

Planning application comment was submitted on the **04 March 2024 20:16 PM**

The following is a comment on application **P240240/F** by **David Fisk**

Nature of feedback: Objecting to the application

Comment: My wife and I would like to object to the proposed residential development on land south of Symonds Yat View (Planning Ref 240240).

Effect on Conservation Areas: We question the need to build in this conservation area within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We note that after a site visit on 24 Feb 2024, the Senior Landscape Officer has objected to this Application and we support this objection. The Senior Landscape Officer states that it (this development) would provide 'no enhancement to the natural environment, as required by the national landscape designation for the AONB'. As this proposed development covers the highest ground in the field, there will be a loss of the substantial landscape buffer to the west. The Landscape officer goes on to state 'the proposal is currently contrary to Core Strategy Policy LD1 as it does not demonstrate that the character of the landscape has positively influenced the scale of the development when considering the high ground and transition to open countryside to the west. It does not conserve or enhance the natural and scenic beauty of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.'

We are concerned with the potential loss of this stunning environment with its wonderful panoramic views, beautiful sunsets as well as the stunning night skies that cannot be replaced. The new footpath has provided a more inclusive access to this beautiful place with its elevated views – it would be a shame to lose all this to an estate of expensive housing.

Overdevelopment: Following all the recent building within Whitchurch village and the surrounding area we question whether any further building on this scale is really now required to meet the need of the local community at Whitchurch.

The 'Planning, Design and Access Statement' at Section/paragraph 3 covers the subject of 'Planning Policy – Housing Need and the Principle'. At para 3.10 it quotes paragraph 70 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that local planning authorities should 'identify land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare. The Agent then goes on to state (at para 3.11) that 'The value of a smaller site such as this in meeting the housing needs should therefore be given material weight in the planning balance.'

However, this is no longer a small site as it is in fact an extension to an existing development (Symonds Yat View) and is now being referred to by some as Phase 2 development. The fear is that this approach to planning application will continue relentlessly until the field becomes one large housing estate of between forty and sixty properties with no consideration of the overall impact such a large development would have in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. For planning approval purposes the statement at para 3.11 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement document should be ignored. We consider this proposed development would just lead to further overdevelopment of the field. We recommend that this agricultural land located within a conservation area of an AONB should be returned to its original glory as a hay meadow or turned into a nature reserve for the benefit of future generations.

Loss of light: We are also concerned that the building of large two-storey properties on the higher ground immediately west of our property will cut out light and warmth to our property and leave us in their long dark shadow. The majority of the light and heat from the sun we receive into our property comes from the west as our property was designed with no south facing windows (for privacy reasons I guess, as they would look directly into our neighbour's lounge and kitchen). Our property runs parallel to the field so the majority of our rooms would be affected as the west facing light/sun currently shines throughout our property.

Building Design: The design of the buildings mirror those of Symonds Yat View which do not blend in well with

the surrounding countryside or any of the village properties. Whilst the properties may be beautifully designed on the inside, the design of the exteriors of the larger properties make them appear like warehouses from certain angles.

Other issues/concerns: We are also concerned with the risk from surface water run off especially during the regular down pours we experience in this area on a regular basis as well as the effect the development may have on our water pressure as Welsh Water has already highlighted this as an issue. The Drainage Strategy Report (Issue 4) at para 1.2 and para 5 states that 'some cut and fill required to realise the project'. This appears to be very understated based on what we observed during the development of Symonds Yat View. A huge amount of soil was removed (cut) in order to build the large properties on the sloping ground and in order to have large flat gardens on the sloping/hilly site. Whilst some of the soil was then used as infill the majority (tons of subsoil) was eventually spread over the field as a way of disposing of it. The Drainage Strategy Report states that the slope of the site is generally consistent – however this was not the case prior to the building of Symonds Yat View. The field had a large dip in it about half way down it running parallel to the eastern boundary. This hollow was completely filled in with subsoil from the Symonds Yat View development. We never witnessed problems with rain run-off from the field until the developer started dumping subsoil in the field. At para 1.4 the report states that soakaway testing has been undertaken however it does not state when this testing was undertaken. If the soakaway testing was undertaken prior to the distribution of subsoil within the field then further soakaway testing should be undertaken. Also, The Summary of Results for 100 Year Return Period appears to be out-of-date as it only covers up to 2020, this should also be reviewed/updated? The Planning, Design and Access statement is way out of date with regard to the local facilities, several of the businesses no longer exist and the bus service is only every 2 hours at the best. This then puts doubts on the accuracy of all the claims made within this document.

Attachment:

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Infrastructure from section 106 to consider: Road improvements on Llangrove Road.

Link ID: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=240240

Form reference: FS-Case-592454862