

Trust objects to Barton Farm Planning Application

In January a group of Trust members scrutinized the planning application by CALA Homes and heard a presentation from their architect.

In the lively debate which followed the general consensus was that this was a great improvement on the previous proposal, but that more evidence was needed to support the diversion of traffic from Andover Rd. We were concerned that the innovative traffic calming proposed on the new route might not prove effective but we learnt that HCC were considering using the proposal as research project. We felt able to support this with the proviso that any alterations made to the present Andover Rd would not prevent its reinstatement as the primary route should the proposal prove unsatisfactory.

We felt that further thought was needed as to who would actually use the Park & Ride site: 200 spaces seemed too small to cope with the Peter Symonds students whose cars currently trouble local residents, commuters wanting to work in the city or travel elsewhere by train, as well as day-time visitors wanting to shop in the city centre. It was felt important that bus services should be established very early during the construction of the development to avoid the first residents becoming too reliant on using their cars. With this in mind, we also felt that the pedestrian and cycle connectivity with the city centre was inadequate, and that improved conditions for this along Andover Rd were needed.

The land on the east side of the railway line seemed vulnerable to future development and we felt that any permission should include a condition designating it for use as part of the green infrastructure, and we also suggested that part of the southern end of the area could be used to meet the current demand for more space on the Park Rd allotments.

The completion of a development of this size is likely to take at least 10 years from the time that permission is given, and we felt it essential that some way is found to put a master plan in place that sets out the original concept and high standard of design, and so ensure that the integrity of the scheme was retained, whether or not a phase of the development was sold on to another developer. The Trust agrees with WinACC that each phase should aim at the highest levels of sustainability that are current at the time of construction.

Despite our recognition that this is better than the previous proposal and the fact that it is a designated local reserve site fit for development, the Trust continues to consider that permitting this large development at this time would damage the character of Winchester. Other proposed developments in the city's centre and its suburbs that are still to be built would provide about half of the housing currently demanded by central government, and it's felt that proof is needed that this scale of additional housing is required and that the local infrastructure can accommodate the demands of these extra 2000 dwellings. If this and the other high-density developments were built, would the already stretched resources of our present infrastructure be able to cope with the extra demands brought about by their residents?

The Trust therefore put in a formal **objection** to the scheme as being premature and detrimental to the character of Winchester.