

06th January 2026

Planning (Area South)
Somerset Council
County Hall
The Crescent
Taunton
TA1 4DY

LETTER OF OBJECTION TO OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (REF. 25/02726/OUT) | **LAND OFF BROADWAY HILL, HORTON, ILMINSTER, SOMERSET TA19 9QN**

Dear Planning

This letter of objection has been submitted by Horton (Somerset) Parish Council ("The Parish Council") in response to a planning application at the Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster TA19 9QN ("The Site").

The application concerns an application submitted for *outline planning application with all matters reserved, other than access from Broadway Hill, for the construction of up to 150 residential dwellings with open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure and potential expansion of Horton Playing Field* (ref. 25/02726/OUT, "The Application").

Impact on scale and character of Horton

It is pertinent that the Local Plan seeks to direct development towards market towns and rural centres, and away from rural settlements, such as Horton. With Policy SS2 of the Somerset South Local Plan (LP", 2015) stating that development in rural settlements will be strictly controlled and limited.

In this context, it is relevant that The Application site was never assessed within the South Somerset Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (Area West)¹, further affirming The Site was never considered suitable for strategic housing development of this scale.

It is noted that both Horton and neighbouring Broadway have recently been subject to significant development.

As outlined within figure 1, during the last 18-months, across Horton and the neighbouring parish of Broadway, there have been 124no. new dwellings approved, with a further 195 no. dwellings currently under consideration across 2no. outline applications (The Application and application ref. 24/02475/OUT).

1

<https://somersetcc.sharepoint.com/sites/SCCPublic/Planning%20and%20Land/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FSCCPublic%2FPlanning%20and%20Land%2FSSDC%20%2D%20Area%20West%20%282021%29%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FSCCPublic%2FPlanning%20and%20Land&p=true&ga=1>



Figure 1 – Planning applications approved and under consideration for residential development in Horton and Broadway

For Horton alone, The Application would triple the number of dwellings approved in just the last year.

It is pertinent that the consultation response provided by Somerset Council Planning Policy only allows for the inclusion of completions and commitments up to the current monitoring period, 31 March 2025.

Therefore, it precludes application ref. 20/03277/FUL (49no. dwellings) and a further outline permission ref. 22/0709/OUT within the parish and approved on 4 December 2025 for a further 9no. dwellings. This results in a potential total of 115no. dwellings to be delivered within the LP period (2006-2028), rising to 265 no. dwellings, should this application be permitted.

If approved, this scale of growth would be in excess of the LP housing requirements for all the higher tier settlements and rural Settlements, aside from Milbourne Port, for which the requirement was comparable (279 no. dwellings). This scale of potential growth of Horton is not appropriate for its Rural Settlement Tier.

Whilst the potential for securing benefits such as affordable housing, green infrastructure and improved playing pitches is acknowledged, it is The Parish Councils view that the development is not commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, nor would it increase the sustainability of the settlement in general.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed development would not comply with Policy SS2 of the LP and would result in a range of impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits.

Sustainable development

It is understood that the LPA are currently unable to demonstrate the appropriate housing land supply.

As such it is understood that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF, para. 11) and the application must be determined on balance and consider the benefits of the proposal against the policies in the framework as a whole.

It is pertinent that, in line with para. 11, regard should be given to key policies within the framework, such as *directing development to sustainable locations*.

In line with para. 77 of the NPPF, to be acceptable, larger scale development such as significant extensions to existing villages, should be *well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities* and *b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access*.

This aim to direct development to locations that support sustainable patterns of movement is supported through the recent publication of the Draft NPPF (dNPPF", December 2025). With Policy TR3 of the dNPPF, requiring *development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are, or can be made sustainable, by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users*.

Furthermore Policy S5 of the dNPPF, seeks to ensure that housing led development outside of settlements, to be *within reasonable walking distance of a railway station which provides a high level of connectivity to jobs and services²⁶; physically well-related to a railway station or a settlement within which the station is located; is of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure*.

Whilst it is understood that the policies within the dNPPF are at an early stage and as such offer limited weight, the draft policies present the intention of development proposals moving forward and are consistent with both the current NPPF and LP, both of which seek to ensure that development is located to ensure good connectivity to sustainable transport options and reduce reliance on private vehicles to access service, facilities and employment opportunities.

In considering whether The Site is sustainably located, it is considered that there are 2no. key matters including i) access to local facilities and services and ii) sustainable transport and highways impacts, which are discussed in turn below.

i) Access to local facilities and services

Whilst Horton benefits from some of the local facilities and services outlined within Policy SS2 of the Local Plan, it is notable that the village relies on the neighbouring village of Broadway for a number of key services that Horton does not benefit from, including primary school and a doctor's surgery.

The Parish Council has significant concerns regarding the capacity of services and facilities within the locality to accommodate the prospective additional residents in light of the number of dwellings proposed. It is noted that comments from NHS Somerset have already highlighted that the local doctor's surgery (within neighbouring Broadway) is at full capacity and the comment from Somerset Council have confirmed the primary school is also at full capacity.

Furthermore, it is notable that the proposed development, nor the settlements of Horton and Broadway, present employment opportunities to serve the future residents. Notwithstanding the increase in people working from home, future occupiers would need to travel, likely by private vehicle, to nearby larger centres, such as Ilminster, Chard or Taunton, to access employment.

In light on the above, it is The Parish Council's view that the settlement of Horton is not able accommodate this scale of development. With the current capacity limits of key services and the lack of employment opportunities, there will be significant reliance services and facilities outside of both Horton and Broadway and therefore, The Application does not form sustainable development.

ii) Sustainable transport and highways impacts

With regards access to services and facilities within Horton and neighbouring Broadway, it is noted that there are a number of highways within the villages which lack pavements and or consistent pedestrian routes, for example along Goose Lane, Pound Road and Whitney Hill (which provides access to Little Boots Nursery). Whilst it is acknowledged that this is the current arrangement for residents, with the level of development proposed within The Application, there is concern that increase in both pedestrians and vehicular traffic could create conflict and pose risk to safety.

Turning to transport links beyond Horton, as identified within the submitted Travel Plan, neither Horton nor Broadway benefit from a train station, with the closest service located at Taunton Rail Station (18km from The Site).

As such, public transport opportunities are restricted to buses only.

Bus connections to Ilminster and Taunton are extremely limited. Notably there are no weekday services after 14.39hrs connecting Ilminster to Horton, and only a single weekday bus provides a connection from Horton to Taunton at 0720hrs. The current service does not present a realistic option for day-to-day travel.

With regards to cycling, there is no dedicated cycle route linking Horton to Ilminster, Chard or Taunton and as such any cycle route between Horton and these larger settlements will require on-road cycling.

The submitted Travel Plan suggests that the proximity of Ilminster to The Site, combined with the facilities within Ilminster, *the low-speed limits and low volumes of traffic*, would make this journey suitable and encourage sustainable travel choices by cycling.

It is pertinent that from The Site the likely route to Ilminster would be east on Broadway Hill, continuing east along Hanning Road before joining the A358 into Ilminster (approximately 4.2km). It is notable that a section of this route from the junction with Suggs Lane to Southfields Roundabout is subject to the national speed limit with no protected space for cycling.

The alternative route would be west along Broadway Hill before connecting to the A303, which too is subject to the national speed limit and has no provision for cycle protection.

The Local Transport Note 1/20 outlines appropriate protection for cyclists from motor traffic on highways (Figure 2). It identifies that for highways with a speed limit in excess of 50mph; to be suitable for most people, the highway should include a fully curbed cycle track. Any lesser form of protection or lack of any protection would mean the provision was only suitable for a few people and will exclude most potential users and/or result in safety concerns.

In light of this, it is concluded that The Site's potential to encourage sustainable travel through cycling is very limited.

Figure 4.1: Appropriate protection from motor traffic on highways

Speed Limit ¹	Motor Traffic Flow (pcu/24 hour) ²	Protected Space for Cycling			Cycle Lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Mixed Traffic
		Fully Kerbed Cycle Track	Stepped Cycle Track	Light Segregation		
20 mph ³	0					
	2000					
	4000					
	6000+					
30 mph	0					
	2000					
	4000					
	6000+					
40 mph	Any					
50+ mph	Any					

Provision suitable for most people

Provision not suitable for all people and will exclude some potential users and/or have safety concerns

Provision suitable for few people and will exclude most potential users and/or have safety concerns

Notes:

1. If the 85th percentile speed is more than 10% above the speed limit the next highest speed limit should be applied
2. The recommended provision assumes that the peak hour motor traffic flow is no more than 10% of the 24 hour flow
3. In rural areas achieving speeds of 20mph may be difficult, and so shared routes with speeds of up to 30mph will be generally acceptable with motor vehicle flows of up to 1,000 pcu per day

Figure 2 – Appropriate protection from motor traffic on highways for cyclists, source: Local Transport Note 1/20 (2020)

With a limited bus service, and no dedicated cycle route, residents will likely be reliant on the use of private cars to access employment, as well as the majority of day-to-day services and facilities within the nearby larger centres.

As a result of the scale of development proposed as well as the recent approvals in both Horton and neighbouring Broadway, this cumulative effect will have significant detrimental impact on the local highway network, resulting in congestion and conflict with other road users.

It is considered that within the wider local road network the proposed development would have particular impact on the capacity of Southfields roundabout at the junction of the A303, A358 and B3168, which experiences frequent congestion, particularly during the summer months.

It is pertinent that in December 2025, the LPA granted outline planning consent for a further 400no. dwellings within neighbouring Ilminster ref. 16/05500/OUT, which will lead to further pressure on this road network. It is the view of the Parish Council that this impact, in consideration of the potential scale of development within the locality, has not been satisfactorily addressed.

The Parish Council therefore object to The Application on the grounds that it would be unsustainably located and would not comply with para. 11 of the NPPF, Policy SS2 of the LP and Policies S5 and TR3 of the dNPPF, which seek for development to be in sustainable locations, that reduce the reliance on private vehicles and would result in adverse impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of further housing development.

The Parish Council therefore also concurs with the response from National Highways and does not consider the submitted Transport Statement sufficiently evidences survey data or trip rates and does not appropriately consider the extent of committed development which will impact on the local highway network.

Landscape and Environment

The scale of development proposed would further erode the landscape setting of the rural village of Horton, defined as character type 26: Tributary Valley Farmland, resulting in urbanization of the countryside character which encompasses the village.

Sewerage

The Parish Council seek reassurance that the foul sewer network has sufficient capacity to cope with the level of development proposed.

Contributions

Notwithstanding the above and the objection to The Application, should the LPA resolve to approve The Application, The Parish Council request a number of obligations to be secured as appropriate through S106 Agreement or ring-fenced from Community Infrastructure Levy payments.

The contributions sought are outlined as follows:

1. The complete upgrade of footpath CH14/24 with a new surface, removal of barriers that stop prams and wheelchairs, clearance of vegetation and edge protection to the River Ding.
2. The improvement of safe pedestrian crossing at the 5-way junction (Five Dials) in the middle of the village. Dropped kerbs, zebra crossings etc. as deemed suitable by Somerset Highway Authority.
3. Funding for a 40mph speed limit along the A358 from Southfields Roundabout to the beginning of the 40mph limit in Puddlebridge and the 30mph limit at Donyatt.
4. Dropped kerbs etc. to help safely cross the A358 at Horton Cross to allow/encourage pedestrian travel to the leisure facilities at Jordans Courtyard and Monks Yard.
5. Funding for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at the recreation ground.
6. Funding for a football pitch to allow The Parish Council to install the size of pitch appropriate to the needs of the village.
7. Funding for a family picnic area near the to existing recreation ground including picnic benches etc.

The above obligations are considered to allow for improvements for pedestrian movements around the parish, as well as allowing for improvements to the current recreation ground in accordance with identified community needs.

Summary

It is considered that the proposed development both alone and in combination with wider development within the village of Horton and the neighbouring village of Broadway, is not commensurate within the scale and character of the settlement of Horton.

Whilst Horton and Broadway present opportunity for access to a range of services, as evidenced these key services are at capacity and as such would be unable to serve the development. The lack of facilities and services, as well as opportunities for employment within the settlement, in combination with The Site being poorly served by sustainable transport, would lead to a significant reliance on private vehicles which is in conflict with achieving sustainably located development.

The Parish Council therefore object to The Application.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor B Mosley
Chair
Horton (Somerset) Parish Council