

Planning application comment was submitted on the **15 June 2023 12:12 PM**

The following is a comment on application **P231391/F** by **Graham Blackmore**

Nature of feedback: Objecting to the application

Comment: please see attachment

Attachment: sandbox-files://648af1a5950b4978667242

Their contact details are as follows:

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Herefordshire

Infrastructure from section 106 to consider: access, drainage, services

Link ID: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=231391

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General

The latest version of this application, although more detailed in some respects, has still not addressed many of the issues of concern raised by ourselves, other village residents and various consultees approached by the planning office. The planning office previously asked for certain amendments which have not been made.

Location. The location plan [REDACTED]. The T-shaped building to the south of the site, labelled Copper Beech, is in fact an outbuilding belonging to Rathays. The public right of way between it and the proposed site is also on land owned by Rathays. (Copper Beech is the dwelling between Rathays and Upper Court).

Number of dwellings

The proposal is still for four separate dwellings, two of which are 2-storey, nominally 3-bedroom houses, but with the addition of external staircases leading to "home offices" – a far cry from 1½ storey "cottages" as claimed in the application. We do not consider this change to be more acceptable than 4-bedroom houses. We still maintain that the site is simply too small for this density of housing. It would result in an overcrowded and cramped mini-estate with inadequate provision for roadside parking. Existing single-storey bungalows on the west, north and east of the site would suffer to varying extents by being overlooked.

And, contrary to the applicant's statement, the development site can easily be seen from the public right of way crossing Rathays land immediately adjacent to the south of the site.

Access

The visibility splays between the main village street and the privately-owned farm track leading to Upper Court Farm, and between this track and the driveway into the Farm, have been "improved" simply by pruning some shrubs, which could easily be allowed to grow up again. The physical turns are still very tight even for cars, let alone larger vehicles such as fire, ambulance and other emergency vehicles. Indeed, it is hard to see from the plans, or from the situation on the ground, how this could actually be alleviated. The farm track is a cul-de-sac, and the only way for larger vehicles to exit on to the village street using a forward gear would be to use the reversing/turning circles of the proposed development.

The existing dwelling Copper Beech is now being used as a home [REDACTED] and there are up to 10 cars daily parked in front of the house and spilling over on to the farm track. This is reducing visibility along the track. Frequent manoeuvring of these vehicles is destroying both the farm track itself and the grass verges alongside it.

The surface of the track has been deteriorating for some time, and the extra traffic from the proposed development would add to this. No mention has been made about making good this aspect of access.

Services

Inadequacies to existing telephone, broadband, electricity and water supply services, and the effect of extra buildings thereon, have been repeatedly pointed out, [REDACTED].

Drainage

There are a number of important details that are still not clear from the application. We would like to make the following points and ask the following questions:

Surface run-off would be dealt with by one soakaway per building, i.e. 6 soakaways. These modern soakaways are big structures, and the plots they serve are small. Where would they all go?

As far as foul-water drainage is concerned, we see that a further investigation by H & H Drainage, building on previous work by Balfour Beatty, has resulted in a recommendation for a shared package sewage treatment plant for the site.

This would presumably entail pipework leading from each new dwelling to the treatment plant. How big is this plant? Where would it be sited?

From the treatment plant, the effluent would be pumped to the drainage field. How big is the pump? Is it integral to the treatment plant? If not, where will it be sited? Pipework would still have to be installed under Upper Court Farm land (which we believe is no longer owned by the applicant [REDACTED]) and underneath the farm track into the drainage field opposite the Farm. This could interfere with existing services (gas, electricity, water, telephone and broadband) to both Rathays and Copper Beech.

An old effluent pipe [REDACTED] onto Rathays land has previously leaked, causing problems for Rathays, and had to be disconnected. The effluent from the [REDACTED] septic tank is presently drained onto Rathays land, just behind the stable block. And there is a septic tank situated on the extreme south-east corner of Upper Court land.

Overall, the potential for leaks onto neighbouring property is considerable. The thought of all the local residents (and walkers using the public right of way) floating on a sea of sewage from multiple new dwellings is still revolting.

Nutrient neutrality has not been clearly demonstrated. In view of the estimated volume of sewage that would be produced, phosphate credits would be required. And, as the proposed drainage field loop is within 200m of the outflows from the septic tanks of existing dwellings, an Environment Agency permit would be required.

Environment

No Habitat Regulations Assessment has been done, which would be needed as the proposal has the potential to impact the Special Area of Conservation.

There has already been some "urbanisation" of the immediate vicinity, with an associated loss of open green spaces to improve the rural setting. Any new building on this site would be detrimental to the existing trees and natural flora of the area, resulting in the destruction of the habitat of local birds and other wildlife which existing residents value. Only one bat box appears on the plans, and no provision for "hedgehog highways".

In summary

Despite the wealth of extra information provided in this revised application, our original concerns regarding access, services and drainage still stand.

We therefore strongly object to this proposal and believe that planning permission must be refused.