

SOUTHWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Chair: Cllr Stephen Carey, Longfield, Frome Road, Southwick, BA14 9PG

Clerk: Nicola Duke, April Rise, 81 Studland Park, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HN 01373 864127

Julie Mitchell
Case Officer
Planning Department
Wiltshire Council
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
WILTSHIRE
BA13 3NY

15th April 2026

Dear Ms Mitchell

PL/2026/01383 - Land off Blind Lane, Southwick, Wiltshire - The development of 90 dwellings with new access from Blind Lane internal roads and footpaths, areas of open space (including play space), drainage, landscaping and associated plant and works

The above listed planning application was considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th April 2026 and I am directed by the Chair and members to lodge the Parish Council's **OBJECTION** to the application.

The Parish Council objects to the application as being contrary to the made Neighbourhood Plan for Southwick. The proposed development is contrary to the policies of the adopted plan, which allocates sites for small scale development only. The status of Neighbourhood Plans would therefore be seriously undermined if this application were to be approved.

The Parish Council objects to the application as being contrary to Wiltshire Council planning policy as evidenced below:

The proposed development is contrary to Wiltshire Council's Spatial Strategy, in that:

1. CP1 states that Development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities. There is no evidenced local housing need to justify this excessively large development of 90 dwellings and the proposals contain no improvements to local opportunities, services and facilities, which are already inadequate and will be further challenged by a development of this size. The application therefore runs contrary to the adopted spatial strategy, which focuses the bulk of new housing in the more sustainable market towns and local service centres.
2. In accordance with CP1 the scope for expansion in large and small villages is limited, with settlement boundaries drawn relatively tightly around the settlement. The proposed development is for a greenfield site which is outside the settlement boundary for Southwick.

3. CP2 states that outside of the defined limits of development, development will not be permitted save for exceptions in respect of additional employment land, military establishments, development related to tourism, rural exception sites, specialist accommodation and in respect of the conversion of rural buildings. The proposed development meets none of these criteria.
4. The proposed development of 90 houses is contrary to the Spatial Strategy in that it does not represent a sustainable development (the PC's comments relating to travel, infrastructure and services evidence this). The Parish Council is therefore of the view that the 'tilted balance' resulting from the lack of a 5 year housing land supply should not apply in determining this application.

The proposed development represents significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and is contrary to Core Strategy policies CP51, CP52 and CP57 in that:

1. The application site has a very strong rural character; the open fields are currently productive arable land. The site therefore has a locally distinctive character and landscape and the proposed development would have a devastating impact on local character and appearance as well as resulting in the loss of valued arable land.
2. The proposed development is contrary to CP57 in that it is not complementary to the locality; the scale of the development is out of keeping with the village character of the parish of Southwick. The proposals, if approved, would completely transform the character and appearance of the village and would have significant harm the distinctive village identity of Southwick.

The proposed development is contrary to CP60 and CP61 in that it does not minimise the need to travel, particularly by public transport:

1. The application site lies outside of the settlement and proposes up to 90 houses. The limited availability of public transport links will ensure that the development has poor levels of active travel. The vast majority of journeys would therefore need to be undertaken by private car, leading to unsustainable travel patterns and increased congestion on local roads.
2. The lack of pedestrian links are inadequate and create serious issues of highway safety. As an example, there is currently no way for pedestrians to safely cross Blind Lane and Frome Road.

The Parish Council further objects to the application on the following material grounds:

1. Highway safety
 - a. The proposed development would result in significant traffic generation adding to already busy and congested roads. The route through Southwick is already heavily used as a commuter and transportation route and the Parish Council has been working with Wiltshire Council to identify measures to combat speeding issues. The traffic generated by the proposed development would significantly add to this already high figure.
 - b. The Parish Council is already extremely concerned over highway safety along Frome Road. There have been frequent accidents along this congested route.
 - c. The Parish Council is extremely concerned at the routes available to access the proposed development. Blind Lane is a narrow 'lane' which does not flow freely at the current time and is already congested. The impact of the development on the lane would create a serious highway safety issue and add to the congestion, especially during school drop off and pick up times.
 - d. The impact of the construction itself will present significant highway issues along the narrow and busy lanes, as well as creating long term disruption for residents.

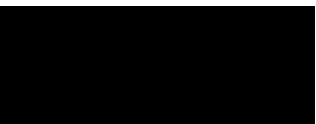
- e. The access to the development from the main Frome Road would also create issues of highway safety due to the high volumes and speeds of traffic. The traffic flow to and from the development would therefore be congested and dangerous.
- 2. Drainage and flood risk
 - a. The Parish Council is aware of frequent flooding in Blind Lane and Wesley Lane and is concerned that the proposed development will both suffer from and add to already significant flooding and drainage issues.
- 3. Effect on wildlife and nature
 - a. The Parish Council is greatly concerned at the negative impact of the proposed development on wildlife and nature, including on important species of bats.
 - b. The LPA is asked to ensure that, if the application is approved, the biodiversity net gain mitigation is applied within the parish of Southwick and not 'banked'.
- 4. Impact on services
 - a. The impact of the development on already stretched local services and facilities is of grave concern to the Parish Council. Local services are limited within the parish itself and residents will therefore have to travel to access these in larger towns, which are already overstretched in terms of the provision of services and facilities.
 - b. The capacity of local technical infrastructure is also of concern and is not felt to be sufficient to handle a potential development of this size, especially in respect of drainage.

The Parish Council requests that the Local Planning Authority also give regard to the following non-material considerations:

- 1. The Parish Council notes that the developer has provided an on-site play area however, the parish already has a well-used and well-loved recreational play area. The provision of on-site facilities is therefore likely to isolate the new development from the community.
- 2. The Parish Council objects to a Sports Pitches and Courts contribution being allocated off site. Although Southwick has both senior and junior football pitches as well as a cricket pitch, due to limited space the Parish lacks a hard surfaced multigame activity area (MUGA). Members have noted that there is a perfect position for a MUGA in the south east corner of the proposed development, which is away from both existing and proposed new houses. A hard surfaced MUGA court should be financed and provided on the proposed site for village use.
- 3. The Parish Council notes that the developer proposes to upgrade Public Rights of Way by replacing stiles, this will not improve access and the installation of kissing gates would be a more suitable option.
- 4. The Parish Council notes that the social housing provided is not distributed throughout the development and the lack of disbursement is against best practice.
- 5. The Parish Council meeting convened specifically to consider the application was attended by 25 residents. The LPA is asked to note the strong level of public feeling against the proposals contained in this application.

In conclusion, the Parish Council registers its **OBJECTION** to the application.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Duke B.A (Hons), FSLCC
Parish Clerk
For and on behalf of
Southwick Parish Council