



Planning Dept,
Chichester District Council
East Pallant, CHICHESTER
PO19 1TY

31 January 2019

Dear Sirs

Local Planning Review 2016-2035

I am writing in response to the recent consultative process with regard to proposed housing developments in the Fishbourne Parish.

I believe the proposals are fundamentally flawed and are contrary to The Secretary of State's policy that "Local communities should be able to determine not only the right number of homes for their area but how they fit in".

The proposals as they stand do not comply with this statement and fail to take into account infrastructure and environmental considerations.

Infrastructure

The proposal is for 250 new homes in a parish of approximately 1000 homes. This is a massive expansion and far in excess of the norm. The current population and the infrastructure of the parish is simply incapable of absorbing this increased volume. 250 homes will lead to 500 cars with the only accesses via the A259, Clay Lane, and Old Broyle Road to Chichester. With the development of Whitehouse farm, Old Broyle Road which is already full to capacity, will become impassable. That means much of the traffic will either use Clay Lane or the A259, both of which are overloaded already, leading to traffic congestion and the ensuing danger and pollution (see later).

The proposal talks about "The need to support the vitality of the village especially the primary school and Community Centre". The school is already full to overflow and the Centre is fully utilised. Furthermore there is no retail outlet (other than a bike shop) in the parish which means that cars will be used for shopping along roads which are already dangerously overloaded.

The railway only provides an unmanned halt, not a full station, and very few trains, exacerbating the need for car transport. The 700 bus service is good but really only services those living along the narrow strip of the A259. The 56 bus route only runs every 1 1/2 hours, barely enough to be considered a "service".

The increased volume of traffic will result in an increased number traversing the Fishbourne Roundabout, certainly the most dangerous on the A27 and possibly one of the most dangerous in the country. Every regular user has suffered an accident or near miss with heavy vehicles driving too fast along the dual carriageway and then round it. Although it is proposed to make alterations to the roundabout, it may, in fact, make it more dangerous for those entering the roundabout from the A259 unless traffic lights are installed at that junction. However, that would lead to greater queuing along the A259.

Environment

The parish partly includes sections of Chichester Harbour's AONB, an SSSI, SPA and SAC. It is inconceivable that housing development at this level with increased resultant traffic and light pollution will not have an impact on the environment of this heavily protected area.

The increased volume of traffic will undoubtedly result in increased air pollution. I live 500 yds from Fishbourne roundabout along the A259 and can confirm that queues in the morning rush hour are usually backed up beyond my house. The same applies midday at weekends in the summer. Queuing of this type results in much higher levels of pollution than fast moving traffic. The current level already exceeds national guidelines and with the proposed development and inadequate infrastructure it will only result in increased respiratory problems for the villagers.

Additionally, I would point out that at times of lesser traffic, more than half vehicles coming from the roundabout in a westerly direction exceed the speed limit. The road is already in a poor state of repair and we are aware our house suffers vibrations from heavy vehicles passing along the road on a daily basis. With the increased volume of traffic, at some stage, damage will appear.

It is proposed to establish a "wildlife corridor" at the eastern edge of the village and this is given as a reason for not developing available land in the vicinity of Clay Lane. Unfortunately there was no one at the consultation who knew any of the details about how this was proposed which could lead to grounds for a judicial review since the local population has not been properly consulted on its establishment. I was referred to the planning document but I cannot see anywhere in it a scientific study or data to substantiate this designation (which is, incidentally not required by statute). I was told that it was to protect the owl, bat and vole population but it already includes a built up area and suffers light and air pollution. It would be much more sensible to provide such a corridor to the west of the village where there is open country. The proposal would appear to be quite arbitrary and gives rise to the assumption that vested interests have been influential in its establishment rather than on a scientifically based assessment. In any case there is an inconsistency in designating a partly built-up area as a wildlife corridor while proposing above-average housing expansion in an area adjacent to the Chichester Harbour AONB.

I understand the need for more houses, particularly affordable houses for young people to get on the housing ladder but this proposal is simply out of tune with Central Government intentions. This is not a NIMBY response. There are possible areas of in-fill development with a sensible number of houses in proportion to the present population but the current proposal has clearly not been thought through and does not reflect the Secretary of State's intention to take into account the local population's valid views.


Alastair Alexander