

To the Parish Council in Batheaston,

We oppose any planning application, which proposes the erection of up to 15 new buildings in The Batch (known as BES 3) and 30 houses on the adjacent land (known as BES 4) according to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment plan from November 2013 for among others the following reasons:

- * The Batch is in a Conservation area, an AONB and Green Belt. The majority of houses in the street are listed and date back to as far as the 17th century. The Batch forms the most southern part of the monks' causeway leading to St Catherines. All buildings hold a historical value and Poplar House together with neighbouring houses is mentioned and known as a point of historical and architectural interest. It is built on cavalier grounds with remnants still visible.
- * The safety aspect for two reasons:
 - 1 No geological analysis of the hill sides has taken place with regards to Bes 3 or 4.
In L972 half of the Avondale garage at the end of The Batch was buried by a landslide caused by heavy rains. This, it was found, was due to Midford sand, which is one of the sub strata on the lower slopes of Solsbury hill.
 - 2 The Batch serves as a pedestrian walkway (7.0m wide in places with double yellow lines) to neighbouring schools with dozens of children and their parents wandering the Batch every morning and afternoon. An added 100-150 cars will create an unsafe area with high levels of pollution. The number of cars is based on the plans that Bes 3 and 4 would be interlinked.
- * It should be made clear that nursery houses do not constitute brown belt. They are removable structures and their current existence should not by any means be a deciding factor on any impending housing plans. The area has lapsed horticultural use and should be kept as such. Their prevailing existence must be interpreted as the current owner's choice to keep them.
- * This proposal contradicts The Village Design Statement, last updated 4 January 2013. The document acts as Supplementary Planning Guidance and clearly states that: "...Broadly speaking, it is easier and cheaper to replace more modern buildings than older ones, and pre-industrial buildings are to all intents and purposes irreplaceable ...Thus pre-1840 buildings and their environment require the most stringent protection... leaving the area which requires the most stringent control as the Conservation Area, encompassing much of Northend and the High Street (again especially as it affects listed buildings and their environment)." The houses in the Batch fall into the same category.
- * The Village Design Statement clearly states that ..."It is important to maintain a "well-treed" green space to separate Bath and Batheaston, and also to maintain and enhance the approach to the Village from the West which is technically Bath. It is recommended that this 'maintenance/enhancement' be achieved by maintaining tree cover." BES 4 currently is that boundary between Bath and Batheaston.
- * Building houses on London Road will create traffic chaos for a long time if not forever. We all know that the queues that build up every morning and evening, also due to the toll-bridge and people's route to and from work. The ring-road was created to try and protect the village centre from the type of congestion which is now being proposed. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment plan from November 2013 presents a list containing six possible sites for Batheaston, whereof the last one, known as BES 6 is deemed high in suitability and would be able to accommodate 50 houses. The fact that this site is called Bathford Nurseries should be of no consequence, as this location is within the Batheaston boundary
- * There has not been a proper analysis of protected wildlife in the Batch. There are garden birds, foxes, badgers, dormice, sparrow hawk, barn owls, tawny owls, toads, Munkjak deer, adders, bats and hedgehogs
- * The properties on the Batch and immediate surrounding area including parts of the High street would suffer a devastating blow in terms of loss of financial value with long drawn out appeals against it. We run a very well regarded four star Bed and Breakfast and would not like to see our business ruined. Our guests frequent the pubs in Batheaston and equally use the other facilities. All business opportunities in Batheaston should be safe guarded and encouraged.
- * Since the discussion started 237 people have come forward and signed a petition and the numbers are rising.

With regards,

Stephen and Susanne Hagen Poplar House, The Batch