

Dear Resident of Feniton,

Feniton's Future

You may have seen that East Devon District Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan.

As part of this it has started a "Call for Sites", inviting developers to promote land for new housing and employment use.

The attached letter has been received from Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, stating that it intends to promote land at Sherwood Farm (north-east of Feniton) for housing. Some of you may have seen that this was recently posted on the Feniton Focus Facebook page and is in the March Parish Magazine.

It is understood that the land comprises the fields either side of the road to Colestocks as you leave Feniton village. This could amount to some 35 acres.

It is clear that a lot of people are very unhappy about the prospect of such a development and there are many good reasons why mass housing here would be a really bad thing.

Also attached is a proposed response that we intend to send to Taylor Wimpey

The response sets out clearly the reasons why development here is unwelcome.

If you agree with the response to Taylor Wimpey you can help show your opposition by **adding your name and address to the response**. If you are happy to do this could you please let us know, preferably by **reply to the email address below**.

While the proposal is at the earliest possible stage, it is important for Taylor Wimpey to understand the strength of feeling in the village.

It is quite possible that housing developers may propose other sites around the village in the "Call for Sites".

Feel free to share this with friends and neighbours who may be interested.

Thank you,

Miles Butler, Sherwood Cottage, Feniton, EX14 3DD

Nicola Baker, Lincoln Close, Feniton

Matt Sherwood, Acland Park, Feniton

Email to: fenitonsfuture@gmail.com

Dear Sirs,

Land at Sherwood Farm Feniton

We have become aware of a communication from yourselves outlining your intention to promote land immediately north of Feniton for residential use in the emerging East Devon Local Plan.

While the document, headed as a "Community Update" is addressed to the "Local Residents of Feniton", it would seem that it was not widely circulated to residents by yourselves. We were very surprised that Feniton Parish Council was not itself sent a copy.

We appreciate that you are responding to the Call for Sites that forms part of the Local Plan preparations and that work is at an early stage. However, we want to put on record, even at this stage, the opposition of a great many villagers to the development of this land north of Feniton for a number of reasons, including:

1. Flood Risk.

The land lies between the steep-sided Cheriton Hill and housing in the existing village and at Sherwood. Surface water run-off from Cheriton Hill already poses a flood risk. Flooding within the village is a constant concern in prolonged heavy rain and the road between Feniton and Colestocks floods across its entire width on occasions. It was not long ago that the farmer of Sherwood Farm and a representative of the Environment Agency were on local television describing special deep ploughing techniques in use on these specific fields to increase the ability of the land to hold water and reduce run off into the village. Building on the land will not only negate that effect but will add to surface water run off. There are serious doubts that any viable Sustainable Drainage Scheme can compensate for this increased risk. The proposed development site lies within a Critical Drainage Area and the development would be upstream of the village. Any development that increases the already high risk of flooding to the village and the subsequent risk to the health and well being of residents will be resisted.

2. Inadequate Local Highways.

The highway network to and through the village will not support significant new housing development in this location. Locally, roads are very narrow and the Feniton to Colestocks road has a number of lengths where it is impossible for 2 cars to pass. Sherwood Lane is single track.

Vehicles heading north toward the A373 and Junction 28 of the M5 will pass through settlements at Colestocks, Payhembury, Luton and Dulford where inadequate road widths create pinch points, delays and nuisance for local communities.

Vehicles heading south to the village and beyond to the A30 have first to cross the Exeter/Waterloo railway via a level crossing. This already creates queues when trains are approaching causing congestion and nuisance in the heart of the new village. The only routes for traffic trying to avoid the crossing create rat-running through the intentionally tortuous roads of the new village, or through the narrow lanes to the old village. Both bring attendant road safety and nuisance problems for residents. Any increase in traffic relying on this crossing is very unwelcome.

Beyond the crossing, Ottery Road from the village to the A30 also has a significant pinch point at Metcombe and Sweethams Cottages where 2 cars cannot safely pass together with other narrow stretches that pose a safety threat to pedestrians and cyclists.

3. Primary School Capacity.

The village school is operating at near capacity and demand is already growing. There is no on-site space to expand the school so a significant increase in pupil numbers from new family homes in Feniton cannot be accommodated

4. Damage to the Character of the Area.

Development in the location proposed would dramatically alter the essentially rural nature of the area. This is Grade 1 productive agricultural land providing a managed landscape typical of this part of Devon and cherished by the village. A large new housing development would fundamentally alter the character of the village setting. A development at this scale would also be visible from the scheduled ancient monument of Hembury Fort.

5. Lack of Sustainability.

You may be aware that a Planning Inspector dismissed 3 appeals for large scale development at the village in a "super-inquiry" in 2014. That decision, supported by the Parish Council, concluded that Feniton was not a sustainable location for major development. There are very limited local services within the village itself. Despite the presence of a railway station, the inadequate capacity of the line to provide a viable commuter service, together with a paucity of convenient bus services, mean that new residents would be highly car dependent. The circumstances and conditions that led to the 2014 decision have not changed and consequently the village will not support similar proposals. Any proposal in this location would not be in conformity with the Feniton Neighbourhood Plan 2016 -2031.

While we appreciate that Taylor Wimpey has every right to promote the site in the local plan process we hope it appreciates the level of local resistance that will be met at every stage.

Yours faithfully,