

From:

Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 10:31 PM

To: Planning Consultation Christopher Cummings

Subject: Planning Application: Land to the North of Exeter. Stoke Hill. Ref. 23/1380/OUT

Dear Mr Cummings

Planning Application 23/1380/OUT

Land to the North of Exeter. Stoke Hill.

I wish to register my very strong OBJECTION to the above proposal. My objects are as follows:

The proposed development is in a prominent area of green space which Exeter Council has indicated should be preserved to protect the visual amenity of the skyline of the northern hills of the city. My partner and I are in the process of buying a property on Rolleston Crescent called Valley View that will be significantly impacted.

The road access to this site is narrow, steep, convoluted, and is not fit for the current levels of traffic using it. It cannot sustain any building traffic or subsequent domestic traffic or delivery vehicles to the new houses. There is a hairpin bend at the bottom close to Mincinglake bridge, and there are several accidents a year where vehicles leave the road and end up in the ditch or the stream. Water running off the hill pours down the road and pools at the old, single width bridge at the bottom. With climate change, the flooding here could make the road impassable for large parts of the year.

With the dreadful and deteriorating state of public transport in the city it is hard to imagine that Stagecoach would run a service up this single track road to the new development. The gradient makes cycle access impossible for all but the fittest and best equipped cyclists. This will mean in practice that the residents will use private cars.

Increased traffic on this road would mean increased danger for pedestrians and cyclists using the Green Circle (there is a crossing point at the narrow bridge) and for schoolchildren crossing to access both Stoke Hill Middle and First Schools.

Noise and disturbance from the building site will be alongside a green space important for wildlife.

If the houses were built, light pollution would be significant in what is currently a dark location and a mapped area of High Concern for Bird Assemblage.

According to the Devon and Cornwall Police Designing Out Crime advice, the proposed gateways, parking areas, and paths through the development should be wide, brightly lit, and should have no shrubs or trees planted alongside them. This will transform the dark hills into a floodlit concrete space.

It is already hard to see any but the brightest stars in the sky in north Exeter due to light pollution. Imagine children growing up and never seeing the stars!

Damage to Nature. The proposed development site adjoins an area mapped as Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland and Meadowland. The site acts as a wildlife corridor and provides a green lung for the residents of the city. Environmental Health states that there has been insufficient assessment in the application of impacts on air quality. The removal of trees from the site will impact on air quality in the area. I understand that clearance work has already been made at the South boundary of the site. I am concerned that there seems to be no Felling Licence in effect in this area. I note that Environmental Health states there should be no vegetation clearance undertaken by the applicant until a CEMP has been submitted and approved. I cannot find confirmation of this approval in the published documents.

Lockdown showed that in order to be healthy and happy, people need much more Nature Connectedness, not less. Development on greenfield sites results in less nature. We cannot keep building on green space. It's a model that is unsustainable and destroys the very thing that makes Exeter a desirable place to live.

We already have sewerage pollution in the stream running below the site. South West Water have tried without success to resolve this issue. With added runoff from the development, not to mention extra pressure on the overloaded waste drainage system, more contaminated flooding in the valley seems inevitable.

The Applicant proposes converting the agricultural building into a community facility and shop. There is already a Farm Shop on Wrefords Lane and a thriving Community Shop, Cafe, and meeting hub at Sylvania Stores. A shop on the hill will generate more road traffic when facilities already exist close by.

With Climate Change and Brexit, the UK is facing greater food insecurity. Large areas of local agricultural land is currently under water after all the recent rain. The proposed development is on agricultural land assessed at Grade 3 which is too useful to sacrifice. It is especially important as it is on a hill and therefore unlikely to be flooded itself even if the valley is wet. We should be doing everything we can to preserve agricultural land to secure our future food supply.

The applicant very recently erected a huge barn on the site to support the farming activities there. From the size of the building, it is clear that this land must be very productive and therefore should be protected at all costs.

Local Schools in the area are oversubscribed, Doctors' Surgeries are at capacity, there are no NHS Dentist places, and the local pharmacy closed leaving no other in walking distance. These circumstances exist even before the development at Exmouth Junction has been populated. There are no extra essential facilities to cater for the proposed houses.

The City currently has 4years 4months of housing stock with a requirement for only 4 years. There is no need for this housing. If it were to be built in this location, judging by former large family homes

on Stoke Hill, Monterey Gardens, Lebanon Close, Yew Tree Close and Lyncombe Close, it runs the risk of being snapped up by property investors and converted to student HMOs. These “households” eviscerate communities and contribute nothing in Council Tax.

It departs from the city's Development Plan. Policy LS1 states: “DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HARM THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE CITY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.”

There is no reason for any departure from that Plan at the current time. Exeter City Council have demonstrated that it currently has a 4+ year housing supply

I hope you will consider these points and decide that this site is totally unsuitable for development.
Regards

Alysa Freeman