

25/00522/OUT Land South of Cherry Blossom Way, Sparkford

Sparkford Parish Council discussed the above application at their EOM on 25 March and wish to record that they still object to the application for the following reasons:

- Object to the application for all the previous reasons listed and dated 15.04.2025

In addition there are the following reasons for objecting to this planning application:

- Object to the permanent closure of Barrow Crossing and associated public footpath – this is a footpath that would be removed under this application and pedestrians rerouted to a busy road. Councillors believe that re-routing pedestrians onto the High Street is far more risky than crossing the rail track. There has been a young person hit by a car in the High Street in the last five years but there are none on the railway line. The pavement they would be diverted onto is not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchairs and therefore could reduce equality access to the footpath and conflict with encouraging people to walk to the garage which is the shop for the village.
- Cherry Pie Lane has been designated for the use of emergency vehicles during the development work but it is not wide enough to accommodate a fire engine. This is shown by the Illustrative Masterplan – Transport Assessment page 53.
- Drainage – councillors do not believe that the current system for foul water drainage will be sufficient to serve an additional 60 houses. In 2017 Wessex Water surveyed foul water in Sparkford and found an issue. At that time South Somerset District advised that no further houses should be built in the village until a Wessex Water scheme which used a hydro slide was put in place. This scheme has not yet been put in place as it was delayed until 2025-30 capital expenditure scheme. The LLFA commented on 10.04.2025 and expressed concerns. The amended drainage plan dated 04 September does still not address the fact that all treated waste and surface water will be discharged into the southern ditch which is already near capacity during heavy rain. The ditch leads to the culvert under the River Cam which backs up with heavy rain. The over topping of the southern boundary ditch or the attenuation basin will endanger houses in Ainsty Drive and Church Road. Houses in Cherry Blossom Way already contend with surface water run off through their gardens. By way of evidence, houses in Church Road previously unaffected now have surface water run off from the Cherry Blossom development.
- Current road that will lead to this development goes through existing Cherry Blossom Way which is a relatively new development where the road has not yet been adopted by Somerset Council. The road currently is not of adequate width

to support heavy transport that would be used to develop the site that and also will not support another 60 houses. Prior to adoption and if the development goes ahead, the road would require significant rework to widen with the loss of pavements and unnecessary alternation of the underground services to be considered suitable for usage by 96 houses and not the current 38 houses to protect home owners and Somerset Council.

- This development does not support Somerset Council's own policies of HW1 and TA5 which are related to public Rights of Way and transport impact.
- Loss of green amenity space and natural/wildlife habitat with the loss of and no apparent gain to the biodiversity of the site – inconsistent with the aims of Somerset Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Somerset Council's Wildlife Trust.

If the development were to go ahead then the parish council feel very strongly that they do not want to lose their footpath as it would divide the village into two, as well as pushing pedestrians onto a busy road. They would want a condition of the development to be that a wheelchair/pushchair friendly pedestrian bridge be built over the railway line at Barrow Crossing - financially supported by the developer or that the current footpath remains in place. If the footpath were to be removed there would be public disagreement which would draw out the process and delay any development work.