

For attention of Chris Collison

In reply to your request for comment on the Denstone Neighbourhood Plan, I must point out that at no time throughout the making of "the Plan" have I been contacted by the Qualifying Body, surely a basic requirement and a most important part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Since 2017 certain aspects concerning the village envelope around the Vinewood Farm have been rearranged so as to enhance this site, yet the more sustainable Oak Road site has been dismissed as "Impossible to deliver" only because it is outside the very restrictive village envelope!. As to the Vinewood Farm site, Ms Anne Skipper, the 2017 examiner, expressed "grave concerns" regarding this site even though only 3 dwellings were proposed at that time!

Since then it would appear that small but significant changes have been made to the boundaries and also SHELEA numbers have been mysteriously increased. This site falls steeply to the College Road on the southern edge, creating a distinct possibility of erosion, the surface water run off, from what has now increased to 24 dwellings ie roads, footpaths and hardstanding would eventually end up in the village centre creating even more flooding problems.

As to sustainability, the site is well over half a mile from the village centre, atop a continual rising gradient on the busy access road to Denstone College. It would be the furthest point west, an outpost rather than in integral part of a vibrant and inclusive village community. For all the sites failing the Q.B. stated that they would happily support a density of 24 dwellings here although there is no obvious access to the site!

The Oak Road site offers a far more sustainable outlook being adjacent to the school grounds and accessible by a public footpath to the school gate. It is only 200 metres to the village hub i.e The Tavern, Village Hall, bowling green, tennis courts and close to public transport stops. There is space for a much needed car park for walkers/hikers and users of the above facilities, thereby removing congestion in the village centre, yet it is dismissed out of hand by the Q.B.

It would appear from information available that certain councillors from Ward and Parish level have tried to increase the merits of the Vinewood Farm site above its potential and possibly Q.B. recommendations are not always in the interests of the village as a whole.

It leaves one questioning the whole system of Neighbourhood Planning. perhaps it should be overseen by a more objective and unbiased body so avoiding these anomalies.

Regards

Robert Johnson