

Planning Department
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
BN17 5LF

46 Hook Lane
Rose Green
Bognor Regis
PO21 3PD

17/2/17

P/6/17/OUT

Land North of Hook Lane Pagham

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to suggest that the proposed development is unsustainable for the following reasons

Loss of high quality agricultural land

This land, as much land in Arun, and in Pagham especially, is used for specialist crops that are grown locally because the area is unique in having the highest radiation (light) levels in the country. This feature makes even grade 2 land especially valuable. The specialist crops can be produced early in the year, substituting imports and generating greater margins per acre, support sophisticated modern businesses. This is particularly applicable to Hook Lane where crops over recent years have included Sweet Corn, Green Beans, Courgettes (particularly interesting given current events), various Squashes etc. The Hook lane field is also a key trial site for new varieties, for example sweet corn for the last two years and squashes last year. Potential developments are threatening local land resources, and have been for some time, as land owned by absentee landlords or developers is highly valued meaning that local horticultural businesses cannot justify purchasing it and therefore have to rent on insecure short term tenancies. Continuing challenges will threaten the viability of these local businesses.

These significant detrimental effects on agriculture have been completely ignored by the applicants' land use assessments

Traffic

It appears that the traffic assessment grossly underestimates the effects on the Pagham to Chichester traffic increases, instead focussing on connections with the rest of Arun. Highways England appear to share these concerns. It seems to have little or no understanding of the large percentage of residents that will work and or travel to Chichester, Portsmouth, Southampton or like me further afield in the rest of the country. This lack of understanding also affects public transport with links (or lack of) to Chichester ignored.

In particular the suggestion that Hook Lane should have traffic calming (no detail but plenty of potential issues here) due to the current speeding issue that has been highlighted by the application will merely move traffic to the dangerous Sefter Road Pagham Road junction. It won't have been identified but many drivers, even from eastern and central Bognor travelling towards Chichester use the Hook lane Pagham road junction in preference to the Sefter Road Pagham Road junction or even the Pagham Road Lower Bognor Road junction because it is safer and easier to get out in the heavy traffic flows. Both these junctions would need substantial upgrading.

Cycling

When it comes to provision for cyclists there is no guarantee that anything will improve the currently dire situation on the B2166. The assessment states

‘Overall the site is quite well situated to make use of the existing cycle routes in the area and is positioned quite well in comparison to the majority of Pagham’

This is the epitome of damming with faint praise, for an in depth analysis of the situation for cyclists (and I know from personal experience) see the CTC Bognor Regis and Chichester comment.

Lack of capacity in local facilities

There is currently no spare capacity at local doctors or dentists and serious parking issues at local shops in Rose Green and Pagham and this needs to be combined with demand for local shopping increasing. There is also a well documented lack of capacity in the Summer Lane sewage treatment plant and any overflowing of this plant discharges in the rife and the Nature Reserve.

More suitable sites

There are a number of far more suitable sites in Arun (e.g. Ford), or more locally, at Morrells Farm for large scale development, or even new towns, in areas that have far superior infrastructure. Whilst these may not be as profitable for land owners and developers as they are brownfield sites costing more to develop and maybe a less profitable mix of housing that is no reason that Arun should not direct development to these areas.

Environment

The applicants' surveys confirm that despite first appearances the field is an important site for a wide variety of animals. Notably reptiles such as Lizards, amphibians, rare migrating birds overwintering, large populations of varying species of bats confirmed by local residents including myself. Birds of prey such as Sparrowhawks and Buzzards can be added to the list.

Hallam Land management detailed development proposals

I suggest this application should be rejected on the following bases

Unacceptably high density / overdevelopment of the site, as it involves loss of the open aspect of the neighbourhood

The proposed housing density is far in excess of that currently in the area, it appears that Hallam are claiming a similar density by basing it on number of houses on the entire site not the developed area. It is also a purely residential area and schools, nurseries, care homes etc are not suitable especially as it is on the margins of the village and such facilities should be centrally located.

Visual impact of the development

The site is important to the nature of Pagham itself, giving residents, many of whom use Hook lane every day, a clear link to open farmland and tying Pagham to the wider landscape of the Chichester Plain and the South Downs. Although it has been omitted from the view points plan in the landscape assessment there is a clear view from Pagham Road, due south, to the site (see photo attached). This view is particularly noticeable in the afternoons with the sun in the west and if the development is approved this will adversely affect the first impression of Pagham for residents and visitors alike

Effect of the development on the character of the neighbourhood

The development in its current form takes no account of the setting of the 18th century houses in Hook Lane that are identified in the Pagham design statement as buildings of special character, farmhouse at number 46, cottages 56 and 58 and the buildings at Sefter. The layout of the development also is inward facing turning its back on hook lane rather than integration in to the existing housing

Design

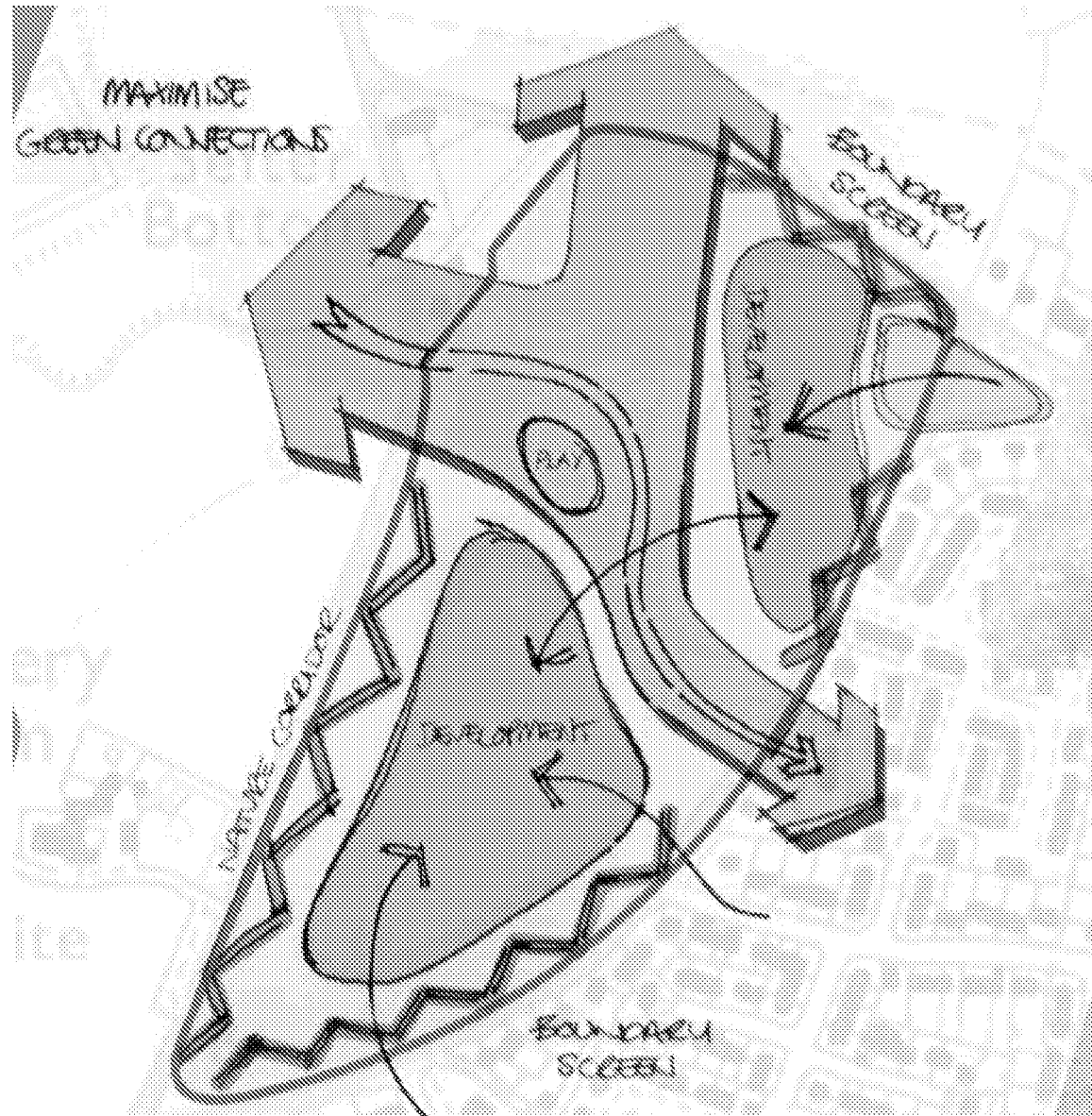
Although an outline application it is clear that the proposed development will be a similar identikit plan to other developments taking no account of the existing design of houses in Pagham. A key example of this is the proposal that building up to 9.5m (>30ft) should be allowed (current houses in hook lane are probably a maximum of 7m and given the number of bungalows the average considerably less)

The loss of existing views from neighbouring properties would adversely affect the residential amenity of the residents of pagham and neighbouring owners

The previous application on this site was refused for a number of good reasons but one of the key reasons was the loss of the view for residents of Hook Lane and Pagham as a whole. From many points along hook lane there are good views of open country side and the Downs. Far from the dismissive 'distant views of the downs' quoted in the application, these views are important enough for there to be a bench (funded by Pagham Chesnuts) (viewpoint five) placed facing this exceptional view (see attached photo). Unfortunately, the photos used in the design statement were taken on a very dull overcast day... It is telling that despite the developers comments about the current views the plans include a mound and a bench for the new residents to enjoy the same views, no doubt a key selling point.....It is an interesting indication of the developers regard for local residents that the initial proposal for consultation indicated that the current bench would be moved from Hook Lane and put on the mound. This was news to Pagham Chesnuts who were unaware of this plan and it was subsequently removed from the proposal. The suggestion in the application to address this issue is to plant screening, given the buildings may be up to 9.5m high, within 10m of the edge of Hook lane any screening is almost impossible to achieve especially as it has to be composed of deciduous species which will give almost no screening for 5 months of the year.

As this application is the result of a promotion agreement it is in the interests of Hallam and the owners to maximise the sale value of the land as they share the profits. This results in an application that maximises the number of houses and minimises any costs that a builder will incur in building. It is the councils' duty to respect Pagham and reflect the wishes of the community and not allow an application to be approved that conflicts with these duties and in doing so unjustifiably maximises the windfall to the owners and the profits of nationwide organisation based in Sheffield.

A key point that should be noted is that the original concept plan for the development in the proposal is much smaller scale and does appear to take into account the view and the setting of the historic houses in Hook Lane



I also suggest that it would be important for the members of the planning committee to view the site in person before making any decision

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

Chris Need



