

PLANNING APPLICATION – PL/2026/03743

SUNNYSIDE, HOLLOWAY LANE, EAST KNOYLE, SALISBURY, WILTS. SP36AH

COMMENTS BY: ANN FIELDING

Previous correspondence: in response to initial notification of application;
Letter dated June 23rd 2026, to Planning and to Building Control.

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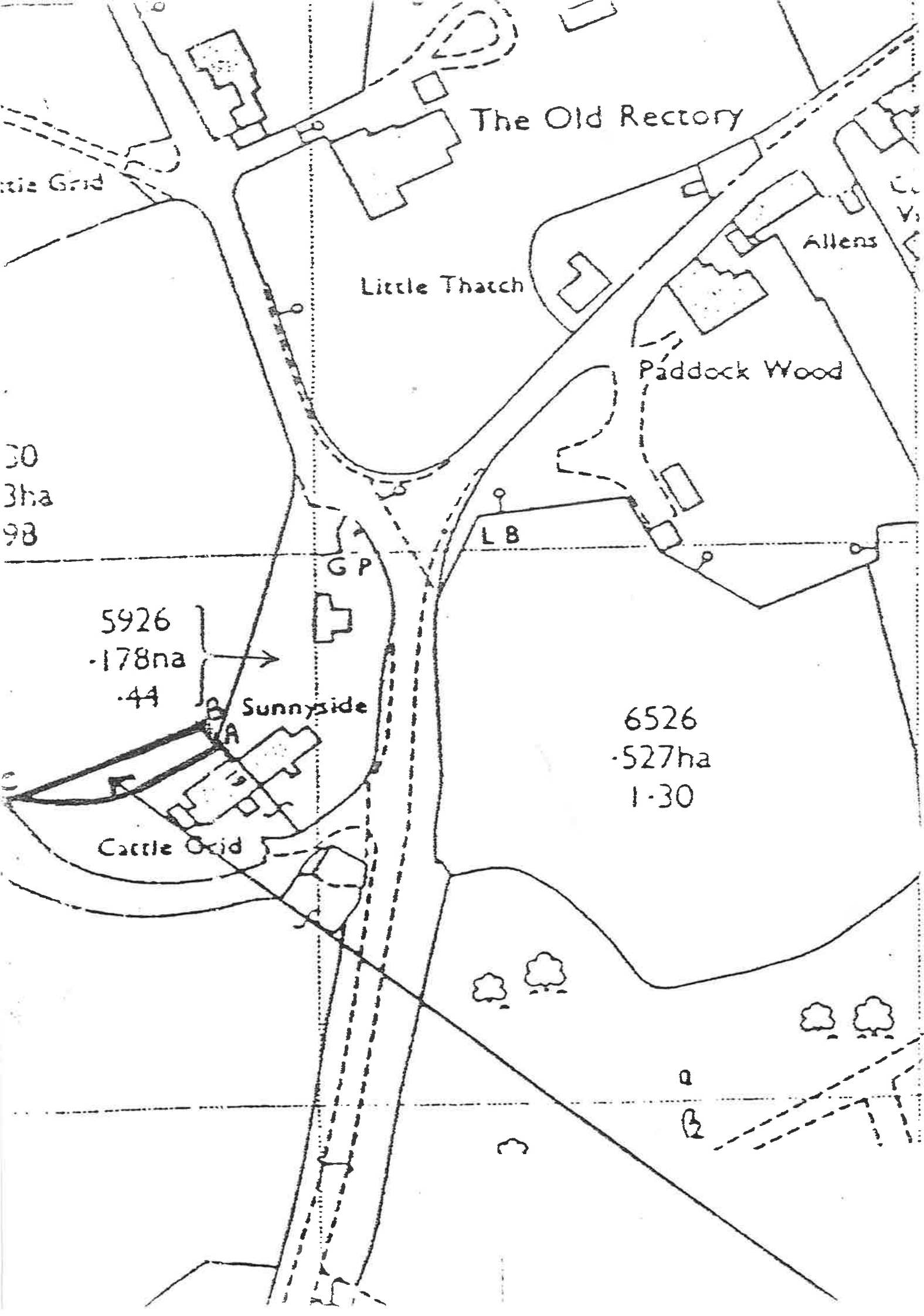
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INTRODUCTION

East Knoyle is an ancient village set in rolling countryside near the Dorset border. The village in medieval times was owned by the church, and the Bishopric of Winchester went from here to establish the village of Hindon about 900 years ago. The wood between Holloway lane and the village street was said to be Bishops deer park

Later much of the property was owned by the Seymour estate, Jane Seymour being Henry 8ths wife. The cottages Sunnyside and Bluebell were four cottages built by the estate in the 1800s, and consolidated into two cottages. They are built of solid 2ft wide greensand walls faced by brick in the front. The softer paler brick of Sunnyside is similar to that of Copse View, which I was told dates to the 1770s. The chimneys, I was told, are high with ledges suggesting thatch, which later be replaced by higher brick walls. The fireplaces are old, a wide wooden beam in Sunnyside, and a Victorian brick in Bluebell, behind which is an ancient corbelled one.

After the ownership moved to the Wyndhams many properties including these cottages, in I think the 1920s, were sold, previously being rented to estate tenants. Subsequently they were improved, Burt Chubb after the war building a brick extension, and maybe then retiling the roof.

When I bought Bluebell Cottage in 1985, the only other properties on this part of Holloway Lane were the thatched house The Pheasantry, and the grey walled and tiled Council houses. After 1986 the grey walled and tiled bungalows Great Ground and Tironui were erected. Towards Underhill the properties are stone and brick , tiled. Towards the village along Holloway Lane they are stone and brick with thatch or tiles. Most are good sized, old traditional buildings.

Holloway Lane is an attractive winding tree lined country lane with some beautiful views. The whole area is part of the Cranbourne Chase National Area. The village is classed in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as a Small Village.

There is very little public transport in the village, a bus once a week, an on call bus, or a Tisbury charity bus. Most residents have cars, and except for the excellent village shop, shopping, health, motor and other facilities are sought in local small towns, two in Dorset.

Young people often leave the village to seek work and a fuller life, and older residents often leave when they can no longer drive. Many villagers are self employed working from home, or retired, or work outside of the county.

COMMENTS AND OBJECTIONS

A) Re: Atlas Planning Statement and Planning Application

LANDSCAPING AND OUTLOOK

The proposal to demolish Sunnyside and erect two modern houses has been supported by Atlas on the grounds that it complies with the planning objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Village Development Strategy and the Cranbourne Chase observations. In fact it directly contradicts all of these.

These objectives are plainly to retain and enhance the landscape, make only changes which are compatible with the local building materials and character of village properties. The demolishing of the cottage is put forward on the grounds that it is a 20th century poorly built property, which is untrue. The case is put that it is damp, rising and penetrating damp. This is due entirely to the neglect of the owners over the last decade. An experienced member of the building trade had told me that the property could be made warm and dry for less than £20,000, ie: damp proof course, pointing, gutters, roofing, lintels, etc, which would be cheaper than demolishing it.

The cottage sits back from the road, and is built below the ground level. So looking from the road only the roofline is visible above the hedge. The road is much higher, and the ground slopes from the road down towards the field at the back. The proposed modern building would have a gable end of two stories sitting high, maybe 9metres, at almost road level, jutting beyond the line of building, only about 8 metres from the road, fronted by an assembly of parked cars, half the trackside hedge having been removed. The metal zinc roof would present a broad intrusion to the eyes of people approaching from the top of the road.

Atlas answered “no” to “can the site be seen from the road?” It is beside the road and can be seen clearly.

The whole development uses materials that are alien to the local properties. They are not eco friendly-- the poor occupants will suffer from the boiling heat of a metal roof and windows, the cold air seeping through the cracks in the wooden cladding. The materials might last decades, whereas refurbished Sunnyside would last centuries. In the last five heatwaves my cottage living room has been a cool 15 degrees without fans or air conditioning, due to the thick stone walls. In winter I have no central heating, and these walls keep it warm.

I suggest that keeping and restoring Sunnyside would provide the three bedrooms needed at much less cost and disruption, and the further two bedrooms could be provided by a grey walled and tiled property located on ground labelled plot 2.

OVERLOOKING NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY

Core Policy 57 regards it as unacceptable that a development should overlook or over shadow another property, cause a loss of privacy and disturbance. Atlas state that they comply with this.

The terrace shown in Plot 1 is almost as high as the eaves of Bluebell Cottage, and about two metres away. People standing can look down into the front and rear gardens of Bluebell Cottage and conversations will be heard. From the room windows of Plot 1 house it will be possible from the back to see into Bluebell garden and the front overshadows the front garden and the windows of Bluebell from the morning sun, and the windows overlook the front garden and all visitors.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Atlas states that four car places should be sufficient, and offers road parking as an alternative. With each adult occupant needing a car, this leaves no parking for visitors, nowhere for delivery vans to park without holding up road traffic and posing a danger to large tractors and vehicles that often sweep at speed round the bend from Underhill.

The entrance is not visible from the bend from Underhill, and it is not visible from the road looking south =. If you stand where the car would be and look right you cannot see the 30mph disc about 20 metres away. Vehicles coming from the south cannot see the entrance because of the bend in the road. It is a dangerous exit point, and sometimes the road can be very busy and too fast.

Cars parked as shown would have to back in, being at risk, or back out onto the road, even worse risk.

All traffic could cause problems with traffic entering and leaving Bluebell and Great Ground. This could be very serious if the elderly occupants needed an ambulance. If entry was blocked the owners could not park anywhere else, and Bluebell cottage would be completely inaccessible.

There is almost no good on road parking available for a long way

Atlas states that Holloway is "lightly trafficked". Sometimes it is quiet, but at certain times of year it is extremely busy with heavy tractors pulling vast heavy trailers, with delivery vans, and with cars going to work or coming home. It is the main route from the A350 to access the roads to Mere or Gillingham.

FLOOD RISK AND ROAD WATER INSTABILITY

In the Planning Application Atlas stated that there is no flood risk. Sunnyside has experienced flooding at least twice. In 2013 there was heavy prolonged rain and the dining room flooded. The tenants told me that it came up through the floor, which was subsequently replaced with Somali stone. .

North of the village is a wooded hill, two contours high, which is greensand. Going towards Underhill from Holloway you drive through a tree lined windy piece called Sandpits where they quarried the sand. Below the sand is clay. Water travels through sand, but cannot go through the clay, so it sits on a water table, and comes out at the junction in springs .

Rainwater comes as surface water from high on the hill near Clouds, and passes through drainage pipes down the fields and the Old Rectory garden onto the road near the postbox at the junction. Much of this water floods in torrents down Holloway Lane after prolonged rain, joined by the spring water. There is a spring opposite Sunnyside. Then road is about 8ft above the floor levels of the cottages.

When I bought Bluebell Cottage in 1985, it was moving. The elderly lady had driven down her track to her garage on the west end of the cottage and the water followed, softening the clay so that it could not carry the weight of the cottage. Wide cracks formed in the walls, and when it dried, heave. The glass telltales put over the cracks broke every night. However, advised by a structural engineer, I asked the Council to put a bund at the top of the track. This diverted the water down the road and now after 41 years my cottage has not moved.

If water from the road is allowed access to either Bluebell or Sunnyside the clay will be affected and lose its structural strength. It will cause structural problems to any property on the land affected. Diggers or lorries carrying heavy loads could lead water onto the site, and repair work would come too late.

SEWAGE AND WASTE WATER

Atlas answered this planning application question with the words "unknown". The main sewage pipe follows the track to the sewer in the field belonging to Great Ground, but this is well above the level of the properties which are below the track and road.

So any sewage from the Sunnyside site would have to either join the sewage system of Bluebell, which could well be overloaded, or need new pipes across Scott's field, crossing the track to Roger Jesse's field to be low enough to flow into the sewer at a point much further away.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT. Site Visit 23rd March 2026

The Environment Act 2021 includes a requirement that developments to provide 10% biodiversity net gain. So there is every incentive to downplay the habitat before work takes place, and to make plans to show a great increase the habitat afterwards.

In 4.10 the southern lawn is described as containing primrose, but failed to point out that there is a carpet of these wild flowers which make quite a visual impact. There are usually bluebells here as well. In summer there are many wild flowers such as speedwell, self heal and ground ivy in the mown lawn which would not have been visible in March.

4.11 Willow is an important tree for wildlife, so I am surprised that this tree was excluded.

4.13 The hedge on the southern boundary is described as "a native hedgerow dominated by hawthorn with frequent bramble." In fact it is an ancient hedge comprising hazel, blackthorn, box, bramble, field maple, a couple of hawthorns, ivy and thistles. The plans show that half this hedge would be removed. This hedge is very popular with small birds for nesting sites.

There is undisturbed ground on both sides of this hedge, and it is not heavily managed, I myself only clipping the occasional protruding brambles and thistles. In the past there have been violets at the trackside base, and there are primroses, periwinkle and celandines there.

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On the planning application Atlas to the question "are there trees or hedges on the proposed site?" answered "No". Asked "Are there trees or hedges on land adjacent that might be important as part of landscape character?" "No" Neither of these answers are true. There are the following trees and hedges that can be seen now on the site and on adjacent land:

Sunnyside site: Front garden close to above hedge : small acer tree; Front garden along boundary with Bluebell: holly tree , hazel tree; Right hand side of entry to car parking: a tall hedge with cork barked elm (tree and hedge), beech (tree height,) lower Ionicera hedge, bramble; From this road hedge towards rear alongside Tironui: more cork barked elm, bramble. From the end of the ancient hedge above mentioned, towards the house: small laurel bush; tall hazel with nuts being eaten yesterday by squirrel, small thorn tree, Mexican orange blossom bush, further tree which may be dogwood or similar by house steps.

Adjacent site: Bluebell Cottage garden: full of trees and bushes: Very tall hawthorn, holly, fruit bushes, Ionicera, bird cherry, forsythia, apple, pear, damson, plum, beech, ash, lilac, and other trees further into the garden.

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On the BNG assessment of current habitat baseline, none of the above trees and bushes are mentioned. I would think that the "current habitat baseline" should be revised accordingly.

Proposed Habitats

Proposed: An area of field grass “modified grass” would be retained, and presumably fenced off, and four native trees planted there. This would of course increase the area of habitat, but would conflict with the clear architect plan to have windows and terraces overlooking the view. The view would in time be blocked by the trees, and I would suggest they might then be removed.

The hedge to the right hand side of the present car entrance would seem to be retained by looking at the plans, and would exist between Plot 2 and the road. It is not clear if all this hedge would stay. The hedge bushes alongside Tironui would clearly be removed, and also the line of trees and bushes between the southern hedge and the old cottage.

It is surprising that there was never a field hedge at the rear of the plot. If a new hedge is planted it would be a useful increase in habitat. Whether the loss of ancient hedge in the front, where it is removed in front of the car parking area, and the loss of trees and bushes is greater or less than the improvements might now be open to question. Certainly it would seem that table 2 would need to be revisited, and the Net Gain be open to question.

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT (BATS)

The building was searched for bats and no evidence found. This does not specify whether an inspection was made of the lofts, which, I am told, are quite accessible. Also it is not clear whether outbuildings, ie: the summerhouse or sheds were inspected.

A "presence /absence survey was taken on 15/08/25. No bats were recorded emerging or entering the building.

A note states that. "This report is valid for twelve months from the site inspection."

So it expired on 15 /08/2026. It is stated that a further survey would be needed before any work started. The property has been vacant since May2025.

Another survey was included which was undertaken on July 19th 2015. At this time the property was inhabited, and had not fallen into its present state of disrepair.

The August survey took place from 8pm to 10-30pm with sunset at 8-30pm. Multiple calls from Pipistrelle bats were heard. They were recorded foraging , but not seen entering the property.

The observation is that the surrounding habitat is good with better foraging and roosting habitats. This would be true as I treat my garden at Bluebell as a wildlife refuge. In August 2025 at 10pm I recorded that there were multiple bats flitting between the tall trees in my back garden, together with a tawney owl sitting in a tree. These would be very close to the Sunnyside site. However I understand that many larger bat species only fly later at night when it is dark. On August 15th2026 at 5am a very large bat flew close to me on my track leading to my cottage.

ECOLOGY AND CLIMATE CONTROL.

1, When these cottages were built in the 1800's, transport in rural places would have been difficult and local materials would have been used. Sand was just up at the Underhill quarry. There was another quarry at Upton, maybe greensand stone, and bricks made at Brickyard Farm, not far away towards Gillingham. Concrete tiles made later after the war may also have used local sand.

By contrast the materials for Plots 1&2 would have used many barrels of fossil fuels on huge ships to carry them: Zinc from China or Peru; Aluminium from China, and timber. From Canada or the USA. Once here they would have to go depots far away, then down on lorries to local sites.

Timber is associated with deforestation and loss of biodiversity.

2. My previous June letter outlines the question of transfer of heat in various materials, and U values, please see. Metals transfer heat or cold very quickly. Wood gets poor and shabby.

3. A recent TV programme showed a school in, I think, Maidstone, where the students found cool peace in wartime tunnels, when the modern school building was unbearably hot. Modern buildings are not always progressive!

4. Holloway Lane must have few equals in Wiltshire for ecological quality. East is the ancient Park Coppice woodland, full of wood anemonies (an ancient woodland marker), bluebells, stitchwort, violets, red campion etc. The road ditch contains rare ferns, and on the west side an ancient hedge and ditch, with fields of grazing sheep or hay making. West of this is another wood.

So wild mammals: deer, badgers, foxes, hares, mice, voles, shrews and birds, bats, butterflies, bees and beetles, frogs, toads and at the top of the road newts and slowworms are crossing or have been run over on the road. Bats fly over the council houses towards the fields, and by Bluebell cottage. Different woodpeckers come across and many songbirds,

So this area has great value for ecology.

5. Regarding the energy usage of Sunnyside, there would be every reason to install a heat pump and solar panels for this property, which would increase its value as a low carbon unit. This way it might well exceed the value of Plot 1, which depends on slabbing and insulation. Some insulation is a fire risk, and some deteriorates and gets infested.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the Wiltshire Core Strategy for Small Villages it states that “development should be limited to infill if it meets housing needs or provides services or facilities”. “ Development should respect the existing character or form of settlement” “it should not impose development on a sensitive landscape area”

The proposed plans would exceed the line of settlement, and impose an alien trading estate type development using materials not seen elsewhere in the village. The present peaceful view of the roof of a traditional cottage behind a mixed native hedge with nesting birds, would be replaced by an ugly two storey structure and a bevy of parked cars. The problems caused on adjacent tracks and roads will cause obstruction, arguments, road parking, and probably accidents.

Any increase in housing would probably be used by people working out of the county.

The Core strategy does not favour “consolidation of an existing sporadic form of development” which seems clearly what is happening with this type of proposal.

The proposer has a business interest in “Eco houses”(see Companies House), and so motivation appears to be not the interests of the village or county, but the provision of demonstration properties. This could be surely done on a less sensitive site which will avoid causing endless problems to neighbours and inhabitants in the future.

A neighbouring planning proposal (Please see my June letter) has been refused.

In conclusion, we feel that the best solution would be to retain and repair the traditional cottage of Sunnyside, and if a strong need is felt to increase housing provision, to build a small two bedroomed chalet bungalow on the Plot 2 site, comprised of the same building type and materials as Tironui and Great Ground, with extra space for parking.

The native ancient mixed hedge in the front of the properties should be retained in full to protect the owners of Bluebell cottage and Great Ground from loss of property and a give a more softened view from the road.

Ann R Fielding. August 23rd 2026