



Yatton Parish Council

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Development & Environment
North Somerset Council
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23rd February 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

The following planning application was considered at a recent meeting on 16th February 2015 at which the Parish Council **recommended NOT supporting** the following application.

i) 15/P/0185/O – Gladman Developments, Land north of Chestnut Drive, Claverham. Outline application for the erection up to 85 dwellings (30% affordable), public open space, water attenuation scheme with details of main access from Streamcross to be decided, however all other Matters Reserved for subsequent approval.

RESOLVED: that councillors unanimously and very strongly recommend **NOT** supporting application 15/P/0185/O for the following reasons.

Reasons for Recommendation. The Parish Council are objecting to this proposal principally because it is a completely unsustainable development outside the settlement boundary of a designated infill village sited on agricultural land currently used as grazing and which has overriding environmental constraints. It is an encroachment of the countryside which will be harmful to the landscape, adjacent heritage sites, protected bat species and poses a serious risk to surrounding properties in terms of flooding. The village has about 305 properties and 85 additional dwellings represent a 26% increase in housing numbers which for an infill village is totally out of proportion.

The Parish Council are fully aware of the current position regarding the Core Strategy remitted policies, the re-examination of CS13 and the five year housing supply requirements. However throughout the process since the High Court Challenge the statement below has been relevant:

“The Judge was clear that while it is only CS13 which was found to be unlawful, because the re-examination of the total housing figure may result in consequential alterations for other policies, then these policies are also remitted. However, “the policies can still be accorded appropriate weight in any decision making and housing can be brought forward through the development control process”

In particular the weight given to remitted policy CS 32 has been demonstrated with the recent refusal of the Barratt application for 80 dwellings outside the settlement boundary at Congresbury. If this weight has been given for a service village then surely the same principle must apply even more to CS33 and an infill village. It would be hard to conceive how an application could be refused by North Somerset Council for 80 homes in a service village and then one for the same number in an infill village be given approval.

The proposed development is totally contrary to CS33 which states;

“Proposals for development within the rural areas outside the Service Villages will be strictly controlled in order to protect their character and prevent unsustainable development.

New residential development will be restricted to replacement dwellings, residential subdivision, residential conversion of buildings where alternative economic use is inappropriate, or dwellings for essential rural workers.

Within the settlement boundaries of the following villages,(Claverham is named) infill development (one or two dwellings), or small scale residential redevelopment where the proposal is community led with clear community and environmental benefits will be permitted. In the case of redevelopment proposals within settlement boundaries it must be demonstrated that if the site or premises was last used for an economic use, that continuation in economic use is unsuitable.

This development cannot be described as small scale and is most certainly not community led as the number of letters of objection clearly demonstrates. The large attendance at the Parish Planning meeting where strong representations objecting were made adds further to this conclusion. There are no environmental benefits to what is a loss of green fields, an increase in traffic on country lanes and through adjacent existing residential roads, flood risk and heritage sites. The sight of these historic buildings is currently enjoyed by the community but will subsequently be hidden by the developer’s proposals to mitigate the impact on them. This is a loss not a benefit to the landscape and historic environment of Claverham and is therefore contrary to the principle of Policy CS5.

It should be noted that Claverham have previously been unable to progress rural exception sites because there was nowhere suitable found through the sequential land search process outside the settlement boundary.

The reasons for why the development site is unsustainable are as follows:

NPPF paragraph 9 emphasizes that *“pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life”*.

The site is located where the access routes out to Claverham Road by any of the options available are all problematic with considerable road safety issues. The developers Transport Assessment under 10.15 suggests options for transport management, our comments on this are as follows:

The proposed route through residential roads of Chestnut Drive/Broadcroft Road or High Street that all have numerous parked cars, a lack of footways and some blind bends at crossing points will be placing residents on foot and cycling at an unacceptable risk when the increase in traffic movements the development will

bring are considered. The school currently uses a mini bus to bring children to school because Claverham Road is considered unsafe for children to walk along.

The suggested signage to prevent the use of Broadcroft Road and Streamcross as short cuts is unenforceable (Streamcross will undoubtedly be the route of choice as the quickest most direct way on to Claverham Road). Streamcross is used by HGV's (going to Laurel Farm units), tractors allied to 4 farms and existing residential traffic. They will be expected to use the new suggested arm at the entrance and it may prove difficult to negotiate for large vehicles and traffic of this type when heading towards Claverham Road direction. The use of Chestnut Drive and the High Street are completely unacceptable alternative routes, they are quiet residential roads with parked cars and children playing and cannot accommodate the large increase in through traffic that the development and its proposed infrastructure will bring.

Claverham has no real employment within the village (Claverham Ltd who have been put forward as employment in the village by the developer are moving in the next couple of years and also gain 99% of their staff from outside the village as it is a highly skilled specialist industry). This has led to a high level of out-commuting with most working residents employed in Bristol or Weston. The proposed development will significantly increase the level of out-commuting and further contribute to Claverham becoming a dormitory village. A village transport survey has been carried out which clearly demonstrates this; the details of which have been submitted to NSC.

The description of the facilities in the village is inaccurate, there is no shop, it is a café, it does not sell groceries. The nearest small supermarket is in the centre of Yatton and for most people the car would be the transport of choice for shopping either that or be limited to what they could carry using other means of transport. The other facilities mentioned were either, only provided for a limited time i.e. outreach post office or only provide something that people may need on an occasional basis (Claverham Village Hall bar (not pub as described) hairdresser and pizza take away). The school would only be available as long as there were places for children, if not then residents would have to once again resort to the only viable option for most at that location which would be the car. These factors are further evidence demonstrating the unsustainability of the proposed development.

The site is located in an area that has a history of flooding and sewage problems and there are very serious concerns about the detrimental impact the built mass of new dwellings will cause on the surrounding area and the ground water levels. This concern was very well demonstrated by the resident of Manor Farm who attended our meeting. His property is close to the development site and is a Grade 2 listed farmhouse. It has a very old well in the dining room which acts as a means of measuring and monitoring the water table and in the flooding of 2012 the well level came within 12 inches of the top. Understandably the resident is deeply concerned about the impact a large built area will have on the water table and especially if combined with future weather events which are considered to be an inevitable part of climate change by many.

The proposed attenuation ponds are not an adequate solution to the drainage and flooding impacts of the site. The Parish Council considers a realistic possible solution would be to pump the attenuation ponds into the Tannery Ditch. The ditch itself would also require downstream improvements in order for it to facilitate the capacity required.

