

Formal Objection to Planning Application P26/01046/PIP

Conflict with Green Belt policy and national planning policy

This proposal is fundamentally contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and to the established purpose of Green Belt policy. The site is agricultural land and there is no convincing basis on which it should be regarded as "grey belt". It is therefore an unsuitable and unjustified location for residential development. While the present submission is framed as an application for permission in principle, that does not diminish its significance. Approval would create a highly damaging precedent, materially weakening Green Belt protection at this location and increasing the likelihood of further encroachment on adjoining land. That is precisely the incremental erosion of the Green Belt that planning policy is intended to prevent. Tockington was plainly treated as Green Belt when the village was originally washed over by that designation, and that protection should not now be undermined by speculative development of this nature.

Conflict with the local plan process and unsustainable location

The site did not form part of the L19 locations promoted through the South Gloucestershire Council plan-making process. Following detailed consideration and engagement with parishioners, Olveston Parish Council identified its preferred location at Aust Road, and the outcome of the L19 process remains awaited. In those circumstances, this proposal is premature and cuts across the plan-led approach to the proper consideration of future development. It is therefore inappropriate for this site to be advanced through a separate permission in principle application before that process has concluded.

The suggestion that Tockington and Olveston provide an adequate range of day-to-day services and facilities for this site is not borne out by the facts on the ground. The only facility within convenient walking distance is the village public house. The village shop and local schools are not realistically accessible on foot for routine daily journeys, and neither Tockington nor Olveston provides doctor, dentist, or comparable health facilities. As a result, future occupiers would be heavily dependent on the private car for most everyday needs. Public transport does not overcome that concern: the only available service is the 918, which remains limited and insecure and is not supported through WECA core funding. Taken as a whole, the site cannot reasonably be regarded as a sustainable location for new housing.

Harm to landscape character and heritage setting

The proposal would cause clear harm to the composition of an "important view" identified in the Tockington Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. It would also result in a significant and irreversible change to the rural character of this location and to the approach into the village. Such harm weighs materially against the proposal and further underlines the unsuitability of the site for development.

For all the reasons set out above, this application should be refused.