

From: Plaut, Annette <>
Sent: 21 November 2021 14:19
To: Matthew Diamond <Matthew.Diamond@exeter.gov.uk>; Planning <Planning@exeter.gov.uk>
Cc: 'Annette Plaut' <>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 21/1291/OUT

Dear Matthew Diamond,

As I write below, please can you ensure that my 3 attached photos are uploaded to the ECC planning website alongside my objection below.

Many thanks,

Annette Plaut

From: planning@exeter.gov.uk [<mailto:planning@exeter.gov.uk>]
Sent: 21 November 2021 13:52
To:
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 21/1291/OUT

Comments for Planning Application 21/1291/OUT

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ms Annette Plaut,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 21/11/2021 1:52 PM from Ms Annette Plaut.

Application Summary

Address:	Land To The North Of Exeter Stoke Hill Exeter Devon
Proposal:	Outline Planning Application for a development of up to 150 residential dwellings, community hub, access and associated infrastructure.(All matters reserved except access).
Case Officer:	Matthew Diamond

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	Ms Annette Plaut
Email:	
Address:	5 St James Terrace, Exeter, Devon EX4 6QH

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: As a frequent walker in Mincinglake Valley Park I strongly object to this planning application. Mincinglake Valley Park is one of 6+ Valley Parks which provide much appreciated greenspace in the heart of Exeter. In the Leisure and Recreation section of Exeter's Local Plan, 7.11 describes them as "'countryside in the City'. They are, in both a literal and metaphorical sense, 'green lungs' within the urban setting. ... These areas therefore make a significant contribution to the quality of life of those who live and work in Exeter."

In 7.7 of the Local Plan it states that "The nature of informal recreation is such that the activity itself, and appreciation of the setting in which it takes place, cannot be separated. Visitors may enjoy attractive landscapes which do not have public access by viewing them from locations where public access is permitted ... The landscape quality of the whole of an informal recreation area can, therefore, be important to the quality of experience even though permitted physical access may only exist over part."

Unlike some of the other of the city's Valley Parks, Mincinglake has the advantage of not being "surrounded by residential and office development", thereby giving its visitors the highly agreeable impression of being in readily-accessible uncultivated countryside.

I note that in the applicants' Landscape Visual Impact Assessment there is a distinct lack of photographs from Mincinglake Valley Park itself. I have attached to the emailed version of this objection, in contrast, 3 photos that I have taken from within Mincinglake Valley Park - both from near Sylvania Community Hall and from the centre of Mincinglake Valley Park. From both these locations the skyline is dominated by the ugly sight of the relatively new barn already on the site subject of this application (21/1291/OUT), which was the subject of a previous planning application:

17/1940/AGF | Prior approval for agricultural building for storage of produce and machinery | Land Off Stoke Hill

From the objections to

21/0682/FUL | Change of use from agricultural building to farm shop with ancillary café, office, storage, and parking in association with Rixlade Farm. | Rixlade Farm Stoke Hill Exeter Devon EX4 9JN

which was 'Withdrawn by Applicant', I note that a number include comments such as "The current agricultural buildings have never been used as such but have ruined a part of the original skyline at the northern edge of the city." and "the building was not intended to be for agricultural use. It appears to have not been used for that purpose."

Not only is this monstrosity of a barn and its adjacent masts plainly visible from Mincinglake Valley Park, but as my photographs clearly show, so is the field within which this eyesore of a barn is located - this is precisely the land on which 21/1291/OUT proposes to build up to 150 residential dwellings.

In addition it is to be noted that the applicants' Landscape Visual Impact Assessment assumes that "Buildings will be 2 storey with the exception of the barn." However this does not correspond to what is actually being proposed: According to the Design and Access Statement "In the key location around the Community Hub (farm shop), - 2.5 storey typologies are proposed to pronounce the gateway to the site. The height of the existing barn is about 8.5 m (height to ridge). It sits within the heart of the created arrival space. The height of the enclosure around this principal space is designed at 2.5 storeys which enables the plotting of a higher density apartment typology."

Thus this proposed development will have a severely detrimental visual impact on visitors to Mincinglake Valley Park.

Please can I remind you that Exeter's adopted Core Strategy sets out an approach which steers development away from the hills that are strategically important to the setting of the city. The Local Plan sets out a sequential approach to development with greenfield sites being at the bottom of that hierarchy.

As can be seen from my photos attached to the emailed version of this objection, the proposed development will end up, alongside the pre-existing monstrosity of a barn, being set against the skyline and also isolated away from the built boundary. The application will thus cause huge harm to the landscape setting of the city and the character and distinctiveness of the hills to the north as a whole and the contiguous landscape.

Saved Policy LS1 states that development which would harm the landscape setting of the city will not be permitted, and proposals should maintain local distinctiveness and character. Policy CP16 states that the character and local distinctiveness of the hills to the north of the city will be protected. The Key Diagram in the Core Strategy defines Landscape Setting areas in the city and the site subject of this application is within the Landscape Setting area covering the hills to the north of the city. 11.1 of the Local Plan specifically highlights that "The hills to the north and west of the City, particularly the ridgelines, give Exeter a distinctive character."

Clearly what is being proposed in 21/1291/OUT does not adhere to either the Saved Policy LS1 nor Policy CP16 and will ruin the "distinctive character" of the hills to north of the City.

In addition NPPF 2021 states that planning policies... "should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes..."

With regard to the applicants' Transport Assessment the applicants imply that the site subject of this application would be easily accessible by foot or on bicycle. This is plainly ludicrous. As a cyclist myself, I would not contemplate cycling up Stoke Hill due to its extreme steepness, windiness and appalling sight lines. For most people cycling to the site subject of this application would, due to the steepness, thus only be possible using an e bike. In addition Stoke Hill road itself is extremely dangerous for cyclists as it is both a narrow road without pavement or marked cycle lane and is virtually only a single track road in parts.

3.37 of the applicants' Transport Assessment attempts to play down the dangerousness of Stoke Hill by describing previous recent incidents along the

lines of "slight accidents resulting in slight injuries". I am not sure what exactly is meant by a "slight accident", but I myself certainly would not wish to be involved in one, especially one that resulted in "slight injuries", which again go unclarified.

The development of up to 150 residential dwellings and a community hub / farm shop / restaurant, can only inevitably lead to far more vehicular traffic along this highly dangerous stretch of Stoke Hill road for which it is highly unsuited.

In apparent recognition of the unsuitability of Stoke Hill to cyclists and pedestrians, the applicants are therefore proposing to cut some new cycle/foot paths through the much cherished greenspace of Mincinglake Valley Park. One of the great attractions of Mincinglake Valley Park however, as mentioned already above, is that it is an highly-valued area of wildlife and countryside, comprising of unsurfaced paths commensurate with such a natural setting. The construction of new invasive surfaced and groomed cyclepaths and footpaths, with their concomitant constant flow of pedestrians and cyclists, would be highly destructive to the relaxing nature of this delightful place to stroll and enjoy the abundant wildlife with its mix of woodland and flower-rich meadows.

The site subject of this application is presently not served by any public transport. Table 3.1 of the applicants' Transport Assessment gives, in my opinion as someone who frequently takes walks up from Exeter city past Rixlade Farm, highly unrealistically short walk times to the nearest bus stops on Mincinglake Road and Collins Road. Not only would someone be taking their life in their own hands to venture to walk from the site subject of this application along Stoke Hill to these bus stops but to undertake such a walk safely along such a steep road in such short times would be nigh on impossible - for one thing the narrowness and windiness of the road necessitates a pedestrian to constantly pause to let vehicles pass without incident and in addition the sight lines are horrendous.

Further, once at the junction of Stoke Hill and Collins Road, the only pedestrian access to Mincinglake Road is via a very steep long flight of steps - i.e. it is totally inaccessible except to the very physically able - there is no wheelchair access between these two roads (and hence bus stops) except via the extremely dangerous Stoke Hill road itself.

Finally I would like to point out the deterioration of air quality caused by the vastly increased traffic flow along Stoke Hill due to both the new residents of this proposed development and due to visitors to the new community hub / farm shop / restaurant. This would be in addition to the noise and dust generated during the construction of the development itself which will be highly detrimental to the peace and relaxation afforded by informal recreation such as walking, cycling, riding, landscape and wildlife enjoyment and picnicking in Mincinglake Valley Park, which is its whole raison d'être.

Please do ensure that my photos, attached to the emailed version of this objection, are uploaded to the ECC planning website alongside my objection.

Kind regards

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