**Planning Appeal re Application for 8 dwellings on site at St Ann’s Chapel**

A planning appeal has been made to the Secretary of State following the refusal of an outline planning permission for the erection of 8 dwellings on the site to the rear of The Chapel and Le Petit Pain in St Ann’s Chapel. The appeal is to be considered on the basis of **written representations,** which means that the Planning Inspector will make his or her decision based on the statements which are received and without holding an Inquiry or Hearing. It is important for those wishing to object to the proposals to submit representations to the Planning Inspectorate by 23rd November.

The Planning Inspectorate will be sent copies of the representations that were made at the application stage but further representations can now be made including representations from people who have not previously made comments.

If sending further representations you could just repeat comments which have been previously made, or preferably could include additional comments referring in particular to the reasons for the refusal of the application.

The application was recommended for approval by the District Council’s planning officers following consultation with the highways officers at Devon County Council. However, Members of the District Council disagreed with the recommendation of their officers and voted by a large majority to refuse the application on the following grounds:

1. *The proposed development is likely to generate an increase in pedestrian traffic on highways lacking adequate footways and also lacking adequate visibility at the junction of the C252 and the B3392 with consequent additional danger to all users of the road contrary to paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy DP7 of the South Hams Local Development Framework and Policy DEV 31 of the emerging Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan.*
2. *Having regard to the new road access points, the provision of a new relocated and wider highway and the resulting loss of Devon Hedgebanks, the proposal will fail to conserve the landscape and scenic beauty in this part of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty contrary to paragraph 115 of the NPPF, Policies CS9 and DP2 of the South Hams Development Framework and Policies SPT11, DEV24 and DEV27 of the emerging Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan.*

**Policy context**

The Plymouth and South West Local Plan has now reached a more advanced stage having now been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The Examination of this plan is due to take place in January 2018.

A further reason to object to this application, which was not included in the reasons for refusal is the fact that the site is within the Undeveloped Coast and Heritage Coast and therefore subject to Policy DP2 of the Local Development Framework and Policy DEV25 of the emerging Joint Local Plan. **Policy DEV25** of the Joint Local Plan states:

*Development will only be permitted in the Undeveloped Coast where it can be demonstrated that it requires a coastal location, it cannot reasonably be located outside the Undeveloped Coast and it protects, maintains and enhances the unique landscape and seascape qualities of the area.*

In this case there are other sites available for development in St Ann’s Chapel and as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process the community voted almost unanimously in favour of the site to the north west of the village, where it was considered that development could take place without resulting in highway safety issues, there would be safe access to amenities by pedestrians and there would not be a significant loss of Devon Banks. There were no votes in favour of development on the appeal site.

**Housing need**

Representations should primarily relate to the reasons why the appeal scheme is not acceptable if that is your view but can also refer to matters such as the **Housing Needs** **Report** prepared by South hams Council which demonstrates that there is no need for large private houses. The local need is for affordable housing and the Neighbourhood Plan will be bringing forward a scheme for circa 10 dwellings which will be for primarily affordable housing.

The appeal scheme, although in outline form, shows a scheme for 5 large private dwellings and 3 affordable dwellings. However, there is currently no guarantee that the appeal scheme will include ‘on site’ affordable housing.

**Highway and pedestrian safety**

The alternative site to the north west of the village can be easily accessed without causing highway and pedestrian safety issues, which is the **first reason for refusal** of the appeal scheme. In particular there would be safe access for pedestrians, particularly children, to access the Holywell Stores, the Memorial Hall, the children’s playground, playing fields and the school bus stop.

The appeal scheme proposes **a new loop road** around St Ann’s Chapel to divert traffic coming from Ringmore and Challaborough to the south of the village. It will however increase the traffic on the Bigbury Road B3392 and result in more pedestrians using this dangerous stretch of road. Pedestrians wishing to access the Holywell Stores and other facilities, other than the pub, will also still need to cross this busy road and the visibility at the crossing is extremely poor, particularly when crossing back from the grass verge to the south of the Holywell Stores to the pedestrianised area in front of The Pickwick Inn as shown on the Appellant’s plans.

**Loss of Devon Banks**

The second reason for refusal refers to the loss of two significant stretches of mature Devon banks in order to provide this new loop road. The scheme involves the loss of two 40 -50m sections of tall and mature Devon hedgerows along the B3392 and the C252. The alternative scheme to the north west of the village or indeed the development of any other site within St Ann’s Village would not result in such significant loss of hedgerows.

**Representations**

Should you wish to make representations, or modify/withdraw your previous representations, you can do so on the Appeals Casework Portal at <https://acp.planningportal.gov.uk/> or by emailing west1@pins.gsi.gov.uk. If you do not have access to the internet you can send **3 copies** to the Planning Inspectorate at Room 3P Kite Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Bristol, BS1 6PN. Please quote the **Appeal Reference No: APP/K1128/W/17/3182100**

**Representations must be received by 23rd November 2017.**

For those wishing to make representations further information with regard to the appeal application can be obtained from Valerie Scott, Chairman of the Bigbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

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