

Mr James Kirkman
Stable Lodge
Oxford Road
Middleton Stoney
OX25 4TE

23rd November 2023

Re: Planning Application for Land Adjacent to Stable Lodge, Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to provide a supporting statement for our application to build a modest family home in Middleton Stoney. The plot of land in question sits adjacent to Stable Lodge in Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire. As long time residents of the village we are invested in the well-being and growth of our community. We believe that this proposal aligns with the principles of responsible and sustainable development while respecting the unique character of Middleton Stoney.

The proposed development provides us with an opportunity to stay close to our family and support network, allowing us to raise our family in a familiar and supportive environment. Building a house in this area holds immense significance for both of us. Soaring house prices in the locality have made it increasingly challenging for us to afford to buy our own home. Due to Flora's medical situation it is likely that in the near future, my income will be the only one supporting our family. Middleton Stoney is the village in which Flora grew up and we would be forever grateful for the ability to raise a family next door to her childhood home with support for us right on the doorstep.

Our Architect Coleman Hicks' meticulous approach to design has ensured that the proposed house design seamlessly integrates with the existing architecture of Middleton Stoney, including the neighbouring property of Stable Lodge. The careful selection of materials, scale, and style contributes to the overall harmony of the area serving to enhance the visual appeal of our village. It is obvious that Middleton Stoney holds a rich historical charm. The proposed house design not only respects the heritage of the area but also incorporates modern amenities, striking a balance that ensures the village's unique identity remains intact.

We are dedicated to minimising environmental impact and this is evident in our choice of sustainable materials and commitment to energy efficient technologies. Our willingness to comply with environmental regulations underscores a responsible approach to a single development. The mature hedging and trees surrounding the site will ensure minimal visibility from Stable Lodge, Middleton Stoney House, and the Oxford Road. Sayers Bungalow is the only location from which the development will be visible, and as such, the design has taken measures to enhance screening by planting trees set back from their boundary in order to be respectful of the residents quality of life. Our commitment to additional tree and wild flower planting further contributes to the rural environment and support of biodiversity in our village.

Neighbourhood Plan Compliance:

We would like to draw attention to the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP), adopted in 2019, which designates Middleton Stoney as a Category C village. While Category C

villages may not be required to take minor development schemes, the inclusion of the application site within the indicative settlement boundary of Middleton Stoney in the MCNP strengthens the case for this development. The proposed infill development aligns with the concept of a space situated between two buildings, a precedent seen in other parts of Middleton Stoney, such as the Rectory Court development. Comparing the proposed plot size of 50m, with 30m designated for construction and the remaining 20m for tree planting, to the average plot size of similar developments along the Bicester Road (48m), it is evident that the proposal is in line with the existing housing in this quadrant of the village.

We have conducted a thorough analysis and firmly believe that our development qualifies as "infill" within the plan's definition, referring to a "small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage." While there might be some subjectivity in interpreting terms like "small" and "continuous," we believe that such judgments should not be the sole deciding factors. The proposed house's positioning, merely 20 meters away from Stable Lodge, would create a seamless and continuous frontage along Oxford Road, in harmony with the area's existing character. Middleton Stoney House and Stable lodge were both once connected to Middleton House, are set further down the Oxford road – they are still part of Middleton Stoney and all sit well within the gates and speed signs usually demarking the boundary of the village. There is also clearly a frontage along Oxford road as beyond the boundary village gates into the village, the houses are clearly visible from Oxford road, no matter whether there frontages are accessed from Oxford Road or from the rear of the properties – there is still a built physical form visible from Oxford road. There is also now a covenant placed on the land, specifying that should planning be granted, there is to be only one residence built on the plot.

The site is adjacent to the Grade II listed Middleton Stoney House and stables and looking at historic maps, it was decided that a Listed Building application was determined as unnecessary, confirming there would be no harm to the nearby listed building.

Middleton Stoney House and its stables were built as a rectory for the then Vicar of Middleton Stoney and as such was clearly an integral part of the village just as much as Middleton Park. The properties clearly sit within the parish and the village boundary. Both the Old Rectory and Stable Lodge undeniably fall within the boundaries of Middleton Stoney, as evidenced by their position relative to the village gates and speed signs, regardless of their past connections to Middleton House. The land in question has irrefutably been part of the village for hundreds of years, this is clear from historical maps and many corroborating sources.

We are registered on the Self Build register for Cherwell, we understand that currently plots are under allocated and we would like to use our own plot for development as outlined above.

In conclusion, we firmly believe that the proposed development is a thoughtful and responsible addition to Middleton Stoney. It not only adheres to the principles outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan but also contributes positively to the aesthetics, environmental sustainability, and overall character of our beloved village.

We appreciate your time and consideration of our views on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

James Kirkman & Flora Douglas