and on the edge of the South Downs National Park⁸ when compared to the other SGO options. This is not surprising given the close proximity of the SGO to this location.

I note that the Council advises that caution should be exercised over these results as they are based on a strategic transport model. In this Council's view, the increases predicted could be lower. However, the evidence base does not support this position. Furthermore, I am not convinced that suitable mitigation could be brought forward to mitigate against this increase in traffic movements having regard to the South Downs National Park guidance on this issue. Despite continued dialogue on this issue between the Council and the South Downs National Park Authority, no strategy has been prepared and there is disagreement between the two authorities as to when such a strategy should be in place.

The National Park comprises a sensitive rural landscape and given the significant scale of development proposed by policies S5 and S6 in such close proximity, the SGO has the potential to cause significant harm in this regard. The rural nature of these roads forms an integral part of the overall National Park experience. In particular, additional traffic at the sort of level predicted to be likely could have a detrimental effect on the communities concerned. **Given the statutory importance of the National Park, the scale of development proposed and the potential impacts of increases in traffic movements within and on the edge of the National Park, I am unable to conclude that the selected SGO represents the most suitable option when considered against all other reasonable alternatives.**

It should be noted that the Inspector rejected the proposals for option C on traffic grounds despite the then proposals for a 'relief road' running from Mortimers Lane to the M3 at junction 12. Objections to the relief road in 2020 were on the basis that it would not do enough to counter the traffic impacts of the new homes proposed on options B and C. It was however self evident that it would have provided at least some relief. With the abandonment of proposals for option B this road is no longer an option, so the impact of development in the option C area will have a heightened impact on the National Park, significantly greater than that feared by the Inspector.

At the same time Sciviers Lane, Upham Street, Queen Street and Longwood Dean Lane are all suffering from intensification of 'rat run' traffic towards Winchester from the new developments around Boorley Green, which have come on stream since 2020. This is in part because of the inadequacy of the B3354 through Colden Common and Twyford to carry even the current traffic flows without being overloaded.

Development along Mortimers Lane such as you are proposing will therefore put an unacceptable increase in traffic onto the rural Lane network of the National Park. The impact is compounded by the total lack of any access to public transport infrastructure apart from the very poor bus service along Mortimers Lane.

This development will be totally car dependent and we note that you make no attempt to answer the Inspector's concerns in your promotional material. We have to conclude that you are unable to do so.

Upham is very pleased to welcome visitors from Fair Oak and elsewhere in Eastleigh who enjoy our beautiful rural village and landscape. The tranquil character of the National Park and our rural lanes will be seriously eroded by the traffic generated by your development, to the detriment of all those who enjoy the Park, including Eastleigh residents.

We also note that Fair Oak is lacking in amenities to support even the new developments that it has seen in the last 5 years at Pembers Hill, Pembers Farm and Severnake Way, let alone further new development.

We are also concerned that your consultation process is very short and poorly structured. Given that your proposals will have impact over a wide area we would expect you to have publicised it much more widely and for longer. We trust that the results of your consultation will be available for public consideration, if you decide to proceed despite what will doubtless be considerable local objection.

*We **OBJECT** to this proposal in the strongest possible terms. It will compound the traffic problems the area already suffers, and do nothing for strategic infrastructure or services in the area.*

Anne Collins

Clerk to Upham Parish Council