

Downend appeal is dismissed on highway safety issue failure

Inspector raps County Council for ‘accepting the unacceptable’

A PLANNING inspector summed up the highways situation in a plan to build hundreds of houses on farmland at Downend as ‘unacceptable’.

And he used the same word to condemn the County Council for approving the developer’s highway schemes in the first place.

He promptly dismissed an appeal by Miller Homes to build 350 homes at Winnham Farm, Downend to the delight of Portchester councillors and residents who bitterly contested the plan for the 50.4-acre (20.39 hectares) site.

It hinged on the major implications of thrusting over 1,000 extra daily traffic movements along Downend Road, its bridge bottleneck and inevitable jams at the overloaded A27 junction.

When the inspector, Grahame Gould, was told the application included no major improvements to the Downend Road bridge, the appeal was doomed.

Portchester West Conservative Councillor Nick Walker, who represented residents’ views at the hearing, stressed the impact the scheme would have on narrow local roads.

Councillor Walker consistently argued that if the development

were accepted, there would have to be a separate pedestrian footbridge over the railway.

He stressed the danger for pedestrians with only a 1.2 metre proposed footpath and the ‘give way-shuttling’ options for traffic would lead to considerable traffic queuing.

The inspector took issue with the County Council’s approval of the Miller Homes highway schemes and declared the County’s two ‘acceptable options’ for pedestrian and highway usage

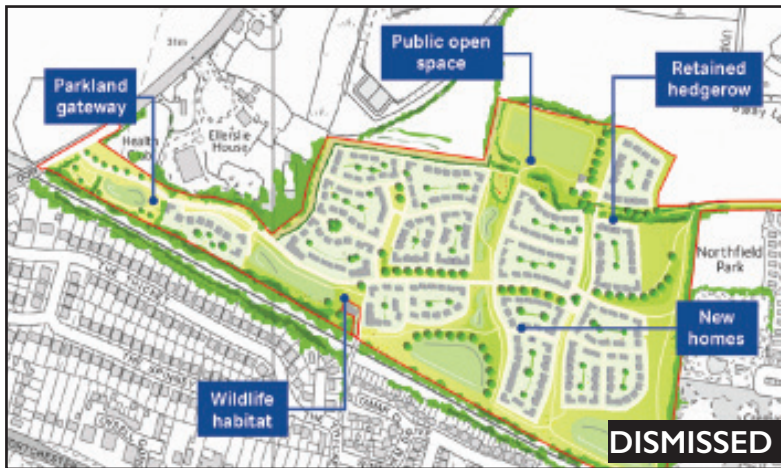
were ‘unacceptable’.

In his 23-page report, Grahame Gould agreed that in sustainability terms the site was adequate and the nitrogen calculation acceptable. Then came his damning summing up:

“I am of the view that the unacceptable harm to pedestrian safety and the operation of the public highway that I have identified could not be addressed”, and he concluded that ‘in highway terms this scheme was unacceptable’.

Councillor Walker said: “I and other councillors have been very concerned about Hampshire County Council’s highways modelling calculations and desktop studies which have been applied throughout the Borough.

“In this case, the inspector upheld my and residents’ views putting pedestrian and highway safety at the forefront of his conclusion.”



Artist impression of Station Road proposed development. Copyright image used with permission of MH Architects.

From an eyesore to an eye-catcher

THE CORNER of Station Road, Portchester should soon be transformed by this striking new development.

A revised planning application has been submitted for the former Merjen Engineering site – now owned by Fareham Council – for 16 elderly persons’ sheltered flats.

Funding for the scheme was outlined by the Executive on October 3, but timing for building and completion remain approximate.

Councillor Sue Bell said: “If planning consent is achieved toward the end of 2019/early 2020, then detailed technical designs will be produced with a potential start on or before autumn 2020.”



We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



NEWS ROUND



Co-op to close

Residents, particularly the elderly, have been upset by the announcement that the Co-op store in Portchester precinct will close in February.

Councillor Sue Bell said: "Iceland is the anchor store, but the closure is not a surprise. Their lease is up in March and we await the next move by the owners."

Hospice cheque

Councillor Simon Martin, in his role as Chairman of the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee, presented a cheque for £8,000 to Rowans Hospice.

Scouts need volunteers

The Scout Association in Fareham is looking for people to commit to becoming a leader at weekly meetings of Beavers (aged 6-8), Cubs (8-10), Scouts (10-14) and Explorers (14-18).

They are also seeking administrators to support the efficient running of groups in Fareham or people with specific skills who can assist with activities such as sailing and climbing.

Contact Mike McHugh on 07714 872599 or Brigid Ryan on 07733 060882 for more details.

New housing strategy

The Council has launched a new policy on the provision of affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Strategy sets out how it will be delivered over the next 5 years, including Council housing.

There are around 4,200 affordable homes in the Borough, but the Council estimates that another 3,500 will be required by 2036 to meet demands.

The best place to retire

Fareham has been named the best place to retire in the UK in Yopa's National Guide 2019.

Yopa - a national estate agent - cited our proximity to the sea, fantastic local amenities, relatively affordable house prices and location.

In an Office of National Statistics 'life satisfaction' survey, Fareham came third in the UK.

Why not "like" our facebook page - In Touch with Portchester West.

Working group tackles carbon reduction

FAREHAM is forging ahead with plans to mitigate the effects of climate change, with a view to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

It follows the October Council meeting when councillors discussed the scope of a newly formed working group led by Executive Member for Streetscene Councillor Simon Martin.

The group's first priorities will be to develop the Council's carbon reduction plan and identify its carbon footprint to provide a baseline against which progress can be measured.

It will look at all areas of the Council's services

to identify carbon reduction opportunities and at initiatives being progressed across the Borough, for example by businesses and community groups.

Councillor Martin will regularly update the Executive with progress and put forward initiatives for consideration.

He said: "There is strong public interest in climate change matters, and so any proposals which emerge will be presented to residents at Community Action Team meetings so they can have their say."



Vision: Artist's sketch of remodelled Ferneham Hall

THE LAST night of this season's pantomime at Ferneham Hall will be a show-stopper.

When the curtain rises again in two years' time, the present jaded building will have been stunningly transformed into a new community, arts and entertainment venue.

Curtain up in 2022 for transformed Ferneham Hall

This will be the flagship of the Conservative Council's vision to revitalise the town centre over the next few years.

Executive member for Leisure and Community Councillor Sue Bell said: "Ferneham Hall has become tired and dated over the 40 years of its life, and transforming it is one of the Council's key priorities.

"This exciting concept will see it become a bustling hub of activity, daytime and evening, seven days a week, offering something for everyone."

And the new £12.3m centre will be professionally managed for the Council by leading leisure and events operator BH Live, which manages 17 venues in the

South and London, including Portsmouth Pyramids and Bournemouth International Centre.

Ferneham Hall will close on January 6 after the cast in this year's panto 'Beauty and the Beast' take their final bow so the project can take centre stage. It will include:

- Main auditorium with 808 seats, retractable on the ground floor and fixed on the first floor balcony, bigger stage dimensions to attract wider range of professional productions.
- Larger foyer continuing up to a first floor bar and terrace, with areas for small pop-up exhibitions. All-day café on the ground floor, with outdoor seating available.
- Secondary performance space with 120-capacity auditorium, demount-

able seating, projector and screen. Flexibility allows uses such as cinema screenings, conferences, dance, community or club meetings.

•First floor studio to accommodate a range of activities eg yoga, dance, exhibitions and conferences.

•Large, flexible meeting room for hire on the ground floor.

The design team is looking to ensure the building has a low carbon footprint and is investigating solar panels, photovoltaic panels and an air source heat pump.

Sue Bell added: "Shopping centres will need to develop and attract residents for other purposes and a brand new community, arts and entertainment venue will bring residents into Fareham and be a vibrant venue in the town centre."

Welborne development gets green light

A NEW community north of Fareham moved a step closer when Council planners granted outline consent for Welborne Garden Village.

Buckland Development Ltd plans include up to 6,000 new homes, district and local centres, schools, shops and community facilities. Other features of the development:

- Major improvements to Junction 10 on the M27 turning it into an all-moves junction



- More than 1,000,000 sq ft of employment space creating around 6,000 new jobs
- Community and health facilities; local pub and hotel
- New secondary school, 3 new primary schools, nursery

- and pre-schools
- Sports facilities, play areas and allotments
- 270 acres of natural green space

There is also the possibility of a new rail station to serve the community.

New card to aid rough sleepers

A DONATION card has been launched making it easier to give money to a charity which helps rough sleepers in Fareham rather than giving directly to individuals.

It will be particularly welcomed in wards where the problem has led to demands from residents to tackle it.

Councillor Sue Bell said Fareham Street Aid had created the card with a QR code which can be scanned with money going straight to the Two Saints charity.

She said: "It can also be shown if you are approached for money as a way of saying that you are donating to a Fareham Street Aid partner."

"They are available from reception at the Civic Offices, One Community in Fareham Shopping Centre and the Citizens Advice."



Gold galore for 'In Bloom' competition entries



PORTCHESTER put up a prize-winning contribution to the 2019 South and South East in Bloom competition, in which Fareham again excelled.

The Borough gained its 16th consecutive Gold award in the Small City category, also being declared category winner.

Local award winners were: Portchester Common – Gold and category winner; Portchester Cre-

matorium – Gold; Northern Junior School – Gold and Hampshire winner; Red Barn Allotments – Level 4, thriving..

The latter was a new entry and there were also many individual prizes at the Fareham in Bloom presentations at Ferneham Hall.

PHOTO: Northern Junior School pupils celebrate their gold award at the Ferneham Hall presentation evening.

Bowls club hits 'jack' pot with £40,000 boost towards extension



POPULAR Portchester Bowling Club has received a £40,000 boost in its plans to extend facilities.

The thriving club, with 155 members, recently had to restrict attendances at several events to meet health and safety requirements.

Councillor Sue Bell said members with mobility aids and wheelchairs had difficulty navigating the space within the present club room at Westlands Grove.

Improved toilets were installed in 2014, but since then there has been a big increase in membership.

"It has planning permission to extend which will double the space that is available in the club room and increase its toilet facilities further.

"I am pleased to confirm that in November the club received £20,000 from Fareham Borough Council from the community matched funding pot and a further £20,000 from Hampshire County Council.

"The club currently has £70,000 allocated toward the project," she said.

The organisation, which boasts a new all-weather artificial outdoor rink, is also developing a junior section through links with local primary schools.

PHOTO (l to r): Phil Harding, Portchester West Councillor Nick Walker, Ken Gibbs, Brenda Webb and Fareham Council Leader Séan Woodward.

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COME AND JOIN US

If you support Conservative principles and would like to vote to select your Council and Parliamentary candidates, to attend social and political events or help us by delivering InTouch in your street, then why not join Portchester Branch of Fareham Conservative Association? Please phone Nick Walker or Sue Bell on 02392 384943.

WE SERVE YOU ALL

Whether you voted for us or not, your Conservative councillors promise the highest standards of service to everyone in the community. Contact us any time and we'll respond personally within 48 hours.

Let us deliver Brexit and get back to domestic priorities



I am honoured to be standing for re-election as your **Conservative** Member of Parliament on 12th December.

This General Election is vital because we need a new Parliament to support Prime Minister Boris Johnson to get Brexit done. Like the majority of voters in Fareham, I voted and campaigned to leave the EU in the 2016 Referendum because I see the many opportunities for trade, migration, sovereignty and laws.

Boris' new deal offers these opportunities and that is why I support it. Your vote will make the difference on 12th December.

By voting **Conservative**, we can secure a majority in Parliament so that we can deliver Brexit, restore democracy, bring this constitutional crisis to an end and move onto other domestic priorities like more police in Fareham, more funding for our local schools and better NHS services.

None of the other parties offers this. Labour and the Liberal Democrats want to prolong the uncertainty and not honour democracy. Vote **Conservative** on 12th December to get Brexit done!

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Suella BRAVERMAN

AS YOUR **Conservative** Member of Parliament since 2015, I have worked on a large variety of local issues and been a voice for Fareham in Parliament.

My track record includes:

- 1 Leading Fareham Community Hospital Taskforce to support more services there, including the Same Day Access to local GPs
- 2 Supporting young people and skills through my 4 annual Apprenticeships and Jobs Fairs with Fareham College and seeing a doubling of the number of apprentices in Fareham since 2015
- 3 Fighting for better transport such as upgrades to Junction 10 and better train links.
- 4 Assisting thousands of people in Fareham to find better housing, resolve problems with pensions or benefits, secure a school place and better social care for an elderly relative.

Thousands of residents have at-



tended my public events for Senior Citizens, Health Services, Brexit and better Broadband.

More needs to be done and that is why I am pleased that Fareham will see more police on the beat locally following worrying incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour in Fareham Town Centre and Locks Heath.

I am delighted that all schools in Fareham will see an increase in their funding with Sarisbury Junior School, Hook-with-Warsash, Park Gate Primary, Brookfield Community School and Cams Hill schools receiving significant amounts to address their previous lower levels of funding.

And I am glad that we are seeing record investment in our NHS, mental health services and social care.

I hope that I can count on your support to continue the work.

Nitrates pollution disrupts Fareham housing plans

FAREHAM planners are well advanced identifying new sites to meet Government demands for up to 2,500 extra homes, but the Council could still fail housing delivery tests due to the nitrates pollution factor.

After being forced to take its development plan back to the drawing board, it hopes to put the revised strategy and any necessary new policies before the December Executive meeting.

But Executive Member for Planning and Development Councillor Keith Evans said that although progress was being made to achieve nitrate neutrality on development

sites, there were still 1,700 on-hold house applications.

He said: "These delays are not good news because until this backlog is cleared, Fareham is at serious risk of failing government housing delivery tests with resulting penalties requiring even more short-term housing delivery – a real mess.

"Fareham, with other local authorities, is strongly engaging with government departments and statutory organisations to get some common sense applied and to see longer term solutions as opposed to short term fixes."

Meanwhile, if the Executive agrees the

revised strategy there will be a public consultation during the winter.

The Council will then merge the results with the 'on-hold' draft Stage 1 and prepare the plan that it proposes to submit to the Planning Inspectorate.

This new overall Borough Plan will be published for general comment in early summer 2020, before going to the Inspectorate in mid to late summer.

The examination timetable is up to the Inspectorate but should be over the autumn – winter period, allowing formal Council adoption of the plan in early 2021.

Prestigious Queen's award for Fareham's Y-Services

Y-SERVICES, the charitable organisation looking after youth services across the Borough, were honoured to receive a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

It's the highest award a voluntary group can receive and was presented by Hampshire Lord Lieutenant Nigel Atkinson.

Andy and Maria Kennedy, who founded the charity in 2011, received the award.

Councillor Sue Bell said: "Y-Services is well-known across the area as being

a great organisation offering a range of diverse groups and young people fantastic opportunities.

"This prestigious award is very well deserved."

PHOTO (l to r): Y-Services CEO Andy Kennedy, quadriplegic yachtsman and Deputy Lord Lieutenant Geoff Holt, Mayor Pamela Bryant, Lord Lieutenant Nigel Atkinson, Councillors Connie Hockley, Sue Bell and Seán Woodward.



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