

Application 1/0020/2022/OUT

Outline application for 3no. dwellings with all matters reserved except access Land To The North East Of Council Cottages Fairy Cross Bideford Devon EX39 5DD

Alwington Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds that it does not comply with local planning policies DM24 (Rural Settlements) and Policy ST 21 (Managing the delivery of Housing).

Specifically:

- Policy ST21 - Managing the Delivery of Housing, is referenced within the Design and Access Statement with *“the proposed residential development is very minor”*. Fairy Cross is a Rural Settlement of approximately 33 properties. This development increases this by 9%. This is not *“a very minor development”*.
- The application suggests that Fairy Cross can sustain the development of the proposed dwellings because there are two community facilities: the Methodist Chapel in Ford and the Village Hall in Fairy Cross. The Methodist Chapel is no longer operating although the building is now let on a short term lease to *“The Rock Church”*. We question how these facilities sustain the development.
- Alwington is recorded in the Domesday Book with a sheep farm highlighting the long history as a rural area focused on farming. Today Alwington Parish comprises 4 hamlets, of which Fairy Cross is one. It is now a rare example of a genuinely rural environment which needs to be preserved.
- This development would change the character of Fairy Cross by introducing properties outside the current boundaries of housing with a suggestion of a potential infill across towards Ford. They would have a significant impact on the properties they are immediately behind, taking away their open outlook across fields and overlooking their gardens.
- Policy DM24 states that *“speculative development will not be supported in view of sustainability considerations.”* It states that such limited housing in rural settlements should either be affordable or limited to occupancy by a purchaser who has a need for a separate home from within the rural settlement and met one of the residency requirements specified in article 13.133 sub paragraphs (1) to (4) inclusive. We question whether the dwellings proposed would meet these criteria.
- Fairy Cross is adjacent to an AONB and is part of a UNESCO Biosphere, we question how the development will impact on these important aspects of the area.
- The proposed development is close to the A39, a road which is already causing concern due to the speed of traffic through this stretch. The development would also increase the amount of traffic using the A39 junction in Fairy Cross.
- Whilst Fairy Cross is serviced by a Bus service, in order to use the eastbound route prospective passengers have to cross the A39 (unrestricted at this point) without even the safety of a central refuge.
- Local residents are very concerned that this proposed development is the thin end of the wedge that will inevitably lead to changes which would harm this essential character of Fairy Cross.