

General

In the interest of the principal of sustainability and mitigating climate change we should not be building housing estates on greenfield sites. Apart from doing so is likely to increase the number of vehicular journeys and thus carbon emissions, scientists have recently stressed the importance of grassland in combating climate change. The act of digging into the ground releases stored carbon and new housing construction also uses scarce resources extracted from our planet. Therefore when looking to meeting housing needs there should be an emphasis on repurposing existing buildings (for example retail or office buildings that are no longer in use), ensuring empty houses are brought back into use, discouraging ownership of second homes where there is a housing shortage for local people. Once a greenfield site is developed for housing there is an immediate loss of habitat.

Whilst the VCHAP states that brownfield sites are preferred, such sites are scarce in rural areas and more likely to be found in urban areas.

Question 8 : site SN0400 - Church Meadow, Alington

I do not agree to the allocation of this site as a preferred site for up to 25 dwellings. As previously stated I do not agree with the principle of building on greenfield sites/open countryside on the edges of small rural villages due to the impact this would have on sustainability, climate change, loss of habitat and biodiversity, and the local community.

Despite the comment in the Site Assessment that access to Church Meadow is satisfactory, all access roads to Alington are narrow single lanes with passing places. Any construction vehicles would have to access the site through the existing residential development causing considerable disruption to residents.

A new housing development of 25 dwellings is likely to considerably increase the number of vehicle journeys in the surrounding area as typically there may be two to three vehicles per household making journeys for employment, medical needs, main shopping and secondary education as none of these needs can be met in the Village and public transport is extremely limited.

I am also concerned about the impact such a development would have on local infrastructure such as waste water management and sewerage. I note that Anglian Water has concerns about the existing sewers crossing the site.

I dispute the need for a further 25 dwellings being built on a greenfield site on the edge of the existing Settlement Limit. I feel that development in villages such as Alington and Yelverton is better served by smaller windfall sites, preferably on brownfield sites or repurposed buildings. Over the last three years there have been 11 new homes added or in the process of being added to the villages' housing stock in this way.

If this site were to be allocated then the following specific requirements should be set out in the allocation policy:

- 1) A maximum of 16 dwellings to include some affordable homes.
- 2) An appropriate mix of housing types to include smaller starter homes, single storey, i.e. not just large 4/5 bed detached homes.
- 3) Inclusion of significant areas of open space, in particular a "buffer zone" between the existing homes on Church Meadow and the new housing perhaps to include screening planting and a wildlife habitat area near the veteran tree.
- 4) Footpath access to connect with existing public footpaths alongside the Garrick Field and the footpath linking to Wheel Road and Yelverton Old Hall.

- 5) Retention of all existing boundary hedgerows and trees
- 6) Houses to include as many green/climate friendly features as possible, such as solar panels and renewable energy heating systems.
- 7) Features that are friendly to wildlife, such as eaves incorporating nest boxes, hedgehog highways, wildflower planting.
- 8) Ecological surveys carried out before any work commences and not just desk studies. Owls have been seen hunting at the site so it's likely that there is plentiful small mammals living in the area together with invertebrates and birds.

Question 9 - Site SN0529SL Nichols Road, Alington

I object to the proposed use of the site for a Settlement Limit Extension.

As previously stated brownfield sites should be developed in preference to greenfield sites for the reasons previously stated. In addition specific to this site although the size of the site (proposed for up to six dwellings) is more in keeping with small scale development for the Village, the access from the extremely narrow Nichols Road is not satisfactory and the site would require extensive landscaping to the side and rear that faces open views of the surrounding landscape. In addition there's a mature Oak tree that would probably require felling in order to extend the footpath and access to the site should it go ahead.