

Should you wish to write to Maldon District Council about the planning application for 50 houses in Church Road, the following guidelines may be of help.

With planning matters, there is no point in saying things like “spoils the view”, “causes noise and disruption” or “makes the village too large”. What is needed are reasons that show that the application does not comply with planning rules.

Policies in Maldon DC local development plan with which the application would appear to fail to comply:

Apart from the property at no 9 Church Road, the site is outside the development boundary. It is therefore contrary to Policy S8 of the LDP. The application does not meet any of the 13 exceptions set out in Policy S8. It should not matter that it is just outside the boundary or that a small part of it is within; the fact is that the substantially greater part is outside.

It does not meet all the principles set out in Policy S1, eg, item 3) not previously developed land; 9) does not conserve and enhance the natural environment.

It fails to meet some of the criteria within Policy D1

- at 1 d) in relation to density in that the density proposed (about 21 dwellings per hectare) far exceeds that of neighbouring areas in the village (eg. Leigh Drive) and the village as a whole; and
- at 6) in that it does not meet the criterion to maximize connectivity within the development and to the surrounding areas – it is a one-way-in and one-way-out enclave with no other connection with the village.

The sec 106 contribution proposed will not result in the additional facilities to increase capacity at the local school or local GP surgeries. It will therefore fail to comply with Policy T2 in relation to Accessibility. You may wish to stress that both the Junior School and Fern House Doctors’ Surgery in Witham are at full-capacity and having to turn people away.

Those living in properties at the far end of the enclave will have much further to go to reach local shops, bus stops etc. They will use cars. The majority of properties in this site will not be in a sustainable location, thus failing Policy T2.

Comment On Design & Access Statement (D&AS)

Introduction to the D&AS quotes from Para 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework that “... helps make development acceptable to communities ...”. Given the level of response from Wickham Bishops residents, this proposed development is clearly not acceptable to the WB community.

Page 12 pictures a bus stop in The Street. There is no bus stop there. Routes 504, 506 and 621 are school buses.

Page 15, para 3.23 contains one of many references in the D&AS to “logical extension to the existing village”. Such a comment could apply to any field or open space on the edge of the development boundary.

Page 23, paras 5.11 – 5.14 contain references to the “public open space” provided in the proposed development. Whilst there may be such a space, this is a cul-de-sac and residents other than those

in the development are unlikely to benefit from the space. There is no through route. People will not walk in and walk out. This will be an enclave used by its residents and their visitors, not the wider population of the village.

Page 38, para 5.32 refers to “well designed public lighting”. The village has very little public street lighting. Suggestions of increased street lighting have previously been resisted and concern has been expressed about excessive lighting on the outside of properties.

Page 41, para 6.3 refers to “legible routes through the development” but this is a cul-de-sac with no through route, either pedestrian or vehicular.

Extract of a report from MDC, possibly from a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise

The site lies to the north of Church Road and the west of Wellands Close. The site lies surrounded by dwelling houses and their extensive gardens. The access is through an existing dwelling which could have to be demolished. Church Road is a narrow lane but it does lead to the wider pavement network. There is a Grade II listed building, Abbots on the southern side of the site. St Bartholomew's Churchyard is located at the south of the site but the listed church is located on the opposite side of Church Road. There is some high surface water flood risk along the eastern boundary of the site. The site is grassed with some tree areas in the northern and eastern sections.

On balance it is considered that development of the site would be unsuitable. Though the site is within a reasonable distance from the services and facilities there is no pavement connection and residents could be unable to walk safely, this could mean an increase in the use of their cars which could be unsustainable. The site does not have any landscape or townscape issues. Overall, the lack of a safe access outweighs the other matters in regard to the site.