



Yatton Parish Council

Hangstones Pavilion,
Stowey Road,
Yatton,
BS49 4HS.
Tel: 01934 838971



Development & Environment,
North Somerset Council,
Post point 15,
Town Hall,
Weston Super Mare,
BS23 1UJ.

26th April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

The following planning application was considered at a meeting held on 24th April 2023 and the Parish Council **recommended refusal** as follows:

i) 23/P/0664/OUT – Land to the North of Rectory Farm, Chescombe Road, Yatton.

Outline planning application for the development of up to 190 no. homes (including 50% affordable homes), 0.13ha of land reserved for Class E uses, allotments, car parking, earthworks to facilitate sustainable drainage systems, open space and all other ancillary infrastructure and enabling works with means of access from Shiners Elms for consideration. All other matters (means of access from Chescombe Road, internal access, scale, layout, appearance and landscaping) reserved for subsequent approval.

RESOLVED: that councillors unanimously recommended **refusal** of application **23/P/0664/OUT**.

Reason for Recommendation: The Parish Council has consistently recommended refusal of speculative larger scale developments like this that Yatton has experienced since 2014 and throughout that time almost no other application has generated such strong feelings of objection as this one. This was clearly demonstrated by at least one hundred and fifty residents who came to give their comments at the Planning Committee meeting. Councillors fully supported the residents' views, in particular those who reside closest to the proposed site and along its access routes but also because the impacts of this development would be felt across the whole wider community of Yatton. The changes to legislation that are currently going through the legal process regarding changes to the need for Councils to demonstrate five year housing supply requirement cannot come soon enough!! This application is an example of exactly the type of inappropriate developments that have been finding a way through the planning system as a result of the five year supply requirement.

The Parish Council has very serious concerns regarding a broad base of issues and constraints with development on this poorly selected site.

Flood Risk

This site is located in Flood Zone 3, the zones are nature's way of providing flood protection for surrounding areas by absorbing flood water from the sea, river or rainfall, all of which are applicable to this site. The raising of the land by three/four metres and sealing of it with built

environment can only result in seriously increasing the flood risk and potential threat to safety for existing residents, their homes and infrastructure in the surrounding area.

It must be highlighted that at the Rectory Farm Appeal (this site is on adjacent land) Ref: APP/D0121/W/21/3286677 the Planning Inspector Decision Report pg 34 states - *Condition 31 is necessary to ensure that dwellings are sited outside Flood Zones 2 and 3. Report pg 43 Condition of Approval 31 stipulates - The area of the site within which dwellings are to be developed, that is dwelling houses, private gardens, and residential outbuildings, shall fall wholly on land that is within Flood Zone 1 of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.*

The Flood Risk Sequential and Exception Test Document assesses the suitability of the site against other potential development land across North Somerset. It concluded that this site could accommodate this size of development within the sequential flood risk test process. The designation of being the 'least bad' site does not make it a good site for development! In addition there was considerable concern regarding the impact on the existing watercourses in terms of erosion and harm resulting from vast quantities of hardcore required to raise the land and the resulting runoff from this into the rhynes over the very lengthy construction time.

Ecological and Biodiversity Impact

The Parish Council fully endorse the detailed comments that have been made by Yatton & Congresbury Wildlife Action Group (YACWAG) regarding the serious negative impact on the Strawberry Line Nature Reserve, the Biddle Street SSSI and Bats SAC. Councillors cannot conceive why an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required for this green field site located alongside these crucially important areas of nature preservation. The cumulative impact on the ecology and biodiversity of this site and the approved Rectory Farm site should be considered when assessing the impact of developing this large swathe of land running alongside these critical areas of nature.

Access

The access to the site from Shiners Elms via the narrow residential roads of Grassmere, Heathgate and Mendip Road which are congested with parked vehicles is unacceptable and unsuitable for this purpose. The long construction phase requiring mass movement of soil and aggregates onto the site and the consequential impact on the local community of pollution by dust, noise and emissions generated by a huge number of vehicle movements will cause a significant detrimental impact on the living conditions and health of residents. This applies to anywhere along the access routes within the Parish but especially along the roads highlighted above.

The HGVs will experience great difficulty passing along these roads as they are congested with residents parking, creating single track one way along extended lengths of the roads. This could also impact the access of emergency vehicles and waste collections. It is very likely there will be queues of lorries backing up to the High Street as they struggle to gain access to the site.

The above points highlight serious issues during the construction phase but even after completion the significant increase in traffic generated by the development will continue to jeopardise the safety of these residential roads and the health, safety and wellbeing of residents on the overstretched local network in Yatton and beyond. Councillors expressed concern that if approved, the level of construction vehicles may jeopardise the re-instatement of the X5 bus service after the completion of the High Street Safety Improvements Scheme.

Affordable Homes

The Parish Council note the provision of 50% affordable homes with this application and seriously question the definition of 'affordable' as it very often is found not to be the case for many people. It is yet to be seen, should this application unfortunately proceed, if the 50% affordable is retained as it seems a very high proportion of the dwellings of this type and value given the enormous costs involved in constructing a site on land that has to be raised by three metres in a flood zone.

Impact on Village Character and Landscape

The proposed site will have a negative visual and intrusive impact on this open landscape creating an obtrusive urban 'lump' along the linear aspect of the village contributing to a further loss of character in this part of the parish.

Other Impacts and Comments

- This site is not in the Yatton Neighbourhood Plan and is contrary to Policy CS32.
- The loss of privacy for existing residents living on the boundary to the site once the land has been raised by three metres will be immense. It will be exacerbated further if the adjacent new dwellings are multi storey. The overbearing impact and loss of privacy this would cause is intolerable.
- The application does not make any reference to the land on the site that is currently designated for a school within North Somerset Council's Core Strategy and the Draft Local Plan 2038.
- The Community Consultation was a very poor process as the developer failed to engage with crucial areas of the village deeply affected by the proposed site.
- The large amount of development in general across North Somerset has seen extensive pressure on key areas of infrastructure e.g. secondary school education, health services and even water pressure.

The Parish Council do not support the development of this site but have to suggest that should this application unfortunately be granted approval consideration be given to the following green measures within the Reserved Matters application:

- For any new roof or roof refurbishment that will face between south-west and south-east, consider installing photovoltaic panels or using photovoltaic tiles in construction.
 - For any alteration to gutters and downpipes, consider installing a rainwater butt.
 - For any construction of new walls, try to include the highest practicable grade of thermal insulation.
 - For any construction try to use materials that are sustainable, made with recycled content, easily reused or recycled, and that save energy.
 - For any project involving alteration or installation of a toilet, consider using a dual-flush model.
 - For any project involving paving, patios and/or driveways, consider using water-permeable materials.
- For any project, consider the feasibility of installing one or more electric vehicle charging points.