

ON UNIFORM

19/03416/OUT

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Mr J A Grierson
Manor Barn
Coombe Hill
Templecombe
29/01/2020

Mr D Kenyon
South Somerset District Council
Development Management
The Council Offices
Brympton Way
Yeovil
Somerset BA20 2HT

Dear Mr Kenyon

Application No 19/03416/OUT – Development of Land at Manor Farm Coombe Hill Templecombe Somerset

Reference: South Somerset District Council letter, 19/03416/OUT/David Kenyon dated 9 January 2020.

I am writing to register my objection to the proposed application to develop at Manor Farm Templecombe.

Over Development in Rural Areas

Abbas and Templecombe already has several outstanding planning applications for housing, to name some of the major developments: Slades Hill – circa 70 houses; West Street circa 40 houses; Coombe Farm circa 4 houses, Throop Road various probably totalling about 30. None of these developments appear to be in build and should they come to fruition will add about 115 - 130 more house to the existing stock. If the Manor Farm development were to go ahead with a proposed additional 80 odd houses this would increase the size of Abbas and Templecombe by some 220 houses. This represents an increase of 30% of houses and ipso facto a potential population increase of about 600 people. The proposal does not include any enhancement of village facilities or integration of the housing with the existing population, if anything the development has the appearance of an encapsulated area isolated and segregated from the rest of the village.

Government Policy

Local Government identified the area as a "Brown Field" site when in fact the area is a "Green Field". This statement was later retracted as a mistake. The area is shown on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) as suitable for 35 dwellings. The outline planning application shows 80 dwellings.

The BBC recently broadcast an article by Professor Matthew Carmona. The report can be read at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-51179688>. This report shows that planning for new development does not always enhance the settlement in which they are planned or encourage people not to use their cars.



Access

The planned development has only one road into and out of the area. The access is on to the A357 at a point where traffic regularly exceeds the speed limit of 30 mph. This road is in regular use by heavy vehicles carrying aggregate, steel girders, milk tankers and a plethora of HGVs that have to use the A357 as a main North South route from the A303 to the port of Poole. It should be noted that the A357 becomes an even busier road during the Summer holiday period and congestion at the traffic lights can often cause traffic tail back well to the North of the proposed Manor Farm access point. In addition, we could expect most households to use cars for work and taking children to school.

The site has two pedestrian points of access. The northern end of the site, where the footpath/cycle track empties into East Street (this road has no footpath). The path then joins the A357 at one of its most dangerous and congested points. The southern pedestrian point of access will also be shared with the vehicular access road. Here pedestrians will, according to the footpath proposal, be asked to share the road with polluting heavy traffic and traffic accessing the site. The A357 is narrow at this point, visibility is limited and pollution high as vehicles crest the hill from the traffic lights in the valley. The proposal suggests REDUCING the width of the road to provide a footpath at a dangerous point from a traffic usage perspective. This cannot be a sensible solution.

Many children from Templecombe attend school in Wincanton and daily catch a bus which picks them up in the centre of the village near Templars Barton. There must be a more imaginative way of producing pedestrian access to the proposed site which is nearer the village hub for buses. If sustainable development and the encouragement of the population to not use cars is to be pursued, we will be taking a retrograde step to mix pedestrians with vehicles. Human nature tends to indicate that pedestrians will normally take the shortest most convenient path between two points and hence it is suggested that a more imaginative approach needs to be taken to the provisioning of footpaths.

Services/Education/Amenities

The impact of the project on the infrastructure of the village from an amenity, services (water, electricity, sewage, drainage) and facilities (shops, recreation, transport, education) perspectives will be high, particularly if the other planning applications in the village are brought to fruition. There are some limited recreational facilities in the village, but they are, generally, centred around the Recreation Ground. These facilities could not be further from the proposed development. No additional communal facilities are planned save for a play area on the edge of a drainage basin. I wonder what the Health and Safety implications are for this, let alone the ability to use this area during periods of rain.

Summary

Although the Developer has taken steps to consult with the local residents this proposal must be considered in the light of the other planning applications that have been passed for this Rural Settlement.

Account must be taken of the dangers of deliberately producing a mix of pedestrians on an already recognised busy road where there is often scant regard for speed limits (A brief examination of the Community Speed Watch data will confirm this).

This application should be rejected as there are a number of unresolved issues.

Yours Sincerely



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MR D. KENYON

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