

James O'Leary

JML (O)

19/03416/OUT

From: David Kenyon
Sent: 26 January 2020 11:44
To: Planning
Subject: FW: 19/03416/OUT Objection Letter
Attachments: 19_03416_OUT Objection Letter.pdf

This has already been copied to Planning. For website please.

David Kenyon
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From: Tim Shepperd <[redacted]>
Sent: 25 January 2020 18:00
To: David Kenyon <David.Kenyon@SouthSomerset.Gov.Uk>; Planning <Planning@SouthSomerset.Gov.Uk>
Subject: 19/03416/OUT Objection Letter

Dear Mr Kenyon,

With regards to the outline application referenced 19/03416/OUT, please see the attached letter of objection.

Kind regards,

Tim Shepperd

T Shepperd
14 Templars Barton
Templecombe
Somerset
BA80AX

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

Sent by email to David.Kenyon@SouthSomerset.gov.uk and planning@southsomerset.gov.uk

25 January 2020

Dear Mr Kenyon,

Planning application reference; 19/03416/OUT Outline application for the demolition of existing buildings and residential development of up to 80 dwellings including the creation of a new vehicular access and pedestrian accesses, open space, landscape planting and surface water attenuation (all matters reserved except access). Land at Manor Farm, Combe Hill, Templecombe Somerset.

As a resident of Templars Barton, I have been aware of the proposals to develop the pastoral land at Manor Farm for a number of months. Whilst the early communications we had with the developer and their agent, and the presentations to the parish council and residents were appreciated, I do not believe the proposed outline application should be supported.

Please consider this letter as my formal objection to the above proposal for the following reasons.

Highways

The majority of comments already made to SSDC by fellow residents of Templecombe express serious concern related to increased vehicular movements and the narrowing of the already narrow highway to include a pedestrian footpath. I will not look to repeat these same concerns, however, will raise other concerns with the application bearing in mind this is the one aspect being submitted in full detail compared to the rest which will remain reserved matters.

The visibility splays have been sized at 60m to suit an 85th percentile speed of 34.5mph for the A357 to the South of the proposed road entrance. The long sections of visibility splays on i-Transport drawing ITB14408-GA-030 show a visibility splay of this length passing just above the crest of the downward slope towards the traffic lights at the bottom of the hill. As quite rightly stated within this report, the current speed limit for this section of road is the national speed limit of 60mph. The applicant however does not provide any evidence of the speeds recorded on this section of highway to justify the proposed visibility splay of 60m.

Appendix E of the submitted transport assessment, Paragraph 2.5 states;

“vehicular speeds were not audited by the Audit Team however, speed data (85th percentile wet weather) was provided to the audit team which identifies that north and southbound traffic approaches the proposed access at 34.5mph and 29.4mph, respectively.”

To put this into context, should the 85th percentile have actually been recorded as 40mph (quite possible within this national speed limit stretch of road), the visibility splay requirement would be 120m, which would result in the crest of the hill obscuring the full visibility splay required distance.

The applicant does propose the possibility of extending the 30mph speed limit zone to the South. In fairness this would probably be a wise and welcomed change to the entrance of the village regardless of any proposed development. That said, a decision in favour of granting the vehicular access associated with this application on the speculation that the speed limit zone be extended South is unacceptable.

With regards to the matter of pedestrian safety, whilst the report accompanying this application does state the number of reported incidents, it makes no reference or allowance of unreported incidents or near misses. Speaking from personal experience, the narrow road and the quantum of vehicles have led to me being struck by passing wing mirrors, or vehicles having to perform emergency stops in order to avoid oncoming vehicles when passing me. I implore SSDC and Somerset Highways to review the possibility of future incidents rather than focusing purely on historic data.

Density of development – Both the finer detail of the proposed scheme and the broader context of the scheme within the village.

The design evolution within the Design and Access statement fails to demonstrate why the proposed plan has changed since being presented to the parish council. The plan presented to the parish council and residents showed some thought to the residents of Templars Barton by ensuring the density of development immediately adjacent to the existing properties was kept relatively low. This has subsequently changed adding a further 4 dwellings to this portion of the site. What is (and has been on all plans seen) noted as ‘Dwellings orientated to minimise impact on immediate neighbours’ has now been made a farce. Yes, when shown on the original scheme, the orientation was better suited to the immediate neighbours, the inclusion of additional dwellings in this area however will greatly increase the visual density of development.

This concern is over and above the immediate concern of the proposed density across the entire site.

The proposed local plan for 2016 to 2036 suggests a suitable figure of 75 possible housing numbers to be provided within this 20-year period. Whilst it is perfectly understood this is only a guide rather than a target or ceiling, and it is respected that there is a demand for housing everywhere, members of the planning authority must take into account the cumulative effect of large-scale applications. This proposal alone could cater for the Local plan period of 20 years and that is on top of other large

applications of 49 dwellings on West Street (19/01604/OUT), 19 dwellings on Throop Lane (18/00650/OUT), 70 dwellings at Slades Hill (18/02739/OUT).

The current proposal of 80 dwellings on a development footprint of 2.44Ha calculates to give a dwelling density of over 32 dwellings per hectare. South Somerset HELAA 2018 suggests a reduced density for any development on this site due to conservation issues. To confirm, the HELAA suggests a yield of 35 dwellings for the entire site, less than half the proposed number.

Views from the East

When viewed from the East on Temple lane and East Street, the visual impact of the village in its current state is diminished due to the majority of the settlement sitting at the highest point of the local topography and extending West. By developing the proposed site with a topography generally falling toward the East, the built form visible from both Temple Lane and the public rights of way across the fields will be greatly increased, far more so than if the proposed development site were level with the remainder of the neighbouring context.

Greenfield Site

When party to early community discussions, it was discovered that the Manor farm site had been wrongly designated as a Brownfield site, appearing on the South Somerset Brownfield Register I understand in 2017. It is also understood that the brownfield register is to be audited at least once a year to ensure the information within remains correct. An audit in 2017, 2018 and possibly even 2019 should have highlighted the error, as this sites lastly and currently contains agricultural buildings which are excluded from being deemed previously developed land (or Brownfield) as written in the national planning policy framework.

It is assumed that the developer and/or their agent undertook a pre-application consultation with the SSDC planning department and also assumed that any feedback from this could have been incorrectly skewed by the site's incorrect designation.

I therefore refer to the notifications of refusal of two historic planning applications on this site, 06/02405/OUT & 07/01308/OUT which state;

"The proposal would appear as an incursion of built form into the open countryside, to the detriment of the character and setting of Templecombe"

This raises the question why the determination of this latest application should be any different.

As a professional within the construction industry, I am wholly aware of and support the need for housing both locally and nationally, and similarly the need for those who plan for and provide that housing to do so in a manner to look after their own commercial interest. However, the requirement for housing supply and commercial viability of a project needs to be balanced with the detrimental impact of dense residential developments in rural locations where you risk urban sprawl on the rural landscape, negative impact on communities and local infrastructure.

This outline application is for the demolition of existing agricultural buildings, I would suggest it would be far more appropriate and acceptable to all to lessen the density of any future proposal and restrict the development footprint to the immediate vicinity of the existing built form.

Yours Sincerely

A redacted signature consisting of two thick, horizontal black lines.

T Shepperd
RIBA