

21/1701/OUT | Land For Residential Development At Hill Barton Farm Hill Barton Road Exeter Devon

Dear Michael Higgins and the Exeter Planning Team,

The Exeter Cycling Campaign is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this application. We note that this application is all matters reserved, however in an outline application, details of where access is situated must still be provided. Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework states that “Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued, therefore the Campaign’s comments on access should still be taken into account.

The Exeter Cycling Campaign **objects** to this application on the grounds that the walking and cycling links are insufficient to meet local and national sustainability policies and objectives. Should the reserved matters make sufficient alterations to access and design as well as provide clarity on the other matters of cycling provision mentioned below, the Campaign would look forward to being in a position to support a future iteration of this application.

The Exeter Cycling Campaign welcomes the applicant’s recognition of the need to provide walking and cycling provision, including the proposed dedicated off-street pedestrian and cycle route. They state that “The scheme promotes key national and local sustainability policies and objectives”, however no reference is given as to what policies and objectives are promoted or how the application meets these.

The [Devon draft Carbon Plan](#) states an imperative to:

1. Reduce the need to travel
2. Shift to sustainable transport options.

And the Council aims to have 50% of journeys done by foot or bike.

The Exeter Core Strategy Development Plan, which identifies Monkerton / Hill Barton as a key strategic development and focuses on providing a sustainable community, includes the following objectives: “Mitigate and adapt to climate change and Achieve a step change in the use of sustainable transport”. It specifically states for Monkerton / Hill Barton that development will “be orientated on the sustainable movement network and designed so as to reduce the dominance of vehicles within the public realm”.

It is not sufficient to merely encourage walking and cycling, they must be enabled through good permeable design and safe infrastructure. Walking and cycling journeys should be at least as attractive or more so than use of the private car, particularly for short journeys.

The application recognises that there are significant employment areas nearby in The Met Office, Sowton Industrial Estate and Exeter Business Park, bounding the site to the south and east. In addition, several major bus routes (78, B, and RED) and the high quality E4 cycle route are along Cumberland Way to the East. The applicant states this plan integrates “cycle routes and footpaths to link to the surrounding area to encourage walking and cycling”. However no cycling or walking links have been provided through to these employment areas, bus routes or the E4 cycle route from the East/South East of the site (the South itself being blocked by the Met Office). The Transport Assessment states “the Proposed Development will deliver a

21/1701/OUT | Land For Residential Development At Hill Barton Farm Hill Barton Road Exeter Devon

further pedestrian and cyclist access to the northeast of the site, onto Hollow Lane. This would enable direct and convenient walking and cycling routes towards Tithebarn Green and the Exeter Science Park.”

Exeter Cycling Campaign disputes that this is providing a direct or convenient route and has concerns about the safety of the route. Hollow Lane is classed in the original application as “quieter road suitable for cycling” and in the new scheme there are indeed 2 access points indicated as pedestrian and cycle links onto Hollow Lane. Whilst Hollow Lane has been filtered at its junction with Ellen Tinkham School and provides a through route for cyclists and pedestrians only, it is extremely narrow with poor visibility, few safe passing places and a poorly maintained surface. There are significant vehicular movements at both ends of school rush hour and the road itself is not suitable or safe to be the only cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to the East of the site. Furthermore, for those trying to access areas to the South of the site, the use of Hollow lane is a significant detour, particularly for pedestrians, adding almost a kilometre to reach the roundabout of Oberon road with Cumberland Way, compared to a direct connection with Oberon Road. Therefore, to meet the ambition of 50% of journeys done by foot or bike, and link up with public transport, a pedestrian and cycle route connecting directly to Oberon Road should be established at the outset, prior to occupation of any of the dwellings. The application mentions there may be a desire to add a vehicular link to this road in the future. The Exeter Cycling Campaign would be extremely concerned with the potential impact this could have on the high quality E4 cycle route. However a bus only connection here allowing services to serve the site and the wider Hill Barton area would be welcomed, provided safe cycling and pedestrian access were also maintained.

Within the site, the application states “The scheme promotes pedestrian and cycle movement, as well as on road cycle provision throughout the site” and includes a “dedicated off-street pedestrian and cycle route” along the primary street. The Exeter Cycling Campaign would expect this to adhere to the design specifications given in LTN 1/20. In particular, we note that this route will be continually crossed by private driveways, especially considering that there is front of plot parking for large numbers of houses. We expect this to make this route hazardous, particularly at rush hour, with unpredictable vehicle movements. To mitigate this we would expect to see traffic calming measures included such as maintaining a level surface for the dedicated walking and cycling route thus providing a raised table crossing for vehicles. Any landscaping and vegetation should also ensure there is excellent visibility of all vehicle movements at all times from this route.

Finally, we note that the only mention of cycle parking appears to be in the Transport Assessment which states “All units will be provided with cycle parking in line with the Exeter City Council Sustainable Transport SPD”. We would expect LTN 1/20 to be adhered with and garden sheds/dedicated storage with secure cycle racks to be provided for every dwelling, including apartments. This will allow all residents and families to own and safely store bicycles without taking away living space in houses – often a key disincentive to owning a bike and cycling to work or school. This should be provided before homes are occupied to enable and encourage sustainable travel patterns from first occupation and could be secured by a condition.

21/1701/OUT | Land For Residential Development At Hill Barton Farm Hill Barton
Road Exeter Devon

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We look forward to how the Applicant proposes to address these concerns so that we can remove our objection.

Yours sincerely

Helen Mako-Yule for and on behalf of:

EXETER CYCLING CAMPAIGN

exetercyclingcampaign.org.uk | Twitter: @ExeterCycling | Facebook: ExeterCyclingCampaign