

Reference Number: S.16/1587/OUT

Proposed Development Land At Holywell Farm, Wotton-Under-Edge, Gloucestershire

Application Type: Outline Planning Permission

Description: Residential development, including demolition of 89 Court Orchard for up to 25 dwellings (Outline application - all matters reserved)

please tick one only

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | NO<br>OBSERVATIONS  |   |   |
| 2 | OBJECT<br>(would not wish the application to be approved) | X | <p><b><u>Wotton-under-Edge Town Council objects to this application:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is not identified for development in the Stroud District 2015 Local Plan. This plan has already demonstrated a 5 year land supply in the district.</li> <li>• Site is outside the boundary of permitted development of Wotton</li> <li>• The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) only permits development in such greenfield sites if there would be no adverse effect on the landscape – this is not the case here since immense historic valley beauty of the southern Cotswolds would be destroyed forever.</li> <li>• Site is in the Cotswold AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) - thus of national significance</li> <li>• Site is highly visible from the Cotswold Way National Trail - one of the nationally significant walking routes across the UK – and due to its location near the bottom of a long valley, its beauty is highly visible from the surrounding escarpment and hills.</li> <li>• Proposal for access via Synwell Playing Fields is not an option since the fields belong to a national charity ‘Fields in Trust’ who have already stated in no uncertain terms that they cannot be sold. This option is therefore factually &amp; lawfully incorrect.</li> <li>• Proposal for access via Court Orchard is through a highly unsuitable residential area, designed as a cul-de-sac 50 years ago, with many parked cars, thus rendering the road width single track in most places. Not only would this make access difficult for any new residents, but the chaos and danger from the construction vehicles needed for such an undertaking is unimaginable.</li> <li>• Access onto the busy junction of Synwell Lane/ Potters Pond which has recently been compounded by development of almost 50 houses would render this bend/corner on a hill even more dangerous than it has recently become – the Town Council is currently in discussions with Gloucestershire Highways on possible methods to avoid accidents, as a result of the extra parked cars from the adjacent new development.</li> <li>• Previous applications on this site have been refused by Stroud District Council Planning Authority as unsuitable development.</li> <li>• The pressure on local services – which are already stretched – would be compounded.</li> <li>• Extra traffic flows would be unable to cope with this increased pressure. Wotton has very little employment and along with recently reduced and totally inadequate public transport, more cars and</li> </ul> |

commuting to workplaces further afield would be inevitable – thus exacerbating the regular traffic problems through the Town.

- If permission were granted for such a development on a green field in an AONB, this would set a terrible precedent for the ravaging of the Cotswold landscape and render as useless the Government planning policies designed to protect rural England from developer destruction.
- This site abuts an important wildlife corridor with many protected species – native white clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) to name just one. Moreover, the developer's two ecology reports seem to disagree with each other on whether the crayfish is even present!

*One can also assess the Town Council's response in terms of its relevance to Planning Legislation in the context of the 2015 Stroud District Local Plan as follows:*

CP1

This development is not in accordance with the Local Plan and it cannot be argued that the adverse impacts will outweigh the benefits (there are none for the residents of Wotton!). Residents of Court Orchard will be permanently affected. Their Cul-de-Sac will be turned into a through road which will add to noise, pollution and danger and some properties will be overlooked.

CP3

2<sup>nd</sup> tier settlements have "...the potential to provide for modest levels ....of homes...". Recent developments in Wotton (Potters Pond 46 homes, Water Lane, 24 homes and Stokes Bakery, 20 units, plus around 20 fill-ins) have already provided a modest level of development. In addition, the unplanned and unwanted significant developments in Kingswood and Charfield mean that the local area has had more than its fair share of modest development. Given that modest recent development has already taken place, this proposal is non-compliant with CP3.

CP4

It is difficult to see how this will integrate into the neighbourhood and reduce car dependency, bearing in mind there is no local employment, and most employment is to the South and West of the town, this development would increase traffic through the town. Any benefits secured by the new residents would be at the expense of those living in Court Orchard which will become a less safe street. Car domination will increase, as will the strain on existing services.

CP7

The developer has not demonstrated that this development will contribute to the long-term needs of this community. It does not. As evidenced in the recent Community Plan, residents are strongly against the provision of more private housing developments. The development will also put more strain on local services (Schools, Doctors, Sewerage).

CP8

This development does not satisfy local housing needs (we need more affordable/social housing, not expensive private housing developments (see Community Plan)). Nothing could be done to make it acceptable in townscape and local environment terms. There is no local employment and it will exacerbate existing traffic problems.

CP15

Developments outside of defined settlement limits will not be permitted. None of the exceptions listed in policy CP15 are met for this development.

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|   |  | <p><u>ES7, NPPF Paras 109, 115 and 116</u><br/> Priority should be given to protecting and enhancing the AONB, not destroying it. This development is not sympathetic to and will not complement the landscape character. The policies state that planning permission should be refused except in exceptional circumstances in the public interest. There is no public interest consideration in this application which will result in the loss of an attractive meadow and will be highly visible on the hillside above the Cotswold Way.</p> <p><u>HC1</u><br/> This proposed development is outside defined settlement limits. It is incompatible with the character, appearance and amenity of this part of the community. It would be an intrusion into the countryside and it would cause loss of an open space which is of importance to the character of the settlement. It would damage one of the gateways into the town. It would create a precedent for further development along the valley and result in the loss of a locally valued habitat which supports wildlife.</p> <p><u>NPPF Para 14</u><br/> The Local Plan has assessed local needs and does not require any significant development in Wotton. The proposals will have an impact on landscape, traffic and local residents. Recent developments in Wotton have already satisfied Wotton's notional share of the District's windfall requirements.</p> <p><u>NPPF Para 32 and 34</u><br/> It is not accepted that Court Orchard will provide a safe and suitable access to the site. It was designed as a cul-de-sac. It is a narrow estate road with poor access onto the main road. The increased traffic will present a danger to residents. In terms of access to employment, the need to travel will not be minimised and no satisfactory sustainable transport modes are available in Wotton.</p> <p><u>NPPF Para 47</u><br/> The LPA believes it has sufficient land supply. This development is not needed.</p> <p><u>NPPF Para 100 and 103</u><br/> Despite the assurances given, concerns remains that this development could increase flood risk due to increased run-off into the stream, putting downstream communities at risk. Inappropriate development such as this should be avoided.</p> <p><i>Approximately 100 residents attended the Town Council planning meeting, where the application was discussed in detail, and were able to state views and ask the developer, who attended, many questions.</i></p> |
| 3 | SUPPORT  |   |
| 4 | Do not object or support but wish to make comments |   |

Date 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Signature *S Bailey*

on behalf of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council

If this is insufficient space, please use reverse or additional sheets of paper but **please tick one box above** to ensure your return is processed efficiently.