

**Minutes of Meeting of
Braishfield Parish Council Planning Committee held in The Church Rooms
at 7pm on Thursday 1st October 2026**

Present:

Members of Braishfield Parish Council:

Clerk/RFO: Jane Ray

Cllr Jane Bennett, Chairman of the Parish Council

Cllr Richard Brazier, Chairman of the Planning Committee

Cllr Julie Benson

Members of the public: 11

159. Apologies

Cllr Ian Knights, Cllr Sally Yalden and Cllr Beverley Windibank due to other commitments

160. Members interests in the business for the meeting

None

161. Public Participation

Comments made at 163.a)

162. To Approve:

a) Appointment of Lawrence Chase – Southern Planning practice Ltd - **APPROVED**

b) Appointment of transport consultant – **NOT REQUIRED**

163. To decide comments for Test Valley Borough Council under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990:

a) 26/01835/FULLS Land at Fairbourne farm, Kiln Lane, Braishfield

Change of use of agricultural land to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace including supporting infrastructure and parking - **OBJECTION**

Letter prepared by planning consultant and comments from Cllr Yalden **APPROVED**

An extra submission was prepared in response to parishioner's comments made at the meeting:

The council's principal concern is that there does not appear to be a sufficient demonstrated local need for the proposed SANG, particularly given the number of existing publicly accessible natural and recreational areas in and around Romsey.

There is already significant local provision of green and woodland space

The area is already well served by existing natural and recreational spaces:

Ampfield Wood (probably 300+ha with many footpaths), Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Farley Mount Country Park, Extensive network of footpaths and rural roads that are already used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. In addition, there are existing recreational facilities in the residential areas of Abbotswood, Kings Chase, Fishlake Meadows, Brentry Nurseries. Every new development will/should have areas set

aside for recreational use built into their plans like the current developments listed above. Therefore, this SANG not justified and is therefore not necessary.

Before taking additional agricultural land out of productive use, the applicant should demonstrate clearly why these existing areas cannot meet the identified recreational need and why a further substantial area of land is necessary.

The proposal should not simply create another destination because land is available for it. There should be a clear, evidenced need for this particular facility and a demonstrated deficiency in existing provision.

The application should demonstrate the specific recreational pressure that the SANG is intended to address, the geographical area from which visitors are expected to come, and why existing provision is inadequate. If the justification for the SANG is principally connected with mitigating the impacts of development elsewhere, this needs to be made explicit and supported by evidence.

If this SANG is being proposed or promoted as mitigation associated with the **New Forest mitigation zone**, the Council should require the applicant to demonstrate precisely how the proposed site will achieve that objective. On the basis both the Braishfield site and the New Forest are some way from urban areas and both will only be visited by car we cannot see how the Braishfield site provides any short or long term benefit to those wishing to visit countryside destination.

It is not sufficient simply to designate agricultural land as a SANG. There needs to be a clear and evidenced connection between the proposed facility, the recreational pressure that is being mitigated, the location of that pressure and the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation.

The proposed area is substantial, and appears to be larger than **Hillier Gardens/Arboretum**.

This raises a basic question: **why is such a large additional recreational facility necessary when there is already extensive green space and established recreational provision in the surrounding area?**

The Council should require the applicant to justify the scale of the proposal with objective evidence rather than simply assuming that a large SANG is required. The proposal would result in agricultural land being permanently changed to another use.

Given the availability of existing woodland and recreational areas in the locality, the applicant should demonstrate why it is necessary to use further agricultural land for this purpose.

The Council should consider whether the identified recreational and mitigation objectives could reasonably be achieved through existing green spaces or through a less land-intensive alternative. There are also important questions about the long-

term management of the proposed facility. Can the Council be satisfied that there is a secure and enforceable long-term management and funding mechanism before granting permission as the proposal leaves ownership with the current owner and what guarantees are there to ensure it stays adequately maintained in perpetuity.

The Council should require the applicant to provide convincing evidence addressing:

1. The specific recreational pressure that the SANG is intended to address.
2. Why existing local facilities and green spaces are insufficient.
3. Why further agricultural land is required.
4. Why the proposed SANG needs to be of this particular scale.
5. How the proposal will specifically address the claimed mitigation requirements associated with the New Forest.
6. What evidence demonstrates that the SANG will actually achieve its intended mitigation objective.
7. Who will be responsible for the site in perpetuity.
8. How ongoing maintenance will be funded.
9. How the car park will be managed and secured.
10. What measures will be put in place to prevent unauthorised occupation of the car park and associated land as the land will remain in private ownership.

Until these matters have been properly demonstrated, there is insufficient justification for approving the change of use of agricultural land.

b) 26/01959/TREES Long Barn, Church Lane, Braishfield – **NO COMMENT**

c) 26/01894/LBWS and 26/01893/FULLS 3 Pond Cottages – **NO OBJECTION**

d) 26/01974/FULLS Apple Cottage, Braishfield Road – **NO OBJECTION**

Signed Chairman: _____

Date: _____