



6th September 2018

Mr. M. Dickins
Planning Policy Team
East Devon District Council
Knowle
Sidmouth
EX10 8HL

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL ECONOMY			
- 5 SEP 2018			
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Dear Mr Dickins

Ref: Baxter's Farm, Musbury

I am sure all the village much appreciated the recent public discussion about Baxter's Farm and to have the opportunity to ask questions.

The elephant in the room, although may have been a deliberate distraction to the main purpose of the meeting, appeared to be the possibility of allowing pitches for travellers. Although personally I do not have a problem with this community of people, I do nevertheless feel that an area within Baxter's farm would not be suitable. The main reason being that this proposed development is right at the entrance to the village and there is no obvious screening, which was talked about as being a requirement. To me the obvious place which is publically owned land by the Council is for traveller pitches to be located in the car parking area of The Knowle when it becomes disused. In that location there are already mature trees for screening and all the other facilities that are required for travellers, such as electricity, water, drainage and of course schooling, as well as a good variety of shops.

As regards to a housing development within the Baxter's Farm area, the village people have been aware that this is likely to happen sometime in the future and I do not see personally any objection. However, various points need to be considered by any developer:

1. The village hall is used by the community most days, including weekends and there are occasions when quite a lot of noise comes from the hall from dances, bands and some sports and at the moment this does not offend anyone. It would not be acceptable to the village people for any new resident to complain about unacceptable noise levels because their house is too close to the hall.
2. Likewise, the farm opposite starts work early in the morning, sometimes around 5.30am, and quite a lot of noise comes from that area from tractors and indeed cows.

3. There is talk in your document that the 'Street' is in a flood zone. In my 40 plus years of having lived in the village I have never seen any flooding in the Street, unless it has been due to blocked drains. However, considering that point of a flood zone, I am not sure how building can take place at a lower level as proposed in your development brief, which must also be in a flood zone. Does this mean that the houses have to be elevated from the existing ground level by one or two meters, i.e. similar to the Tesco housing development in Seaton?

Assuming the flood zone area is a red herring and that development will proceed, I am extremely passionate that the architecture of the properties is innovative and imaginative in design and that the houses are not just semi-detached soleless blocks, all exactly the same. You only need to look around villages where older properties have been constructed and then extra houses built in between; they are usually of a completely different design, roof lines not the same, windows different shapes, and likewise with the doors. Village houses should also have chimneys, regardless of whether there are fireplaces. Also, in my opinion it is important that there is sufficient space for a cottage style garden and ideally a vegetable patch. I personally will object strongly to any poor designs. It does not actually cost much more to have something that looks beautiful and in keeping with the entrance to the village, where passers-by will hopefully admire what has been created.

Please remember the essential car parking requirements, at least two cars per house and extra space for visiting people with cars.

As regards to a community orchard, this could be an excellent idea but the developer should include a small property to house an apple press where the community can gather together to extract the juice. However, I would wonder whether the planners have considered that trying to grow new apple trees in an old orchard can be very difficult due to dormant disease within the ground. Usually this is not a successful, long term exercise and professional advice would be required to check its viability.

With thanks for your consideration

Yours sincerely

