

**Examination of Fareham Local Plan Part 2
Development Sites and Policies**

Statement in relation to Issue 7, Question 7.5

From: Mary Leth
(DREP 520)

The Development Site Brief for Housing Site H7, at pages 153-156 of the Submission Version of the Local Plan Part 2, is unsound and undeliverable to the extent that it treats Green Lane as a “potential access” to this site.

Green Lane is an unadopted, unmade private road, barely 9.5 feet wide for much of its length and the expenses of maintaining it are borne by the residents of the lane under informal arrangements.

Fareham Council has repeatedly recognised that Green Lane could not safely accommodate the additional traffic that would be generated by use for access to new development on this site:

P/01/0208/OA – permission refused (after numerous objections from residents of Green Lane) for 3 new houses in part of H7 (then “Area 14”) with access from Green Lane (reasons for refusal: “*d) Green Lane is unsuitable in its present condition to take the type and amount of traffic which the proposed development would generate.*”)

P/02/0128/OA – permission refused for one new house on the same plot for the same reasons.

P/03/1707/DP/B – owners of 34 Green Lane, at that time the NE end of the lane, given permission to build one new house (now 32 Green Lane) only after entering into a written agreement with Fareham Council that they would cease using Green lane for access to their existing property, and use only a track from Fleet End Road instead. As a result, 34 Green Lane became 45A Fleet End Road and the lane ended at the entrance gate to the new house. This agreement (a pre-condition to planning consent) ensured that there was no net increase in the number of properties using the lane.

P/04/1613/VC – owners of 32 Green Lane granted permission to build a garage on what had been the section of Green Lane separating their property from Area 14/H7. (The garage is shown in the map on p.153 above the red line.)

P/13/1064/FP – permission refused in January 2014 for two new houses in SW section of Area 14/H7 using Green Lane as access and including purported “improvement” of the entrance to Green Lane from Fleet End Road and unspecified “improvements” to the lane’s surface. Objections from 10 of the 15 existing properties for which Green Lane is sole access.

P/14/0341/FP – essentially the same application as P/13/1064/FP, but re-lodged in April 2014 after reference to Green Lane as an additional “potential access” to H7 was introduced into the Publication Version of Part 2 of the Local Plan as a late amendment after public consultation. The Council’s Planning Committee unanimously refused permission on 27 August 2014, recognising that Green Lane’s “restricted width, condition, lack of passing bays and absence of lighting” made it unsuitable to accommodate the additional vehicle movements for the 2 proposed new houses. No evidence was ever put forward of any realistic prospect of overcoming these concerns, but Green Lane residents had been kept under siege by these proposals for nearly 9 months.

The applications summarised above respectively proposed two different angles of access to H7/Area 14 from Green Lane – the 2001/02 applications attempting to go straight ahead along a narrow NW section of private land parallel to and separated from the final section of Green Lane by a protected tree and ancient hedge (as now depicted in the plan on p. 153 of the Submission Version) and the more recent ones by means of a sharp left turn into H7 just before the end of Green Lane. The difference is not material, because no amount of tinkering at the end of the lane would remedy its totally unsuitable condition and width overall.

Having recognised that Green Lane cannot be made safe and suitable for access to even one or two additional houses in H7, it is completely unreasonable for the Council to designate it as “potential access” for even more houses there. When I rang the Council’s offices last spring to complain about this late amendment, I was told by one of the planning officers involved in its preparation that one of the reasons for adding Green Lane as “potential access” (after more than 20 years of published planning policy stating that access to this site should be from Fleet End Road) was to “encourage” owners of land in the way of other access routes to be more “reasonable” in their financial demands. I do not think this can be a proper reason for changing the plan, nor do I believe it would necessarily have the desired effect anyway. If Green Lane as “potential access” survives in the Local Plan, developers are just as likely to continue to spend time and money (and the Council’s time and resources) making untenable applications involving Green Lane and residents will have to spend time, money and effort repeating the same objections again and again, even though land in H7 has no

right of way over Green Lane.

Over the years Fareham Council have been inconsistent in the way they have described Green Lane, sometimes acknowledging it as a private road and at other times referring to it as a private street or a unadopted public highway. Hampshire County's Highways Department have confirmed in writing that the lane is neither: (a) on its definitive map of public rights of way, nor (b) on its list of "private streets" (i.e. unadopted roads, which may or may not have public rights of way over them, but have been declared as potentially maintainable). A "New Street Order" in respect of the lane was apparently issued by Fareham Council back in 1967, when they were contemplating adopting the road, but this has never been, and I believe could not now be, implemented. I understand that the Council were unable to find a copy of it when enquiries were made last year. In any event, they have made it clear that they have no intention to adopt the lane.

There is no realistic prospect of making Green Lane up to public highway standards, even if the residents who are responsible for it were minded to do so, which they are not. To improve the surface sufficiently would be prohibitively expensive due to drainage and utility issues and the fact that residents would have to be denied access to their homes for an extended period; tarmac and streetlighting would completely change the rural character and amenity of the lane, and there would remain the fundamental problem that the lane is barely wide enough for one vehicle for most of its length, with some houses built very close to its edge. (The plan on p. 93 of the October 2012 version of Part 2 showed the full length of Green Lane, but once it was amended to show it as a "potential access", it was cut off so that only the very end of the lane near H7 is visible in the corresponding plans in the Publication and Submission versions.)

I attach some photos of Green Lane which demonstrate better than words how unsuitable it would be for more traffic. This aspect of the development brief is not deliverable; it is ineffective and in fact counterproductive and we therefore respectfully request that the references to Green Lane in the map on page 153 and in the second paragraph on page 154 of the Submission Version be deleted.

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