

Hamble Parish Council

Planning Appeal Reference: APP/W1715/W/22/3292580

Land at Satchell Lane, Hamble le Rice, Hampshire

Hamble Parish Council is against the appeal proposals. The Parish Council made an objection to the application (LPA Reference F/20/89488) on the 29th April 2021 and fully supports the decision by Eastleigh Borough Council to refuse permission for the proposed development. In considering the appeal, we ask the Inspector to consider our comments made at the time and the following additional points.

Policy Context

As Eastleigh Borough Council will no doubt explain in their Statement of Case, the policy context for the consideration of appeal is now fundamentally different from that which applied at the time the application was refused and, perhaps even more importantly, to the policy context for the previous decision by a Planning Inspector in relation to development on this site. The new Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036 was adopted on the 25th April 2022. This confirms that the appeal site is subject to countryside policies and lies outside the settlement boundary. The site is not allocated for development and is not required to meet housing need. Any long-term housing requirement will be addressed by strategic allocations to be considered as part of an early review of the Local Plan for delivery towards the end of the Plan period. There is no necessity or requirement for the release of smaller sites which have not been included in what is now the most up to date plan in Hampshire. This new policy context provides additional support for the decision to refuse this application and a material reason with substantial weight for the Inspector to take a different view from the colleague who considered the previous appeal.

Hamble Airfield Application

The site is bounded to the west by the former Hamble Airfield which is allocated for sand and gravel extraction in the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2013. A planning application for permission to commence extraction has been submitted by Cemex UK Ltd and is currently under consideration by Hampshire County Council.

The application and the appellant's Statement of Case give no consideration to the implications for residential occupation of the proposed gravel extraction, or for the in-combination effects of the additional traffic from the Satchell Lane site with that proposed by Cemex UK Ltd.

Site Context

The airfield site is open countryside with a large quantity of tolerated recreational use of informal paths crossing the site. If gravel extraction is permitted there is a policy requirement for the restoration of the site to its current condition, and a level of biodiversity diversity net gain has been proposed by the applicant.

Whatever the outcome of the Cemex application, the Satchell Lane development would therefore represent an urban form of development which will be out of keeping with the surrounding area.

With due respect to the Inspector who considered the previous appeal, the Parish Council remains of the view that the proposal would be incongruous, in particular because development should become less dense and less urban in form as it extends away from the village centre. The layout of the scheme would create an abrupt and inappropriate contrast with its surroundings. It would also contrast markedly with the type and form of housing development that is found along Satchell Lane. As such it would have a negative impact on both the landscape and built form context of the area.

Sustainable Development

This proposal does not represent sustainable development as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Pedestrian routes from the site to important local services are limited, and in particular there is no suitable pedestrian and cycle route from the site via Satchell Lane to Hamble Lane and then on to the Hamble School and the local doctors' surgery. Residents of the scheme would not be able to safely access these essential services on foot or by bicycle without having to make a long detour via the village centre. A round trip to the surgery using the village centre route would be over five miles and for many residents this would not be feasible as an option. It is highly likely that the majority will be forced to default to car use for even the most local journeys as the unavoidable consequence of a fundamentally unsustainable location.

As such the proposed development fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF (Paragraph 112) to “give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme **and with neighbouring areas**” (our emphasis).

Design Quality

The layout of the scheme is less good than the previous scheme, even though it provides for fewer units.

The scheme lacks character or interest, utilising a “road centred” layout which creates a linear and car focussed street scene especially in and around the central block of housing. There is a lack of personal and defensible space with some parking spaces being placed remotely from the dwellings and without oversight and supervision.

There is no meaningful street hierarchy which means that there is no internal grain to the site and opportunities to create social spaces that promote interaction are lost. Small pockets of grassed areas are scattered apparently randomly around the site with no serious consideration given to their use or function.

Housing provision in the village currently favours larger housing units that are at the expensive end of the market. The scheme offers forty four-bedroomed homes, and very few smaller units. This does not reflect the needs of the community for smaller market homes (which are more affordable if only because they are smaller). The proposal does not therefore comply with the social objectives set out in the NPPF for the creation of sustainable communities. If such a large number of bedroom units were to be provided the site would be marketed to family group occupants with children/young people yet provides no convenient access to local play or recreation facilities near to the site. The nearest play area is at the end of footpath1 at Bartletts Field, which is too distant for unsupervised play other than the oldest of children.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF now makes clear that “Development which is not well designed should be refused..” In our view this development is not well designed and it was right that it has been refused; a decision which should be upheld on appeal.

Site Access

We referred in our objections to the planning application to concerns about the site access and safety on Satchell Lane. There is a known problem with speeding on Satchell Lane and mobile speed reduction devices are often in use to try to reduce excess speeds. The proximity of the entrance to the corner and limited site lines has to be considered against the 'real world' situation and not a theoretical compliance with speed limits. We note that the highway authority has indicated that a safe access can be achieved, but a long list of technical requirements remains unresolved and we believe that the ability of the appellant to provide a safe access is, at best, unproven and on that basis cannot be permitted.

Wider Highways Issues

It is acknowledged that the proposed development generates a relatively small number of traffic movements, but as the NPPF makes clear, the impact cannot be assessed in isolation from the existing network situation. It is common ground that there are severe problems associated with the key junctions along Hamble Lane some of which are forced to operate above capacity, resulting in congestion and poor air quality especially during peak periods. Hampshire County Council as highway authority objected to this proposal on these grounds following concerns raised by an inspector looking at a previous appeal decision (GE Aviation APP/W1715/W/20/3255559). It has confirmed to the Parish Council that the Hamble Lane Improvement Scheme which was proposed by the highway authority in 2019 as essential to address existing network problems now has a cost of at least £15m with only £2m of S106 contributions and other funding currently available. Given the scale of the shortfall there is no prospect of bridging this funding gap and therefore no prospect that mitigation works on a scale actually required to support any new development will take place. Taking further contributions may narrow the shortfall slightly but will not enable the improvements to come forward within any sensible timeframe, with the consequential impacts for residents and businesses. They cannot therefore be considered as suitable mitigation for the harm caused by development.

Hamble has a significant employment base from boat building to manufacturing businesses. With no alternative road access businesses are dependant on bringing in staff and materials along this busy route and some have reported problems to the Parish Council in recruiting and

retaining staff due to the long and unpredictable commute (feedback from a manufacturing business and from a local hospitality venue within the last three months). The inability to recruit and retain staff is a significant overhead for local companies and any further worsening of traffic conditions on Hamble Lane will further impact on this situation.

Summary

For the reasons explained above the Parish Council reiterates its support for the refusal of this application and respectfully asks that the appeal be dismissed on the sound planning grounds identified in the original decision and expanded upon in this representation.