

## ***Mallards Road, Bursledon***

### ***Main Issues***

- *impact on the landscape and settlement form*
- *accessibility to facilities*

### ***Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions***

- 5.197. The objections refer to a site of some 3ha of grazing land on the southern edge of Bursledon. It has frontages to Hamble Lane (B3397) and to Mallards Road and is generally bounded by post and rail fencing with some hedgerows and trees on the perimeter. Existing dwellings on Mallards Road face towards the site. The ground level drops to the east towards Pilands Wood, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation that borders the eastern edge of the objection site.
- 5.198. I have concluded elsewhere that there is a need to identify additional land for housing, to provide for reserve sites in accordance with the HCSP's requirement. On this basis it is appropriate to look to the potential for this site to contribute to the identified need.
- 5.199. This land is within the designated local gap between Bursledon, Hamble and Netley Abbey. While the Inspector at the EBLP Inquiry concluded that any coalescence between these settlements would be undesirable, I consider that the need to provide for additional housing sites in sustainable locations merits re-appraisal of the importance of particular areas within the gap. At this point the gap between Bursledon and Hamble is reasonably large, and even though openness of the landscape between the two leads to some intervisibility, the effect of a small, well-contained development on the site would not be very significant. There is a narrower gap to the edge of Netley Abbey, but in this case any visual coalescence effect would be minimised by intervening woodland and some variations in topography. Views into the site from the east would be generally contained by Pilands Wood. Subject to a high quality landscaping plan for the site that would provide a new, softer edge to the settlement than currently exists, and to protection of the SINC from any adverse effect, I consider that this land could be acceptable in countryside and settlement form terms as a reserve site.
- 5.200. With regard to the sustainability of this location, the nearest primary school and local shopping facilities are at School Road, Bursledon and at Lowford respectively, less than 1km away. These could be reached by footways and pedestrian routes. The route to School Road is rather tortuous and varies in its gradient but it may be capable of improvement so that it could offer a convenient alternative to using the car. A shared pedestrian and cycle route to Hamble School provides easy access to secondary school education. Hamble rail station is also within a relatively easy walk or cycle ride of the site. The hypermarket at Windhover is only about 1.5kms away. While none of these distances

make the site highly accessible, for the reasons set out above in respect of Berry Farm I consider that it is necessary to balance these relative disadvantages with other accessibility factors. There is a good range of employment and other facilities available within the Hamble peninsula that are accessible by cycle or bus, and bus and rail services offer connections from here to major centres. Balancing all of these factors, I consider that this site has some merit in PPG3 terms.

- 5.201. I have also taken into account the Council's concerns about incremental expansion in the Hamble peninsula as set out above under Berry Farm. But for the reasons given there I conclude that these concerns do not justify dismissing the potential of this site. It is worthy of detailed investigation as a potential reserve housing site. At a density of about 40dph it might accommodate about 80 dwellings. Any modifications to the urban edge and local gap boundaries would be consequent upon the outcome of these investigations but are not recommended in isolation.

### ***Recommendation***

- 5.202. The land to the south of Mallards Road, Bursledon should be included in the list of sites for detailed assessment with a view to identifying it as a reserve housing site in modifications to be brought forward to the Plan.