

Formal Objection – Proposed Development at Land at Church Farm, St Athan

Maxine Levett

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Sir/ Madam

Planning Policy Team

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Dock Offices

Barry, CF63 4RT

Subject: Formal Objection – Proposed Development at Land at Church Farm, St Athan

Dear Sir/Madam,

I submit this objection to the proposed development at Land at Church Farm, St Athan. While the site has featured in plan-making for some time, the RLDP remains at consultation and is not adopted. The proposal conflicts with national and local policies.

Spatial Strategy & Conformity with Future Wales

- Future Wales does not place the western Vale within the Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys National Growth Area.

- Local LDP Policy MD1 requires safeguarding countryside and ensuring infrastructure capacity.

This area is naturally a rural area. Any build will negatively impact the rural element of St Athan and the Village.

Education Capacity

- Local primary and secondary schools may already be at or near capacity local people report they are unable to get adequate local schooling.
- New development increases pupil numbers, placing pressure on school places.
- Lack of available spaces can result in longer travel distances for children or overcrowded classrooms.

Healthcare Provision

- GP surgeries, dental practices, and community health services are already oversubscribed.
- Additional demand increases waiting times and reduces access for existing residents.
- Emergency services (ambulance response times) can also be affected if road congestion increases.

Transport & Highways

- Increased traffic on a small rural road contributes to congestion and safety risks.
 - The proposed junctions are not designed for higher traffic flow or delivery vehicles. Proposed exit is intrusive on current properties in the region

Footways or safe pedestrian routes are limited.

- Public transport is infrequent or insufficient to support current yet alone additional population. No rail station at St Athan. People have to drive to either Rhoose or Llantwit to be uncomfortable on a 2 carriage train for 40 minutes into Cardiff, often standing.

Hourly bus services cannot be relied on to connect to rail services or to get to employment on time.

Traffic to Barry or Bonvilston backs up either side of Cardiff Airport roundabouts from Rhoose and St Athan. Increased traffic flow will have further negative impact on congestion.

Utilities & Drainage

- Existing drainage networks may not cope with increased surface water run off.
- Local sewer systems are overloaded, illegally discharging into the sea polluting the area.
- Water supply or pressure issues may arise where systems are already stretched.
- Electricity networks may require upgrades to support new loads.

5. Community Services & Facilities

- Additional demand on parks, play areas, wastage and recycling facilities.
- Pressure on community infrastructure

Digital Connectivity

- Rural broadband infrastructure are already limited.
- New development is likely to worsen network strain unless upgraded.

Placemaking, Design Quality & Amenity

- LDP Policies MD2 and MD7 require good design, protection of amenity, and avoiding unacceptable impacts.

- Poor integration with existing design and settlement pattern. Local houses will feel imposed upon with the nature of the new build and placement of the supermarket
- Incremental urbanisation of the village.
- The development will impact on amenity and sense of place.

Access, Highway Safety & Active Travel

- Entrance location is unsafe and contrary to Travel Plan SPG (2018) and Parking Standards SPG (2019).

- Unsafe road conditions – connecting Gilestone road is narrow, parked cars outside houses, people park to access shops, poor visibility on bend of the road.
- Dangerous connection to the B4265. (cars block, stagger, cross roadways unsure where to wait, take risks to stop blocking traffic on the B4265)
- No safe footways or crossing points.
- Fails to meet active travel standards.

Education, Health & Emergency Services

- MD1 requires infrastructure to be available or funded; evidence is lacking.

Flood Risk & Drainage (TAN 15 & MD1)

- FCA required; greenfield development increases run off.
- Gilestone Road and B4265 known flood risk areas.
- Attenuation ponds require maintenance to ensure ongoing efficiency. Flood risks in the village, and the risk on the B4265.

Biodiversity, Net Benefit & Green Infrastructure (MD9)

- Protected species present; hedgerow removal harmful.

Hedgerow is full of red listed species; sparrows, yellow hammer, starlings all use the hedge alongside Gilestone road. To maintain safety, foraging and wildlife corridors it is essential for this hedge to remain and space between hedge and new builds essential to limit disturbance. Rooks feed off the land, as do gulls and egrets.

Retail Scale & Location

- Retail unit disproportionate and harmful to amenity and safety.entrance
- this impacts on current residents with increase in traffic, proximity and exit to narrow road, residential area, lack of paths, changing the value and nature of the area
- impact detrimental to current businesses

- location impacts negatively on local residents

Countryside Protection & Green Wedge (MG18)

- Openness and rural character reduced. Countryside protection policies aim to safeguard rural character, landscape openness, biodiversity, and the separation of settlements. In the Vale of Glamorgan, this is primarily supported through LDP Policy MG18 (Green Wedges) and associated design and landscape policies. Their core purpose is to prevent inappropriate development that would erode the distinctive rural environment.

This Proposal introduces commercial activity, large-scale housing, can resulting in incremental urbanisation, undermining the quiet rural setting that countryside policies seek to protect.

Protecting Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- Hedgerows, pastures, and field margins support priority species (e.g., sparrows, starlings, yellowhammers, bats). This is evident running along Gilestone road and is essential this hedgerow maintains its ecological value.
- Countryside protection therefore also supports ecological connectivity, ensuring habitats are retained, enhanced, and not fragmented by development.

Conclusion

In Summary

Countryside protection policies exist to:

- Maintain openness
- Protect the rural landscape
- Prevent settlements merging
- Avoid urbanisation
- Safeguard biodiversity
- Support plan-led development only

This proposed development harms these qualities and so is not supported under the policy framework.

I request re-assessment of the site, redesigned access, full FCA/SuDS, biodiversity strategy, and revised retail proposals.

Regards

Maxine Levett