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Claire Walker

From: margaret botwright [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2014 15:37
To: PlanningPolicy
Subject: Planning policy

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to comment on the change to the local plan to include St Mary's Hill. I do not have any objection to this, in fact I wholeheartedly support it, but I do believe the land west of Blandford St Mary, both the land between Dorchester Hill and Fairmile AND the Lower Bryanston Farm should be taken out of the local plan to compensate for this inclusion, for the following reasons:-

Poor highway infrastructure. Dorchester Hill is too narrow to take extra traffic, and the junction with Fairmile and New Road is dangerous, with nowhere to reconfigure the road layout due to existing buildings. There are no pavements or street lights either on Dorchester Hill, Fairmile or New Road, with no space to create them, whereas there are already street lights and pavements in place at St Mary's Hill.

The suggestion is that this proposed development will provide housing for people working in Poole and Bournemouth. Because of the recent reduction in bus services, and no guarantee that there will not be more, this will inevitably generate more traffic on these unsuitable roads.

There are Greater Horseshoe bats on the SSSI land around these sites, which are protected by law, and I believe another resident of this area has already highlighted the numerous laws relating to bat protection, which would prohibit any development of land around Dorchester Hill, Fairmile and New Road. It is also my understanding that the council would be breaking the law if it included any of this land in any housing development now or in the future. The council has consulted with English Heritage but has it consulted with other agencies such as Dorset Wildlife Trust, Vincent Wildlife Trust?

The area of Dorchester Hill and Lower Bryanston Farm is very important as it is countryside, and within the area of the AONB, and any development would have a detrimental effect on the look of the whole area.

Over-development of the village of Blandford St Mary. Outline planning has already been granted to build 200 houses on the brewery site. The Environmental Statement Volume 3 Non-Technical Summary dated November 2006 considers the impact on the AONB both near and far, whereas no environmental impact statement was supposedly needed for the land off Dorchester Hill, which is closer by some distance to the AONB than the brewery site.

Flood risk. The development of either of these two sites would increase considerably the flood risk for properties towards the bottom of Dorchester Hill, in particular The Stour Inn and Berkeley Lodge, both of which have experienced severe flooding this year. However the site at St Mary's Hill could drain directly into the River Stour via identified flood plain.

Recent attempts to include Blandford St Mary within the boundary of Blandford Forum were rejected. This means that Blandford St Mary remains a village, and any plan for future housing should take this into account - it is not a town. It has few facilities of its own, and to access facilities means either a walk along unsafe roads or a car journey through congested and unsafe lanes.

In short, development of either of these two areas would impact on protected species of wildlife;

exacerbate an already difficult and dangerous highways situation; adversely affect drainage with its attendant flood risk; whereas the St Mary's Hill site would have less impact on wildlife; provide better access to the road network for commuting; provide better drainage.

Kind regards

Margaret Botwright