

I note that a pre-application for a housing development at Tregarrick Farm appears on the agenda for the parish council meeting to be held on Thursday 9th November 2017. I cannot find details of this on the Cornwall Council website, so cannot comment with certainty on the scheme to be considered. However, this site was subject to a pre-application earlier in the year (**PA17/00660/PREAPP** | Pre application advice for Residential development (outline) for the development of 60 units | Land North Of Tregarrick Farm Luxulyan PL30 5EQ), against which I believe the following objections can be made. I am unable to attend the public session on Thursday, so I request that, if regulations permit, my objections to the above, or any similar development in this location, be passed to councillors and taken into consideration during the meeting.

It would appear that a development on this site, particularly a major development as outlined under **PA17/00660/PREAPP** would contravene the Cornwall Local Plan in various ways, including: Policy 7 (Housing in the Countryside – ‘only permitted where there are special circumstances’); Policy 26 (Flood risk management and coastal change – ‘2.199 Policies will seek to ensure development does not add to the flooding of existing communities and new development is located to avoid areas of flood risk as a first principle to minimise its risk of flooding’); Policy 27 (Transport and Accessibility (‘not cause a significantly adverse impact on the local or strategic road network that cannot be managed or mitigated’); and Policy 28 (Infrastructure - ‘2.205 The impact of development on local communities and the fabric of the existing built and natural environment is an important consideration’. Interestingly, the Portfolio holder, in her preface to the Cornwall Local Plan, wrote ‘For too long, not having a plan, we have been bombarded with speculative housing development that has damaged trust in our communities of the positive difference planning for places can make’, so it seems that this is the exact type of proposal that the Plan was partly written to avoid.

The proposal is to build in a Designated Rural Area, as defined by the Housing Act 1981. The avoidance of building in the countryside is one of the principles of the local plan. Under Point 2.33 of Policy 7 of the Cornwall Local Plan, open countryside is defined as ‘the area outside of the physical boundaries of existing settlements (where they have a clear form and shape).’ The site is outside the historic hamlet of Bridges on viable farmland and therefore a development of any size would contradict the policy.

The narrow road onto which traffic would emerge from the site is already busy, with a mix of private vehicles, tractors and lorries. Visibility at the junction would be poor since drivers coming out of the development would not be able to see other vehicles coming up the hill from Bridges or around the corner from Rosemelling. The inevitable increase in traffic would also have a detrimental impact on air quality, particularly in the valley bottom at Bridges. It would not fulfil the objective of Policy 27 of providing ‘safe and suitable access to the site for all people’ and would cause a ‘significantly adverse impact on the local or strategic road network that cannot be managed or mitigated’.

It is situated immediately above a flood plain (Functional Floodplain 3b Location: Tywardreath. Reference: FF3b/57) and will almost certainly exacerbate the local flood risk. You will be aware of the many incidents of flooding in the past that have inflicted expense and misery on local residents at Bridges Moor in Luxulyan. Cornwall Council’s application constraints also show that Flood Zones 2 and 3 would be affected. Indeed, this is one of the areas under consideration in the St Austell Bay Resilient Regeneration Project (STARR) being led by Cornwall Council. Therefore, it would appear to be illogical to work to alleviate flood risk on the one hand and to allow a development that would increase flood risk on the other.

The Cornwall Local Plan seeks to ensure that development occurs in the most sustainable locations in order to protect the open countryside from inappropriate development'. Other aspects of local infrastructure, including the sewerage system and local school are not designed to cope with the increase in local population that would result from this development.

Without doubt, adjacent properties would suffer overshadowing and a loss of outlook; and in some cases, where the new houses would be higher than existing ones, a loss of sunlight, particularly after midday. These are, of course, important material considerations in determining planning applications.

Responses to the Neighbourhood Plan consultation exercise undertaken this autumn clearly show that building in the open countryside is strongly opposed by respondents, and this is matched by a wish to maintain current settlement boundaries. Indeed, the decision of the parish council in 2016 to construct a Neighbourhood Development Plan is evidence of a local determination to pursue plan-led development rather than allowing a speculative free-for-all. The proposed site is not one named in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012-2015. I believe that the total number of names on the Home Choice housing needs register for the parish (bands A-D) is 11; therefore, it cannot be argued that this development is responding to any local need.

In conclusion, any development on the site would not only be against key principles of the Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030, it would have a negative impact on the residents and infrastructure of Luxulyan and would be against the wishes of the majority of local people.

Best wishes,  
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