

Planning Officer's assessment of the Planning application for Glebe

From: Roberts, Darren
To: Shelley Jones
Subject: 08/22/0001/HYB Land at Cheddon Fitzpaine
Date: 08 June 2022 14:07:00

Dear Shelley

I have been considering this above proposal and write to inform you of my assessment. Please note, I am still yet to receive comments from all parties- I have chased on a landscape officer response and this will be available shortly, nonetheless I consider that I have sufficient information to inform my decision.

The site is situated outside of the development boundary and within the green wedge, as stated in Policy SP 2 of the adopted core strategy. The intention of this policy is to ensure that development is delivered in a planned manner in strategic sites such as Monkton Heathfield, Priorswood and Nerrols, and to protect and extent the corridors between these sites to allow a comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure locations.

A country park at Maidenbrook is identified within the Key Diagram for Taunton shown in the core strategy, and a 'green link' within the area between Monkton Heathfield and Nerrols.

The core strategy does not allocate an area for development within the green wedge.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the coalescence of settlements and maintain a sense of place and identity for neighbourhoods, protect valuable wildlife corridors and habitats, and protect areas of landscape importance and visual amenity.

The small village of Cheddon Fitzpaine is distinctly separate from Taunton and the planned urban extensions. The proposed housing developments are not in keeping in terms of scale and location with the existing settlement. In particular the Glebe Barns and Glebe Wood expansions will create a large, continuous built area within a designated green wedge and block the northsouth green corridor. Due to the location in the countryside, the nature of the road and footpath network, and the lack of local public transport and facilities, these areas of housing would create car-borne developments, contrary to sustainability policies and the need to emphasise health and wellbeing.

In addition, due to the relatively low elevation of the area, it is viewable from a number of receptors and will change the nature of views, including from the Quantock Hills, Cotlake Hill and the A38. It is likely that in order to prevent an urbanised outlook being viewed from these receptors, that considerable planting would be necessary, which would be at odds with the generally open character of this landscape.

There are concerns that the impact of the development on the local highway network would be severe and therefore contrary to the NPPF. Although the principle of the country park is supported, its proposed use would lead to an intensification of Maidenbrook Lane, and the amount of traffic generated, including educational visits by bus and coach, would not be able to be accommodated without severe impacts. In addition, the junction with the A3259 would require improvement in order to increase the numbers of traffic and would also be detrimental to highway safety.

Furthermore, as stated by Historic England, no information has been given in respect of the impact on the significance of a number of heritage assets and principal views from Hestercombe House and Garden.

Finally, there are concerns with the submitted habitat solution, as identified by Natural England. This includes the need for clarity in relation to the calculations and the proposal to utilise

meadow and grassland as mitigation. Without this information, any HRA undertaken by the Council would not support the application.

For these reasons I consider that the application is contrary to the following policies:

Core Strategy

SD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CP1 – Climate change

CP4 – Housing

CP6- Transport and Accessibility

CP8 – Environment

SP1 – Sustainable Development Locations

SP2- Realising the vision for Taunton

DM1- General Requirements

DM2- Development in the Countryside

Development Management Policies:

ENV3- Special Landscape Features

SB1 – Settlement Boundaries

In addition, policies within the NPPF, particularly where they relate to the principle of sustainable development, highway safety and heritage.

I am therefore unable to support this application and will be looking to refuse it. Given that this is not supported by the local parish council or ward members, this would be decided under delegated powers.

However, if you wish to withdraw this application please let me know. I will not issue the decision before 20th June.

Kind regards

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