



19/01204/OUT Land To The North of Old Hill, Bickington



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1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The application has been called to the Planning Committee by Councillor Cox and Councillor Nutley because they consider this small development will allow members of families' living in Bickington to stay within the village and allow those that have had to move away due to lack of housing being able to return to the village.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Refusal for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would constitute the provision of open market housing within the open countryside which is contrary to Policy S22. Whilst an element of affordable housing is proposed, the application is not accompanied by a viability assessment which evidences the requirement for the open market housing to cross subsidise the delivery of affordable homes on a rural exception site. The application is therefore contrary to Policies S21, S22 and WE5 of the Teignbridge Local Plan.
2. Insufficient information has been supplied to demonstrate that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on protected species contrary to policies EN8 (Biodiversity, Protection and Enhancement) and EN10 (European Wildlife Sites) of the Teignbridge Local Plan.

3. DESCRIPTION

The Application Site

- 3.1 The site relates to a plot of land within the middle of the two settlement boundaries for the village. For clarification, the site therefore falls within the open countryside as defined by the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033.
- 3.2 The site is part of a much larger field, but it should be noted that the application site only relates to a small part of the field which lies adjacent to the property of Springfield. This property is divided from the site by a hedgerow which forms the eastern boundary. The western boundary constitutes the remainder of the field with further residential properties lying beyond.
- 3.3 The application is made in outline, with all matters reserved. Access however is most likely achievable from the 'Old Hill' access road to the south, as shown on the Illustrative Site Layout.

The Application

- 3.4 The application is for the construction of 9 nine dwellings – 5 market and four affordable. The proposal is made in outline with all matters reserved except for access.

Planning History

- 3.5 This application is the same that was refused last year under delegated powers under planning reference 18/00591/OUT for the following reason:

“The proposed development would constitute the provision of open market housing within the open countryside which is contrary to Policy S22. Whilst an element of affordable housing is proposed, the application is not accompanied by a viability assessment which evidences the requirement for the open market housing to cross subsidise the delivery of affordable homes on a rural exception site. The application is therefore contrary to Policies S21, S22 and WE5 of the Teignbridge Local Plan”.

Key Considerations

3.6 The application seeks outline planning permission for the residential development of land at Old Hill, Bickington.

The key considerations in the determination of the application include:

- Principle of the development
- Impact upon setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Impact upon the character and visual amenity of the area/open countryside
- Impact on residential amenity of surrounding properties
- Impact on ecology/biodiversity
- Land drainage/flood risk
- Highway safety

Principle of the development

3.7 The application site lies outside of the settlement limit of Bickington and is therefore, for planning policy purposes, within open countryside where Policy S22 (Countryside) of the Local Plan would apply. Policy S22 states that, in open countryside, development will be strictly managed and limited to uses which are necessary to meet the overall aim, in this case affordable housing for local needs. The policy does not make the provision for market housing.

3.8 The applicant has stated that given that the site lies between built up parts of Bickington which fall within the village envelope that the full force of policy S22 should not apply, and that at the same time the permissive aspects of S21 should be applied.

3.9 In respect to Bickington being a village, Policy S21 sets out the policy criteria in respect to this and outlines that defined villages will be appropriate locations for limited development which meets their social and economic needs, and protects their rural character. *Emphasis is therefore on the provision of affordable housing, employment and small scale development brought through the Neighbourhood Planning Process.*

3.10 However, for planning policy purposes, the site lies outside of the settlement boundary, and the Plan is explicit that in such areas these are considered to be open countryside. Policy S22 is therefore the applicable policy, which amongst its criteria limits residential uses to affordable housing for local needs.

3.11 Policy WE5 (Rural Exceptions) of the Local Plan is permissive of housing in the countryside, however, these sites must provide 100% affordable housing. The policy states:

The development of a site for 100% affordable housing will be permitted where:

1. There is a proven need for affordable housing from households who have a strong connection with the parish or adjoining parish;
2. The site adjoins a settlement and does not have a disproportionate impact on local environmental or historical assets;
3. The type of affordable housing and the scale of provision are limited to meeting the proven local need;
4. A planning obligation is enforced ensuring the affordable dwellings are retained as affordable in perpetuity;
5. The price paid by the registered provider is limited;
6. Where there is a proven need according to (1) but no available public grant to fund the affordable dwellings, the incorporation of open market housing on the site may be permitted, at the minimum amount required to fund the affordable housing provision if in accordance with the parish/neighbourhood plan (if any);
7. It can be demonstrated the proposals are in a location or of a type that will not affect the integrity of a European site.

3.12 In accordance with criteria (1), the Council's Housing Enabling Officer has provided comments and undertaken some initial research to suggest there is a need for 4 affordable homes however more evidence in this respect is required as set out below. The site also adjoins a settlement and is not considered to have a disproportionate impact on local environmental or historical assets. However, when it comes to criteria (3) and (6) and (7) the application falls far short of the Policy requirements.

3.13 The application proposes residential development of the site, with only 44% of the dwellings proposed as affordable. Despite a request to the applicant to provide viability evidence as to why the market units are required, no viability evidence has been submitted. The application is therefore clearly not compliant with policy.

3.14 The applicant has drawn attention to other developments that have not been required to submit a viability assessment that they consider to be comparable to this application:

Application **17/00618 Outline (Western House)** - erection of 32 dwellings including incidental open space, landscaping and an area of strategic green infrastructure (all matters reserved for future consideration).

Comment: The section 106 agreement states that 20 % of the dwellings are to be affordable dwellings. This proposal was on an allocated site within the Local Plan where it is specified the requirement is 20%.

Application **12/00301/MAJ (Hele Park)** Demolition of existing club buildings and development of a mixed use scheme comprising up to 650 dwellings (Use Class C3), local centre (Use Classes A1/B1/D1/D2), employment use (Use Class B1), public open space, landscaping and highways access onto the A383 - (Approval sought for means of access).

Comment: This was approved on an emerging allocation at a time when the Council could not demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. Teignbridge's Adopted Supplementary Planning Document at the time required 25% Affordable housing. The section 106 agreement provides for 25% affordable housing and would have provided significant infrastructure.

- 3.15 These other proposals were therefore policy compliant. It is where development does not accord with the required amount of affordable housing as set out in Policy that a viability assessment is required, to demonstrate that the amount of market housing to be provided would be at the minimum amount required to facilitate the development. This applies to all sites with varying policy requirements for affordable housing but in this instance as a site in the countryside, the policy starting point is 100% affordable housing. The developer needs to demonstrate that the site is subject to significant costs which are exceptional to the site and reduce the viability, and has therefore been requested to supply a viability assessment, however none has been supplied.
- 3.17 The National Planning Policy Guidance states that “*Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that fully comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. Policy compliant in decision making means that the development fully complies with up to date plan policies*”. In this case the amount of affordable housing provided is not policy compliant
- 3.18 The need for affordable housing is found throughout the District and it is fully accepted that the proposal does offer 4 affordable dwellings which add to the affordable housing stock.
- 3.19 However, this scheme is considered to be a market housing led development. It is considered that, if this development were to be allowed with the lack of any evidence as to why it cannot conform to Local Plan Policy, it would make any site that comes forward which does not demonstrate policy compliance acceptable, and effectively policy WE5 would be rendered ineffective. It is acknowledge that the NPPG states that people living in rural areas can face particular challenges in terms of housing supply and affordability. However without any evidence that the proposal would not be able to provide more affordable housing, it is not considered that given the evidence that the application could be supported.
- 3.20 The NPPG states that the nature of rural housing needs can be reflected in the spatial strategy set out in relevant policies, including in the housing requirement figures for any designated rural areas. A wide range of settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas, so blanket policies restricting housing development in some types of settlement will need to be supported by robust evidence of their appropriateness. A neighbourhood plan can allocate additional sites to those identified in an adopted plan so long as the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions. Local planning authorities can support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites by working proactively with landowners and potential delivery partners such as parish councils and community land trusts. The Local Plan Review process may provide an alternative avenue to the applicant but at this time, there is no policy support for the proposal.

Neighbourhood Development Orders

3.21 In late 2017/early 2018 Enablers worked with the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Officer to explore options for delivering a wider mix of tenures 3 on this site. An options paper setting out how this could be achieved through a NDO was presented to the Parish Council and the community consulted on this option on Sat 03 Feb 2018. This would have enabled a site to have been 'allocated' and a masterplan for the site drawn up in consultation with the community to ensure a sustainable development. This option was not supported. NDOs are drawn up in consultation with the community and subject to a local referendum which means that, in enablers' view, this is the most viable and democratic route for the community to achieve its objective.

History of Community Engagement in Bickington

3.22 In 2016 TDC Housing Enabling team worked with the neighbouring parishes of Ilsington and Bickington to look at housing need and identify possible exception sites for affordable led housing projects. At that time the need for rented affordable housing in Bickington was low and the focus was on a small scale, affordable custom and self-build project that could meet needs in both Bickington and Liverton (located in the Parish of Ilsington) as there was an active self-build group in Liverton. In Bickington this process identified the land west of Springfield, Old Hill, Bickington as a possible exception site. This was followed by extensive community consultation on affordable housing provision and views on the potential exception site. 2 events were held in July 2017 and a further event on 03 February 2018.

Housing Need

3.21 A Housing Needs Survey Report for Bickington was published in May 2014. As this is now more than 5 years old a new survey would be required. Since the previous application 18/00591/OUT was submitted the need for affordable, rented housing in Bickington has risen from 1 to 3 on Devon Home Choice. In June 2019 the Devon Home Choice Register showed a need for a 1@1Bed, 1@2Bed and 1 @ 3Bed.

3.22 This means there is a relatively low level of need for rented affordable homes but a need does exist. This need may increase should a scheme come forward as people often do not register when they believe there is no realistic prospectus of being housed. Experience in other rural communities show that if community drop-in and consultations are held registration of need can increase. The need for low cost home ownership or entry level home ownership is unknown. However it is known from wider research there is a district wide need for low cost home ownership – although this is not considered an appropriate location to meet this wider need.

Affordability and Low Cost Home Ownership Need

3.23 Affordability research carried out by Teignbridge Enablers in 2018 and reported to TDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 19 shows that when comparing local housing costs to local average incomes, there are affordability problems for most housing tenures in Teignbridge, because of the differential between low wage levels and housing costs.

3.29 The National Planning Policy Framework states that "In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should

support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.” A Rural Exception Site is defined in the glossary of the NPPF as small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity that would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding. This approach is entirely consistent with our Policy.

3.30 As specified within the Housing Officers response grant funding is available. There would not therefore appear to be any material reason why market housing would need to be provided on this site.

3.31 The applicant has drawn attention to entry level exception sites and that these allow for market housing. However it should be noted that the NPPF still requires Entry Level Sites to consist of 100% affordable homes albeit they allow for a greater proportion of low cost home ownership tenures such as shared ownership or discounted open market housing. The National Planning Policy Framework states that:

*71. Local planning authorities should support the development of entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home), **unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority’s area**. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:*

*a) comprise of entry-level homes **that offer one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework**; and*

b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them³³, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework³⁴, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

3.32 Annex 2 of the NPPF says that affordable housing would fall within affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing or other affordable routes to home ownership.

3.38 The applicant has drawn attention to the strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) from 2009 and that this found the site to be suitable achievable and available. However it is made clear within the assessment, that “the inclusion of a site in the SHLAA does not guarantee allocation in the Teignbridge Local Plan or indicate that planning permission will be granted for development”. Many sites are considered during the SHLAA process, but only the most favourable sites are allocated for development, based on sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment.

3.39 It is accepted that the NPPF states that *To support the Government’s objective of significantly boost the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed [and] that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are Addressed, and small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area”.*

- 3.40 However, the NPPF must be read as a whole, and it is considered that there is no evidence that a higher proportion of affordable housing could not be provided, entry level housing sites are 100% affordable sites, the Council can demonstrate a 5 year housing supply and therefore the policies within the Plan carry full weight. The site is outside the settlement boundary of Bickington where Local Plan Policies within the countryside apply, that this site is clearly distinguishable from the applications that have been cited by the applicant, this application is contrary to both National and Local Plan Policies and is therefore unacceptable in this regard.
- 3.41 It is not therefore considered that as it stands and with the lack of viability evidence that the application accords with both National and Local Plan Policies.

Highway safety

- 3.42 The application is an outline application with all matters reserved except for access. The Highways Officer responded under the previous application (18/00591/OUT). Their response advises that although there are no footways or street lighting that there would not be any objection for an access from this point. Whilst the concerns regarding the speed and narrowness of the surrounding lanes are noted, it is not considered reasonable to raise an objection in this regard.

Impact upon setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

- 3.43 The site is not located within a Conservation Area; however there is a listed building located approximately 130m to the west of the site. Given the sloping topography of the area, this listed building cannot be seen from the site, and any development could include screening which would further screen the application site from view.

This is also the situation for the listed building to the north of the site, which again, cannot be seen from the site.

Impact upon the character and visual amenity of the area/open countryside

- 3.44 The application site does not fall within any particular landscape designation, and is fairly flat in terms of topography. The proposed residential development of the site would not move away from the general character of the area, provided that the layout and material palette reflected the local context of the village. Reserved matters would also look at landscaping, and ensure that a suitable scheme was delivered which helped screen the development where necessary, as well as enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on residential amenity of surrounding properties

- 3.46 The nearest properties to the site include the property of 'Springfield' located immediately adjacent to the eastern border, a number of properties also lie to the west of the site as well as to the north.
- 3.47 A development of 4 affordable homes which front on to Old Hill Road, would follow the existing building line and would not be considered to cause an impact on these properties subject to window placement and boundary treatment. However, in this instance, any reserved matters application (were the development proposed

considered to be acceptable), would need to consider layout and orientation to ensure that the amenity of existing and future occupiers was acceptable and protected.

Impact on ecology/biodiversity

3.48 The site falls within the following Council designated areas:

- Cirl bunting winter zone;
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Bat corridor

3.49 Policy EN8 (Biodiversity and Enhancement) of the Local Plan states that the Council will work to protect, enhance and restore the biodiversity of the area and EN11 that development which would be likely to directly or indirectly harm such a species will not be permitted unless certain criteria are met, including sufficient up to date information being available to base a decision, and the public benefits of the development outweighing the harm.

3.50 It is acknowledged that a consultation with the Biodiversity Officer was not carried out previously on this site. However, given the environmental designations, and new guidance, the Officer has been consulted and commented that:

3.51 The site falls within a junction of 2 x Strategic Flyways from Natural England's planning guidance for the South Hams SAC 2010. The 2010 guidance is in the process of being superseded; under the imminent new guidance, the site would fall within the Landscape Connectivity Zone: the scale of development is just below the threshold for 'MAJOR' development, would not be anticipated to cause landscape scale impacts, and would not be located in or cause a pinch point. In relation to SAC bats, Likely Significant Impacts on the Landscape Connectivity Zone may be screened out.

3.52 There are currently no follow-up targeted species surveys. These are required to show no adverse impacts on protected species and avoidance of net loss of biodiversity. The following information is needed:

1. Bat survey for non-SAC bats, in accordance with BCT Good Practice guidelines. For this site the survey effort might be anticipated to be that for moderate habitat suitability (for which survey comprises a number of walked transects and use of static detectors)
2. Habitat suitable for reptiles is identified (tussocky grassland on most or all of the site). There ought then to be standard reptile surveys carried out to ascertain population level, and in due course a translocation programme to remove animals from the development site. Details are also needed on enhancements that will be carried out to off site recipient land (which may be blue line land in this case) to accommodate the displaced population
3. A means of assessing biodiversity net loss and gain. For this, one of the biodiversity offsetting calculators might be used
4. When biodiversity loss and gain has been suitably calculated, further details on the types of mitigation and landscaping enhancement measures which would be carried out, and long term management schemes (such as through a Landscape Ecological Management Plan LEMP), to give adequate certainty that net biodiversity

loss would be avoided and net gain achieved. There may be scope to deliver mitigation and enhancements on off-site (blue line) land

In addition to these 4 points, please note:

- Hedges: please verify with Highways as to whether there would be visibility splay requirements for the access point, necessitating additional hedge loss and height restriction. At present there appears to be a net loss (8m of hedge loss for 4m replacement), and a breach to hedge connectivity
- Dormice are widespread in Devon and presence of breeding or resting places could not be ruled out in this location. Direct hedge removal extent may be of small scale (depending on if visibility splays are needed), though there would be disturbance aspects to be accounted for from development being brought adjacent to hedges. Once visibility splay requirements are confirmed, please let me know so I may advise further regarding dormice
- Noting that the application is Outline for access only at the current time, it must be recognised that for any future layout, scale and landscaping, retained hedges must not form domestic curtilage boundaries but instead there must be a sufficient stand off zone / buffer between retained hedges and development. The width of this buffer may partly depend on levels of light spill; in due course it may be necessary for a lighting modelling assessment to be carried out. For light averse bats, a guideline used at other sites has been that there is no light spill exceeding 0.5 Lux at a distance of 5m from the face of bat commuting features (such as hedges)

3.53 Without this information the Council Biodiversity Officer has advised that it would not be possible fully to assess impacts on biodiversity, protected species or any “species licensing requirements” as we are required to do at this stage.

3.54 The applicant has been advised of these concerns, however no further information in this regard has been provided. The Council has a duty to protect and conserve European Wildlife Sites and species. It is therefore considered that sufficient up to date information is not available on which to base a decision. The proposal would conflict with policies EN8 and EN11 of the Local Plan which seeks to protect, enhance and restore biodiversity of the area, and is unacceptable in this regard.

Drainage

3.55 Concerns have been raised relating to the drainage of the site. The drainage officer has raised concerns regarding how surface water would be addressed and the adoption and maintenance of the proposed surface water drainage management system in order to demonstrate that all components will remain fully operational throughout the lifetime of the development. It is considered that in the event the application is approved that matters of drainage can be dealt with by way of an appropriately pre-commencement condition if the development were to be found acceptable.

Climate change

3.56 Policy S7 (Carbon Emission Targets) seeks to reduce carbon emissions per person arising within Teignbridge of about 42% from 2009 levels by 2030. The strategy in the Local Plan seeks to direct development to the most sustainable locations where there are existing facilities. This is part of the reason why restrictions are placed on open market housing in the countryside as this is likely to generate high levels of trips by private car. Whilst not a major development and therefore not required to

submit a Carbon Reduction Statement, there is nothing within the submission identifying how the proposal would seek to minimize its carbon footprint.

Minerals impact

3.57 The site lies within a Mineral Consultation Area defined to protect an important limestone deposit. In commenting on applications, the DSF considers whether the proposals are consistent with Policy M2 of the Devon Minerals Plan, which seeks to prevent mineral resources from being sterilised by incompatible surface development. In this case there is already more sensitive development closer to the deposit than the proposal would be and therefore it would not cause additional sterilisation than has already occurred. No objections are therefore raised.

DCC Education

3.58 The DCC County Education Officer has requested money towards education provision. However this would be covered by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regime.

Other Matters

3.59 Concerns have been raised due to impact on property values, but this is not considered to be a planning matter.

4. POLICY DOCUMENTS

Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033

STRATEGY POLICIES

S1A Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

S1 Sustainable Development Criteria

S2 Quality Development

S4 Land for New Homes

S5 Infrastructure

S6 Resilience

STRATEGY PLACES

S21 Villages

S22 Countryside

WELLBEING - HOUSING

WE5 Rural Exceptions

QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

EN2A Landscape Protection and Enhancement

EN3 Carbon Reduction Plans

EN5 Heritage Assets

EN8 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement

EN11 Legally Protected and Priority Species

EN12 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

5. **CONSULTEES**

Full comments are available online and are also reported above in the body of the report

Spatial Planning

... The emphasis of this proposal on market housing means that it does not therefore satisfy the requirements of S21.

... The proposal does not therefore satisfy the requirements of S21A.

... The proposal does not therefore satisfy the requirements of S22.

... The proposal does not therefore satisfy the requirements of WE5.

Conclusion

Based on the above there is an objection from the Spatial Planning and Delivery Team on the basis that the proposal does not conform with the policies of the Local Plan. If the applicant wishes to progress the site for development then we would recommend that the application is pursued as either a rural exception site with a significantly higher proportion of affordable housing than is currently being offered or through a neighbourhood plan for the parish of Bickington.

Housing Services

Housing Enabling comments:

Conclusions

1. The planning status of this application in terms of exception site is unclear.
2. The application does not meet exception site policy WE5 requirements and such enablers would object to the proposal.
3. If the site is being promoted an Entry Level Exception site the principal of this outline application is also contrary to the adopted development plan and not in line with national policy. This is a further reason for a holding objection to this application subject to further discussions with the applicant on affordable tenures.
4. Whatever the planning route taken Enablers would strongly suggest further engagement with the community to ensure support for the design detail, affordable tenure mix and provision for need other than just Bickington and surrounding parishes.

Drainage

...

The applicant must therefore submit a surface water drainage management plan which demonstrates how surface water from the development will be disposed of in a manner that does not increase flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems. The applicant is therefore advised to refer to Devon County Council's Sustainable Drainage Design Guidance, which can be found at the following address:
<https://new.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/land-drainage-consent/>

In accordance with the hierarchy of drainage solutions, infiltration must first be explored as a means of surface water drainage management. Discharging the surface water runoff from this site to a sewer or watercourse will only be permitted once the applicant has submitted evidence which adequately demonstrates that infiltration is not a viable means of surface water management on this site (e.g. results of percolation testing conducted in accordance with BRE Digest 365 Soakaway Design (2016)).

If the above tests demonstrate that infiltration is not viable, the applicant will be required to submit details of an attenuation-based surface water drainage management system, with an off-site discharge point. This system must attenuate all of the surface water runoff generated up to, and including, the 1 in 100 year (+40% allowance for climate change) rainfall event, before discharging it off-site at rates and volumes equal to the site's greenfield performance.

Any surface water runoff discharged to the sewer system must first be attenuated to the 1 in 100 year (+40% allowance for climate change) rainfall event and flows from such systems should be limited to a discharge no greater than the site's greenfield runoff rate.

Written confirmation must then be obtained by the applicant from South West Water Ltd. to confirm that this method of surface water disposal is acceptable.

The applicant must submit details of the exceedance pathways and overland flow routes across the site in the event of rainfall in excess of the design standard of the surface water drainage management system.

The applicant must submit information regarding the adoption and maintenance of the proposed surface water drainage management system in order to demonstrate that all components will remain fully operational throughout the lifetime of the development.

Biodiversity

SUMMARY

More information required

Non-allocated countryside outside built settlement

The site is outside built settlement from the TDC Local Plan; developments in countryside are subject to Policy S22 under which there must be no net biodiversity loss and a biodiversity gain should be sought. There would be loss of 0.26ha of grassland, hedgerow loss, and also a level of disturbance impacts to field boundary hedges, where built development is brought immediately adjacent.

South Hams SAC

The site falls within a junction of 2 x Strategic Flyways from Natural England's planning guidance for the South Hams SAC 2010. The 2010 guidance is in the process of being superseded; under the imminent new guidance, the site would fall within the Landscape Connectivity Zone: the scale of development is just below the threshold for 'MAJOR' development, would not be anticipated to cause landscape scale impacts, and would not be located in or cause a pinch point. In relation to

SAC bats, Likely Significant Impacts on the Landscape Connectivity Zone may be screened out.

Follow up ecological surveys and assessments

There are currently no follow-up targeted species surveys. These are required to show no adverse impacts on protected species and avoidance of net loss of biodiversity. ...

When the further information is available, please let me know so I may advise further.

Without this information I believe it would not be possible fully to assess impacts on biodiversity, protected species or any species licensing requirements, so that in the meantime there would be a **holding objection** due to conflict with Policies EN8 and EN11, and some doubt that current information would meet the terms of Policies EN9, EN12 and S22.

Devon County Education

Regarding the above planning application, Devon County Council has identified that the proposed increase of 9 family type dwellings would generate an additional 2.25 primary pupils and 1.35 secondary pupils which would have a direct impact on Blackpool Primary school and South Dartmoor College.....

It is anticipated that any education infrastructure contributions would be provided for through CIL.

South West Water

Provides comments regarding drainage, asset protection and capacity for SWW drains to accommodate discharge

Devon Stone Federation

I am writing as Secretary of the Devon Stone Federation, which is the trade association representing aggregate minerals operators in Devon. The site lies within a Mineral Consultation Area defined to protect an important limestone deposit. In commenting on applications, the DSF considers whether the proposals are consistent with Policy M2 of the Devon Minerals Plan, which seeks to prevent mineral resources from being sterilised by incompatible surface development. In this case there is already more sensitive development closer to the deposit than the proposal would be and therefore it would not cause additional sterilisation than has already occurred. The DSF does not wish to raise an objection to the proposal.

Natural England

Natural England has **no comments** to make on this application.

Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published [Standing Advice](#) which you can use to assess impacts on protected species or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

34 letters of representation have been received raising issues of:

- Support as would improve the quality and choice of homes in this declining village
- New homes will re-invigorate Bickington
- Young people are forced to leave, this can be reversed with sympathetic development
- Bickington lacks critical mass which has led to the closure of the pub, post office and a garage. It needs more people and a balance between medium and affordable properties.
- Would be compliant with policy S21 of the Teignbridge Plan.
- Will enhance social and economic needs of the village
- Benefits outweigh policy S22
- Would complement the existing housing stock
- Will provide affordable homes
- Village needs to expand
- Site is served with water and sewerage
- The topside site has been tastefully developed
- Transport links are excellent
- School access is good
- Access has visibility
- Would keep the village vibrant
- Enable those to return to the village
- Will give employment to a developer
- Good access to A38
- Good mix of housing
- Will only be a small increase in traffic
- Small developments should be encouraged
- Sensible infill development
- Within the boundaries of the village and village envelope
- Supported by the NPPF as small housing sites can make a contribution to meeting housing requirements
- Supports entry level housing sites
- Not a sustainable location
- Lies outside the settlement boundary
- Would not uphold the key objectives of the Local Plan
- At a time of climate change we must protect the open country trees and environment
- The percentage of affordable housing is less than half of the houses planned
- Whilst it may be argued by the applicant that some open market is required to support the economic development of the affordable housing, this ratio is far greater than which is necessary
- Any development must be aimed both affordable and aimed at providing homes none of the market houses are protected means the development is failing on all fronts
- The land is outside the settlement boundary and contrary to policy
- Was included in the review of boundaries by Teignbridge DC for good reason
- Teignbridge has a 5 year land supply and no additional properties are required

- Area known to be flight foraging area for Greater Horseshoe Bats. Not addressed by applicant
- The village has no shop, post office, pub or anything, the pub which was the toby jug is derelict and is a eye sore and this should be addressed before considering more houses
- Old Hill is a small lane with no street lighting or pavements, the proposed access therefore would create numerous problems for existing residents
- There is a lack of parking on Old Hill at the moment and further properties would create even more need for on road parking
- The access from Bickington onto the A383 (a road which has seen many road traffic accidents in recent years) is difficult at the best of times and increased traffic will be a danger to all road users.
- Value of our property would be affected
- Will lead to erosion of character
- 9 homes will not revitalize the village
- More suitable locations for development
- Hard to see any genuine need
- Previous application turned down
- Concerns regarding drainage
- Nowhere for children to play
- If turns into phases 2 and 3 have serious concerns regarding flooding
- Bickington has no amenities whatsoever, no shop, post office, play park or similar and this is unlikely to change. There are thousands of houses being built in Newton Abbot
- The affordable new housing in Newton Abbot has many amenities, a cycle path to town, direct bus routes to Newton Abbot, Exeter and Plymouth via Ashburton. Whilst we accept that affordable housing is necessary for the younger generation
- Lanes have bottlenecks and will create a rat-run
- There is ample affordable housing being provided.
- Affordable housing is not needed in Bickington
- Would be better for people to be close to shops, schools and medical facilities
- Would cause noise, traffic and disruption
- Housing packed into a tight plot

7. PARISH COUNCIL'S COMMENTS

At the meeting of Bickington Parish Council on 5th August 2019 it was resolved that I write to you to advise the following

The Council RESOLVED that it **SUPPORTS** the above application

However, the Parish Councils wishes to highlight the concerns raised in the Public Forum at the meeting when this application was discussed

- Some members of the Public confirmed that a small controlled amount of development would be welcomed in Bickington - whilst others considered the status quo was preferable

- A long term resident commented that this would give the Village a real boost - as no development had taken place over the last 50 years

Various areas of concern were voiced

- Worries that this would be the start of widespread expansion of housing
- Concerns that the existing sewerage system might not be able to cope
- That the access for the scheme should be from the Old A38 rather than Old Hill
- That any development might lead to the implementation of street lighting
- That there was no need for additional housing
- That the Outline scheme appeared to incorporate open ended roads – potentially indicating future planned expansion

8. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- This is an outline application. CIL liability will be calculated when the reserved matters application is submitted.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Due to its scale, nature and location this development will not have significant effects on the environment and therefore is not considered to be EIA Development.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, and in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 of the Act itself. This Act gives further effect to the rights included in the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance.

Business Manager – Strategic Place