



saynotochawtonparkfarm@gmail.com

Via email

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Your Ref: RK/CP

Councillor R Millard
East Hampshire District Council
Penns Place
Petersfield
GU31 4EX

Dear Councillor Millard,

In view of the proximity of the EHDC Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation on the emerging Local Plan our campaign team felt it timely to remind you of some of the reasons why we believe that Chawton Park Farm (CPF) should not be included in it.

Concentration of Housing in a New Settlement is *Not* a popular public option and CPF is the *least popular* large site option

The “large site” principle for the district was first established when the Northbrook and Bordon sites were identified as possible stand-alone and sustainable developments. They were included as part of the Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation in February 2019. CPF was not included at this stage. Only in September 2019 was CPF included in the Large Site Development Consultation which included ten potential sites. The result of the subsequent Large Site Development Consultation was a firm rejection of CPF as a development site; indeed it was overwhelmingly the LEAST preferred site. Earlier this year EHDC undertook the first part of a Reg 18 Consultation again, on Issues and Priorities, the results of this showed that concentration of housing development in a new settlement (such as CPF) was ‘by far the most commonly ranked least preferred’ option.

A petition **against** building on CPF has over 5300 signatures, representing around 30% of Alton’s population.

At the Full Council meeting of 28th July last year, Mr Jenkins expressed a view when questioned by you about CPF that “as your lead planning professional, at this point in time I would be recommending refusal”, and in response you said “my immediate response to that is “good”. It is the wrong location, it is the wrong size, it is the wrong infrastructure provision.”

There are Alternative Smaller Development Sites in Alton

An assessment of the 2018 EHDC Land Availability Assessment (LAA) showed that 1147 houses could be built in Alton, in more sustainable sites than CPF.

CPF is not a Sustainable Site

The CPF site is located nearly 1.5 miles from the centre of Alton and is at least a 30 minute walk. This is considerably outside the latest thinking of 15 or 20 minute neighbourhoods. There are no public amenities within a 15 minute walk of CPF apart from the Chawton Park Surgery and Community Hospital (14 minutes), the Sports Centre (8 minutes) and Cricket, Tennis and Bowls Clubs.

Development of CPF will cause Traffic Chaos on Northfield Lane and Chawton Park Road

The Alton Transport Strategy (ATS) estimated that development of 1200 houses on CPF would add an extra 670 (morning) and 740 (evening) vehicles at peak hours. The effect on the Chawton Park



Road/Whitedown Lane junction would be to increase the traffic by nearly half in the morning and a third in the evening. Hampshire County Council has already indicated in a letter from 2015 that the operation of the Chawton Park Road/Whitedown Lane junction was already a 'concern' without the ongoing Crest Nicholson development on Ackender Hill and certainly without any CPF development.

The rest of the traffic increase would impact Chawton Park Road and Northfield Lane both of which are in part, effectively single carriageways, and would create a bottle neck at the A31 junction, and when passing under the constricting Victorian railway bridge.

Impact on setting of Chawton Park Farm Grade II Listed Farmhouse

The adverse effect of the change from farmland to housing on this building would be enormous.

Impact of the development on the character of the neighbourhood

Any housing on CPF would completely alter the rural character of this part of Chawton – it is a 'stand-alone' site so does not tie-in with any other housing in the locality.

Development of CPF will inevitably impact SINCs, ancient woodland and the 'valued' landscape

CPF is surrounded by woodland some of which is designated 'ancient woodland' and Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINCs). A large busy development would negatively impact the wildlife in those woodlands and the woods themselves by incursion of residents and domestic animals, as well as light pollution. The Council for the Protection of Rural England has characterised the CPF site as a 'valued' landscape within the definition of the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 170(a). The CPF site contains, or is in close proximity to, medieval Deer Park Pales which have been described as a 'monument of national importance'. Some of the trees on the site would be classed as 'veteran', indeed Natural England's 'Veteran Trees a Guide to Good Management' says that some of the highest concentrations of veteran trees are found in current and former parkland which applies to CPF. Their importance for wildlife is in the specialised habitat they provide.

Any development of CPF would be ruinous for this landscape which is valued by so many Altonians and visitors who enjoy walking and cycling through this beautiful valley and 'green lung' of Alton.

EHDC Corporate Strategy 2020-24

EHDC pledge within this that 'the Council is the custodian of the beautiful environment of the district and are committed to protecting it for future generations' – this applies to CPF.

Grow Up

Within the emerging vision for Grow Up EHDC say: 'to support and encourage a thriving rural district, to preserve the openness and distinctiveness of our landscapes, to encourage biodiversity and to maintain a sustainable rural economy' of which CPF is a part.

Petition Presentation

This petition exceeds the minimum 5000 signatures for it to merit consideration by EHDC as the Planning Authority and is to be formally submitted to the Council.

The Say No to Chawton Park Farm Campaign will be outside Clanfield Community Centre at about 6pm on Thursday 28th September, prior to your Full Council meeting to present you with our petition.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Palmer



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on Park Farm Campaign

SAY NO