

ALLAN KERRIS

**Manor Farm - Ref. No: 19/03416/OUT**

I **object** to the Outline Planning Application - Ref 19/03416/OUT to build ca 80 houses in Templecombe. The reasons are as follows:-

- a) There is no identified need in Templecombe for a development of that size and there is no evidence for the ability to deliver large scale housing developments in Templecombe over the last 10-15 years. There are currently three outline planning applications for approximately 140 additional houses and with this application in addition that total is well over 220 possible new homes. The former Meads development on Slades Hill for ca 75 houses was approved in 2013 and has never been started indicating that there is no identifiable need for such projects in Templecombe.
- b) There is little employment in Templecombe and these developments if approved would result in the new residents having no choice but to travel to their place of employment by car as the public transport options are inappropriate and infrequent. The train service available does not actually stop in Yeovil, one of the biggest sources of employment and the bus service available is too infrequent. This directly impacts one of the stated objectives of reducing the use of cars for environmental reasons.
- c) Given the ratio of house prices to earnings in Somerset is 8.2 it is unclear what the term affordable housing means - most houses in Templecombe sell for well over £200K and if there is a need, it is for deposit free houses costing around £150K starter homes.
- d) Specifically related to this application the stated intention to make walking and cycling options in the village are unsatisfactory.

The A357 is inherently a narrow road and at peak times approximately 500 vehicles per hour travel through the village including about 60 wide vehicles. This data is taken from the South Cheriton vehicle counter and excludes both internal school traffic of approximately 60 cars per hour and Thales traffic travelling north and turning at school lane (not counted at South Cheriton) - estimate at 30% of the 700 employees - say 230 vehicles. The full total of traffic travelling on the A357 through the village at peak time is close to 800 vehicles - at some points the road is less than 5.5m wide.

The proposal is to provide a shared area for pedestrians and traffic between Yarn Barton and build out 4 on the High Street. Pedestrians leaving the north end of the development are expected to walk between East Street and Yarn Barton to get to the village amenities eg the school at the same peak time as the traffic. This part of the A357 is littered with parked cars removing approximately 2m of width from the carriageway leaving about 4-5 metres for pedestrians and two lanes of traffic. There is no priority crossing planned for the pedestrians and the 20mph speed limit is ignored and unenforceable.

Pedestrians leaving the development via the exit onto the A357 at Coombe Hill fare scarcely better as again there is no planned pedestrian priority crossing in the 30mph speed limit area and no continuous footway to the village shop and onward to the school.

There is absolutely no provision for cyclists in any on the plans.

The unavoidable conclusion is that no parent living on the proposed new development will walk to school with their children at the times they need to do so because the A357 is too risky and the vehicle drivers have no acceptance of pedestrians in what they regard as 'their space'. The new residents will drive in their cars and create even more issues than we already have in the School Lane area.

The only way to encourage walking in Templecombe would be to eliminate the HGV traffic in its entirety, or install traffic lights with pedestrian crossings throughout the village. Neither of these are realistic options and therefore it is impossible for any developer to meet the aims of this type of policy.

- e) As SSDC are unable to demonstrate a 5yr housing supply plan all of the normal policies applicable in the planning process become irrelevant. The overriding policy used to determine these applications is the NPPF which presumes development will be allowed unless it can be shown to be unsustainable. The burden of proof lies with SSDC in this case and they have neither the staff nor the financial resources to compete with developers.
- f) Finally, throughout the documentation provided reference is made to the Local Development Plan Consultation where there is a proposal to introduce a 5th level in the planning hierarchy - this would mean that Templecombe would have the status of a Village. The indications are that this would make it easier for more development to occur in the settlement. It is noted that these proposals would suggest that Templecombe would contribute approximately 60 new houses over the 15 year life of the plan. I have a number of points to raise on this issue:
  - i) We are already dealing with potential developments totalling in excess of 220 houses without that initiative - I do not understand what world the Local Plan developers are in but it is certainly not the world Templecombe is living in.
  - ii) The Parish Council and a significant number of residents, who managed in the first instance, to find out that this initiative was happening are universally in opposition to the change for Templecombe, as is our District Councillor.
  - iii) The timetable for the Local Plan is at least two years away, it is a consultation with an uncertain outcome and as such should not be quoted in any planning application made in 2019. The current Unitary Council consultation could delay this even more.
  - iv) Where there is a number of significant applications aimed at the same area there needs to be a way of reassessing any other approved applications should one application actually start construction - Templecombe currently has 4 major applications and should any one of them start construction the other 3 should be reassessed in that light.

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