

Burridge and Swanwick Residents' Association

2023/4 Chairman's report

The aims of the Association are to safeguard the wellbeing of residents in the village as far as possible.

We try to achieve this particularly by tracking Planning Applications and anything we feel may affect the Quality of Life in our area. We have tried over the past year to stay in communication with you all through Emails, Facebook and our website with information about issues in and around our area.

The most important event this year was the approval of the Fareham Local Plan that earmarks where development is proposed and the policies that will be applied to applications up to 2037. This enables the Council to refuse new housing in unsuitable areas.

The most significant application in our area, at Eversdown Farm, was most unfortunately allowed on appeal just prior to the acceptance of this planning document.

This approval for building up to 38 houses was with All Matters Reserved, except for access that was agreed to be from the Botley Road between the Recreation Ground and Eversdown Farm.

This meant that the appearance, detailed means of access, landscaping, layout and scale were still to be decided.

I believe we were fortunate that Cala Homes purchased the right to carry out the development.

The layout they proposed was considered by local residents to be better than the Outline Plan proposed by Workham who originally obtained the Government Inspectors permission to build on the site.

There were a number of issues that we and Fareham Borough Council were unhappy about and I believe Cala Homes have done their best to accommodate our combined concerns.

In particular, it was agreed that a corridor of green planting would be established on the west side of the development. This serves as an ecological protection for the Ancient Woodland bordering the site and allows maintenance access to the public sewer serving Burridge Road properties.

Footpaths that ran to the rear of the new houses and existing neighbouring gardens were removed as they were deprecated by us and the Designing out Crime (Police) Officer.

Gable roofs were replaced by hipped roofs to reduce their bulk and no building is to be more than 2 storeys high. There is also to be a variety of house designs and finishes.

Affordable housing was spread around the site to encourage pride of place and social interaction.

A complex drainage system is to be established to drain the site and avoid flooding of the lower land to the West.

Throughout this process Cala Homes and FBC have both worked hard to achieve the best result possible.

Work has now started on construction of the access road and as building progresses we will keep you in touch with the onsite activities. If the works cause issues locally please contact me using the chairman@burridgeandswanwickra.org.uk email. We have a line of contact with the developers who will do their best to ameliorate the impact of the construction on the neighbourhood.

Moving on from this development there is a list of the other applications that the Committee has discussed both at our meetings and by email on this website on the Planning page.

The largest of these is on the **land to the South of Rookery Avenue** adjacent to the Motorway. Two sites have been proposed. That to the East has now been approved following multiple changes to the design including a reduction in the number of houses and removal of the office block.

The smaller application for 20 houses has now been reduced to 19 but is still under consideration. We have commented on this as we feel there are still too many dwellings proposed and the exposure to noise and parking arrangements have not been fully addressed. The site had previous approval (expired) for only 7 houses!

The motorway noise issue and loss of countryside woodland also concerned us in connection with the application for **12 houses on the Bursledon Brickworks land** off Swanwick Lane. We appreciated that there was considerable sympathy for the need to raise capital to preserve the listed buildings of the Brickworks and asked for your opinions on this development. The replies were divided but overall against building here. The plan had significant Councillor support as an enabling development. The application was approved. It is hoped that when the repairs to the brickworks, supported by the developers contribution, are completed the office space constructed within the old walls will bring in an income to help the Brickworks Trust to maintain the museum.

We have supported a number of residents in opposing developments that we also felt were inappropriate. At 260 Botley Road for example we felt 2 houses would have been more in keeping on this plot but despite some support for our objections the Planning Officer's report recommended approval and the Planning Committee agreed by majority.

4 houses were also proposed in an application at 35 Burr ridge Road. We made certain that local residents were aware of this because many of the properties in the vicinity have large gardens and we felt rear development would set a precedent for further loss of countryside. The majority of comments to FBC supported our view as did the Planning Officer with the result that it was refused.

Another application for a new school building in New Road opposed by us and local residents and was also refused.

I believe these results indicate that, as has previously been stated, it is the number and quality of objections to applications that influences FBC's decisions. Please continue to give your opinions direct to the Planners as well as letting us know as this will give us the best chance of protecting our neighbourhood from intrusive developments.

The application for a house on a very small plot behind 274 Botley Road had already been allowed on appeal despite access being along a **Public Right of Way**. Two small increases in size were permitted but we were able to encourage the developers to re-site the EV charging point so that the turning area within the site would always be available enabling vehicles to leave in forward gear without reversing into pedestrians using the path. We hope that the path will be improved when the house is complete as it is frequently flooded.

The examples above are not exhaustive we have also commented to the council regarding other issues and applications and the decisions made will continue to be published on the Planning page of the website.

The opening of Whiteley Way has been a disappointment. Even when it has been adopted, in few years' time, it is not going to relieve the pressure on our roads significantly. There are just far too many new houses being built in and around the South Hampshire region. Hopefully the improved link to Junction 9 of the M27 will prove to be an easier route for traffic from Whiteley and may ultimately be used by other traffic as an alternative route. We have made a plea to Winchester City Council not to include anything in their Local Plan to discourage this. The road has been built to accommodate buses and large vehicles with carefully swept curves, wide bridges and properties facing it generally have rear parking. It has also been double yellow lined. Despite its shallow humps, curves and roundabouts I found it took a similar time to traverse to the M27 as the route through Park Gate and the A27.

Winchester City Council have included some small additions to the North Whiteley Development in the area between the School in Bluebell Way and Cherry Tree Farm. We have requested that they ensure the separation zone and wildlife corridor between North Whiteley and Burr ridge properties is retained.

Last year we commented to Hampshire County Council, who are updating their **Minerals and Waste Plan, on the subject of the Raymond Brown site**. This is still currently in their plan reserved as a Minerals Recycling Site. This does not preclude development on the site, but FBC have not included it in the Local Plan. These two factors make development on the site less likely.

At last year's AGM an appeal was made for volunteers to litter pick in our area. A small group have been tidying the Burr ridge/Botley Road area including the Recreation Ground at regular intervals but please do continue to support them by checking your own frontage. Swanwick Lane doesn't seem to suffer so badly but we would welcome some volunteers to cover this area.

Following concerns expressed by several residents and the reports we have received from Speedwatch we decided to try to address the issue of **traffic in our area**. A survey to assess your opinions was determined to be the first step. This was sent out to all residents on our mailing list and received a response from 40% of them. Obviously many of you share these concerns. The initial results will be discussed at our AGM after which we will add responses from the copies hand delivered and decide which options to pursue to try to address this issue.

Throughout the year I have had the support and advice of the Committee and without them my first year as Chairman would have been much more difficult. Some have been serving you for many years and it is only natural that they would like a rest. Our Treasurer, George, has given warning that he wishes to retire in 2025. If you live in our area, this is your Association so please consider spending some time on the Committee to help protect Burr ridge & Swanwick for current and future residents. It is important that the committee has representation from across the area and with a variety of experience.