

Dear David

At a meeting of Abbas and Templecombe Parish Council the Members discussed the above application and cannot support the proposal as it is and would make the following comments: -

21/02436/FUL | Demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 18 detached bungalows with associated parking and access. | Knights Templar Court Nursing Home Throop Road Templecombe BA8 0HR

With regards to the current planning application the Parish Council have the following observations:

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT (INCORPORATING HERITAGE, FLOOD RISK & DRAINAGE AND HEADS OF TERM).

1. I note that in paragraph 2.6 Abbas and Templecombe is described as the fourth largest Rural Settlement with a good level of local service provision without defining the actual area to which the ranking is considered.
2. As in a number of previous applications "The number of existing jobs, relative to the size of the economically active population, is high and a comparatively large amount of new employment floorspace has been completed". Fact corrected the recent expansion at Thales and a 330m contract protected 50 existing jobs within Thales' base in Templecombe and will create up to 30 more over the 15 year life of the contract. There are therefore relatively few jobs available and the majority of those are for highly skilled operatives. Potential housing growth will result in the need to travel outside the village and therefore the village does not offer sustainable employment.
3. Paragraph 2.6 also refers to "An opportunity is being progressed by the rail operator to increase the amount of car-parking at the station, providing an opportunity for enhanced service provision" This reflects an error in a previous SSDC draft plan and in fact refers to potential expansion of Castle Cary Station, some 10 miles away and on the Great Western Line.
4. The statement is keen to emphasis the range of services available – significantly it does not allow for the pressure on those services. The Parish Council has repeatedly highlighted the cumulative effect of successive planning applications putting unacceptable levels of pressure on capacity of services as well as local road networks – for example the school is currently at capacity.
5. While the Parish Council recognises and commented on previous applications it should be noted that 3.3 18/00650/OUT - outline planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 19 No. dwellings with associated access and parking. The application was resolved to be approved by Council's Regulation Committee on 20th November 2018, subject to the submission of Section 106 Legal Agreement. The S106 was required to secure affordable housing, education contributions and a travel plan. The application was not progressed and therefore it's difficult to justify that the application therefore meets any justifiable need.
6. The Parish Council remain concerned over the tight access to and from the site. The justification that the existing access which has effectively already been approved through the previous application appears to ignore the significant increase in traffic generated from 18 separate properties compared to a single small care home. While the proposal will provide a footway on one side of the road it sadly does not continue to the exit of the site which does not support pedestrians. It should also be noted that there is no pedestrian footpath on Throop Road at this point.

Planning policy context

7. SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements - Development in Rural Settlements (not Market Towns or Rural Centres) will be strictly controlled and limited to that which: Provides employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement and/or creates or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or Meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing. Development will be permitted where it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, provides for one or more of the types of development above, and increases the sustainability of a settlement in general. Proposals should be consistent with relevant community led plans and should generally have the support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation. Proposals for housing development should only be permitted in Rural Settlements that have access to two or more key services listed at Paragraph 5.41.

As a Parish Council we would like it acknowledged that Templecombe like a number of other rural settlements and villages in South Somerset has far exceeded the number of permitted applications and therefore this application is not commensurate with the cumulative scale and character of our Rural Settlement.

The developers have also worked hard to justify providing the lowest possible level of social housing through Vacant Building Credit and so therefore bringing forward only 2 social housing units which further dilutes any benefit to the community rather than the 35% (6 units) district-wide affordable housing target.

1. The Planning, Design and Access Statement includes HG6 - Care houses and specialist accommodation – Ironically this proposal sadly removes specialist accommodation rather than creates it despite there being both an acute local and national need with the oldest average population in the County in neighbouring Dorset.
2. TA1 – Low Carbon Travel - All new residential and employment developments in Somerset should provide for the charging of electric vehicles with an external charging point adjacent to each parking space and within the curtilage of the site. Such charging points should also be provided for garages within the development; the layout of the parking spaces and absence of garages does not make it clear how this will be achieved. Facilities for cycle parking should also be provided within the new development and again it is not apparent how these will be included.

Given the dramatic changes in working patterns in the last 18 pandemic months the requirement to enable ease of working from home by providing a designed in specific work area with broadband connections is even more apparent but this does not seem to have been included in any of the plans submitted.

1. HWI– Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development. The size of the development does not require allocation of additional space. It should be noted that the site is not accessible to any open space/recreational area by pavement.
2. EQ4 – Biodiversity. Given the site has been uninhabited and there is already recognition of a significant bat and reptile population which should be prioritised in design and schedule of works.
3. The Planning, Design and Access Statement refers to the November 2018 South Somerset District Council document 'The Potential for Rural Settlements to be Designated Villages'. This document was part of the Local Plan review at the time and while the conclusions of this document stated that Abbas and Templecombe

was identified as one of a number of settlements regarded as 'the most sustainable locations for development'. This document is not part of the current local plan and therefore the Parish Council see no justified reason for using its contents to give weight to any development being acceptable in principle.

4. As a Parish Council it is very disappointing that the developers do not feel that additional consultation needed to be undertaken. The proposal represents a significant development that impacts the village as a whole.

In Summary

The proposal offers limited space for additional visiting traffic to the site in addition to any resident's cars. The number of properties would have an impact on the Village infrastructure, and it is felt access to and from the site is not adequate. The Parish Council are concerned that the development would need to be accessed down a narrow lane with poor visibility and a small bridge and further restricted by existing on road parking and where there is no footpath linking the proposed site to the rest of the Village in order to encourage anything other than private vehicle access. Since the previous application additional properties have been built and the capacity of the road at the site of the bridge is a concern both in construction and occupation of the site.

Also attached is a letter received from a neighbouring Parishioner, the contents of which the Members are in full support of especially in relation to the flooding and sewage issues and wish this also to be taken into account.

Regards

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Tina Chapman - Parish Clerk

[Abbas & Templecombe Parish Council](#)