



31 January 2013

Ms Kath Horne
Programme Officer
South Gloucestershire Council
PO Box 2081
South Gloucestershire
BS35 9BP

RESPONDENT ID 2819809

Dear Madam,

Reference: Proposed 300 houses on Land At Morton Way, North East Thornbury, Bristol South Gloucestershire BS35 1LR

We OBJECT to the proposal for additional housing on Morton Way, over and above those already accepted by the Inspector adjacent to Park Farm, Thornbury, as part of the CORE Strategy.

We were disappointed to find out via the Thornbury Gazette that South Gloucestershire Officers were proposing to include extra housing at Morton Way in the Core Strategy, in order to satisfy the Inspector, after he indicated he may need to make provision for extra housing in the district, over and above those houses already identified. Our understanding is the South Gloucestershire Officers did not consult with local Councillors and we think this is unacceptable.

Our understanding is that the Inspector agrees that there should be a new consultation to review ALL options across the district for the extra houses he has identified and this will not happen until March. Hence, the consideration of the planning application for the proposed 300 houses on Morton Way should be temporarily suspended.

In terms of the proposed 300 houses our specific objections are as follows.

- **Public Enquiry:** Our understanding is that at the Public Inquiry there was NO consideration for additional housing to be included at Morton Way. Also, as discussed at the Public Inquiry, there is still one fundamental question ...does Thornbury require mass housing development? In 2006, the Inspector's view in the current plan...indicated that there was no evidence to support the need for mass housing. What has changed in 6 years or will change in the foreseeable future?
- **Employment Opportunities:** there is NO new major employment locally...in fact it has recently reduced with South Gloucestershire choosing to relocate staff away from Thornbury. Several years ago land was set-aside for "industrial type development to support the employment in the town". However, within the lifetime of that plan "Hopkins Close" was sanctioned, thereby removing the land which had been designated as potential land for development for increasing local employment opportunities.
- **Further Development:** we consider that any further development in Thornbury, could open the floodgates to more development. Clearly, if any development is allowed beyond the existing natural curtilage, there will be on-going speculative pressure from developers. There are

'brownfield sites' within the Town which should be considered before losing forever the superb rural setting that we enjoy...once lost, it can never be regained.

- **Schools:** it has been suggested that more houses are needed to fill the local schools. Fundamentally this is wrong....schools are a service provider to the Community (houses) NOT the other way around. Thornbury's health and well-being as a social and cohesive community is the primary objective, so its need for housing should only be based on whether the community needs additional houses to serve the local population.
- **Re-invigorating Thornbury Town Centre:** it has been assumed that additional houses will re-invigorate the town centre because the new residents will shop in Thornbury. This is a false assumption, housing WILL NOT necessarily re-invigorate the town Centre. The vast majority of the new residents will probably work outside of Thornbury and they, like a significant proportion of the current residents, will shop out of Town at, for example, Cribbs Causeway. We consider 'unique' shops should be encouraged to provide the alternate 'shopping experience' to that of Cribbs Causeway. Thornbury should try and become a 'specialist shops town', and encourage visitors to visit Thornbury by promoting, for example, Britain in Bloom, The Arts festival, Christmas Lights, The carnival, Farmers markets, Antiques Fairs, independent shops etc which all help to make Thornbury somewhere that people will choose to come and shop/spend time in.
- **Community Spirit in Thornbury:** Thornbury has a vibrant Community spirit with numerous local groups willing to participate on a voluntary basis for the community. We believe even more new housing will change Thornbury. There is a real danger of reaching the maximum point at which that 'goodwill' prevails, and we need to protect the willingness of the voluntary community culture. We consider another 300 houses with a potential 600 adults, 600 children/young adults and another 600 cars will damage the community spirit. One of the reasons that Thornbury's community is so strong, is that people do stay here and feel part of the community, people want to live here and get involved...they may not if it grows much bigger and loses its community feel.
- **Flooding/Water Table:** in recent years the UK has experienced far more flooding issues than ever before...mass housing has undoubtedly contributed to that. Have the consequences of losing the drainage facility, by developing these green fields site been thoroughly investigated for potential flooding and the effect on the water table?
- **Dormitory Town:** in the past Thornbury has been a successful dormitory town serving the industries in north and central Bristol. However, with the proposed and current development of new houses on the land in Filton, North Bristol, prospective new home owners may choose to live nearer to their place of work. Travelling to and from Thornbury will be an increased financial cost and increased travel time. It cannot be assumed that young families will want to buy the approved 500 houses and the proposed 300 houses in Thornbury.

We hope we have described our objections clearly and that they will be considered.

Yours Faithfully,



Robert C Brady and Mrs Elaine A Brady