

2014 Local Plan Review – Yeoford

Due to the poor communication regarding the current MDDC Plan Review & limited time since the vast majority of villagers became aware of the proposed development of land at Hill Barton Yeoford, we have only had time to compile our initial objections and we reserve the right to add to or amend these at a later date. In addition we wish to place on record that several notices appeared around the village with an incorrect e-mail address which will inevitable mean that some objection will not reach you either within the deadline if at all.

There are currently approximately 157 dwellings within the Yeoford Settlement Limit, as defined by the MDDC January 2014 Policies Map. This figure includes the Warrens Farm Development, which is not yet shown on the map, part of which was allowed despite it being within the Yeoford Conservation Area & the recent Chapel Close Development, also not shown on the map, part of which is outside of the Yeoford Settlement Limit. In the past 30 years Yeoford has increased by approx 83 dwellings, c112%, from approx 74 to 157; this excludes the partial redevelopment of Yeo View which also increased in numbers.

Almost all of the permitted developments in Yeoford have been significant multiple units e.g. The Oaks 30, Yeoford Meadows 26, Chapel Close 12, The Meadows 8. Smaller more sympathetic developments would have preserved a greater level of individuality & character. There are several potential small plots which could be developed, such as the old village hall site, which would negate the need for such a large scale development if there is actually a demand for any additional dwellings.

How has it been established that there is a need for additional housing in Yeoford & why 17? We do not believe that there is a need for this level of expansion of Yeoford, there has been no assessment of the development needs. Several properties at the most recent multiple development at Chapel View were unsold for some time. IF there is actually a demand for such a high level of development there are potentially several alternative less obtrusive options which have not been put forward due to unawareness even amongst owners of suitable land &, in some cases, possibly the belief that their land is on the so called 'floodplain'. Many of the dwellings erected in the village in recent years are on land identified as 'floodplain' & this has not prevented planning approval even in very recent years. Despite the obvious blatant disregard for basic planning principals in the past, highlighted above & as the proposal is outside the Yeoford Settlement Limit, the development at Hill Barton should not be permitted.

Several previous developments have started with initial approval for low numbers only to be significantly increased at a later date & the sites overdeveloped i.e. Chapel View. We have no faith in the Planning Authority to control either the density or ultimate expansion of the initial proposal.

The lower of the proposed fields is regularly waterlogged as it appears to carry a considerable amount of water which funnels from the higher field & the lane across it to the nearby river.

The access to both sites will be virtually opposite each other in very close proximity to a bend in the single track lane which is one of the premier routes in & out of the village. This coupled with the ever increasing agricultural traffic in the immediate vicinity caused by the expanding activities at Hill Barton Farm, including off-loading of articulated vehicles on or near the lane, will be inherently dangerous.

The lane between the proposed site & the village pub is arguably the most dangerous section in the entire village due to it being very narrow with a sharp bend on which there is a junction.

Pedestrians, especially children, will have to negotiate this section in order to access any village amenity or service including the school & there is no way this section can be widened.

The initial impression gained by any visitor to the village from the direction of Crediton/Neopardy will be one of yet another ill considered urban sprawl rather than a small Devon village with a Conservation Area at its heart. We do not need yet another 'estate' especially not one with 3 storey town houses such as were recently permitted at Chapel View!

To date there appears to have been scant regard for the alleged current Planning Policy including preserving the unique identity & appearance of rural locations such as Yeoford. Why should residents have any confidence that future developments, such as that which is proposed, will be treated any differently?

MDDCs own policy is to protect the environment by ensuring that development is matched with jobs, transportation links & local services amongst others.

MDDCs own website states that there are already almost 1.5 vehicles per household in their catchment area & they say that this is greater in more rural areas such as Yeoford. It is therefore not unreasonable to estimate 35 - 50 additional cars will be travelling our narrow lanes causing more congestion, accidents, road deterioration & increasing pollution because:

The bus service is now virtually non-existent.

We have lost one of the villages major resources, the Post Office & Shop.

Employment opportunities are virtually non-existent in Yeoford.

The village school is already reached capacity so any younger children would have to be driven to the nearest available school.

There have been no improvements to road access to the village from any direction over the past 30 years & the surface condition has deteriorated significantly. Almost all access roads from major routes are via single track lanes unsuitable for any increase in small vehicles that additional housing would bring let alone the ever increasing number of commercial vehicles which now use them.

We will experience even longer delays in emergency services reaching us putting life at risk.

Virtually non-existent broadband, mobile phone & TV signals.

The above points are despite the significant growth of Yeoford & highlights that the infrastructure & facilities of the village are insufficient to support the current number of dwellings let alone any additions.

MDDCs current policy of not granting residential planning permission for conversion of barns, even those which are unused & or derelict, unnecessarily increases the need for new development in rural locations & this policy needs to be amended to consider each application on its individual merits.

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23 March 2014