

Dear Planning Committee,

I am writing to object to the speculative planning application submitted by Obsidian for development of a site backing onto the village of Cropredy, on the Claydon Road.

I understand that the government has recently dropped its compulsory targets for house building and Cherwell Council itself continues to exceed its targets with a 5.4-year housing land supply. As the council website says it 'puts us in a stronger position to be able to refuse planning permissions for speculative proposals that don't meet their district's needs.' (Councillor Colin Clarke Wed 8 February 2023). Councils are allowed to build fewer homes if they show it would significantly change the character of an area. This proposal would do just that.

This application would fundamentally change the nature of the village community of Cropredy, with 60 additional houses. The scale of this development is out of proportion, adding to the existing 300 plus houses in the village. As a category 'A' village I understand that villages like Cropredy should only be considered for suitable infilling and conversions. There have been a number of such houses added in Creampot Crescent, Round Bottom, Cherry Fields and Spring Lane for example. This would be the development of a green field site, extending the village beyond any historic boundary and changing the rural character of the village. The Obsidian proposals make much of preserving views from the Oxford Canal towards St Marys Church but equally do not consider views of the village from the Appletree Road towards the village.

The development of this site would create a separate isolated part of the village. There would be no connection to any part of the existing village; it turns it back on the village. The only connection would be by car, adding to road use and traffic through the village to get to school, the village shop or to Banbury. These houses would be a commuter dormitory town. Public transport by bus is extremely limited. Obsidian severely underestimates car movements expecting 52 vehicle movements per hour in the morning, for example.

This proposal has serious implications for the quality of life of every house backing onto the site in Kyetts Corner and Creampot Lane. The creation of a 10-metre border between the existing settlement and the development would not shield houses from the loss of view or provide privacy for many of these homes. Some houses in Creampot Lane lay lower than their back gardens meaning that any development would tower above existing homes. The development would also affect the environs for houses slightly further back. This impact does not appear to have been considered.

There would also be serious concern about the risk of water run off to properties lower than the site as well as the detrimental impact on the wildlife frequently using the field. There would also be concern regarding pressure on existing infrastructure such as roads, sewage disposal, and sewage and service provision such as the doctor's surgery.

More serious consideration should be given to alternative plans at the southern end of the village as this affects fewer people directly. There are also other areas within the village which would, if available, be more suitable for sympathetic, small scale development supporting the vitality, richness and integrity of the Cropredy community.