

**NCA** | ARCHITECTURE

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Planning Objection submitted for  
Proposed development at:

Land South of Jersey Cottages, and East of Heyford Road, Kirtlington.

Application Ref : 23/02471/F.

October 2023

## **Introduction**

This objection has been prepared with respect to the Full Planning Application submitted at Land South of Jersey Cottages and East of Heyford Road, Kirtlington – 23/02471/F.

This statement will serve to demonstrate that the permission sought under this application fails to respect the prevailing and established grain of Kirtlington, harmfully impacts a number of heritage assets, including the grade I listed Kirtlington Park, and fails to meet a number of core policies in the CDC Local Plan and NPPF.

## **Site Description and Proposal Description**

The application site is an irregular parcel of land, on the edge of the Kirtlington Park Estate and is located on the Eastern side of Heyford Road, towards the Northern Extents of Kirtlington Village. Access is afforded via an existing post-war development consisting of 4 houses – Jersey Cottages. Much of the site is an open paddock with its perimeter boundaries formed by mature trees and the natural drystone estate wall for Kirtlington Park which follows Heyford Road.

The proposal seeks to develop the open paddock area of the site to provide an additional 14 houses of varying size and of a semi-detached and detached nature. Houses are two storey in height, as a minimum, and are to be finished in a palette of materials (natural stone walls, slate or tiled roofs, and with timber framed windows) that is generally consistent with the vernacular. Alongside the dwellinghouses, a number of garages are proposed. A perimeter footpath seeks to link the development with the wider village, which requires the formation of a new opening in the drystone boundary wall.

## **Objection point 1 – Development Grain**

Kirtlington Village is set out in a broadly linear fashion, with development laid out to follow the arterial Heyford Road. The grain of development is split North and South of the Village Green, with the Sothern end of the village afforded a less linear layout by virtue of the boundary of Kirtlington Park stepping eastwards, and the shaping of Heyford Road around the Church of St Mary the Virgin. Noth of the village green, the character and grain of the village is very distinct, with a feathering out of development on the East side of Heyford Road.

Apart from the Post-War Jersey Cottages, all development is set out on the Western side of Heyford Road, with existing properties laid out in a semi-linear format. Most houses which form the primary street frontage are orientated to address Heyford Road, with a scattering of more organically arranged houses laid out to the West of the primary frontage. Any isolated development, East of Heyford Road and south of Jersey Cottages, are historic and listed buildings associated with the Kirtlington Park Estate, including the Lodge and Gates, Portway House and Home Farmhouse.

The proposal to site 14 new dwellinghouses on the Eastern side of Heyford Road, is in clear contrast to the prevailing and established grain of the village and represents an unacceptable sprawl of development into the Kirtlington Park Estate, which will have irreversible impacts on the landscape (designed by Capability Brown) and setting of a Grade I listed building.

Whilst there is a broad acceptance that development within villages and smaller settlements are required – Kirtlington is defined as being a Category A village in the adopted CDC Local Plan, these must be brought forward in a manner which reflects the established development pattern. This proposal clearly fails to comply with this and is contrary to Policy ESD 13 & Policy ESD 15.

## **Objection point 2 – Form of Development**

Notwithstanding the failure of the proposed development to assimilate appropriately within the prevailing and defined grain of Kirtlington, the proposed layout had little to no consideration to the pattern of development at the Northern extents of the Village. The submitted layout is contrived and appears to have been shaped so that it can be nestled into the centre of the existing paddock that it has been located, and does not respond to the numerous heritage, arboricultural or landscaping constraints in either an imaginative or considerate manner. This site is located in a Conservation Area, and lies within the historic curtilage and boundaries of a Grade I listed building and a Registered Historic Park and Garden. These area designations demand high quality and proportionate development to be brought forward for consideration.

CDC Local Plan Policy Village 1 and Policy Village 2 describe the LPA strategy for distributing new housing across the district, and describes that *'appropriate forms of development will vary depending on the character of the village and development in the immediate locality'*. It has been established that this development is contrary to the prevailing village grain, and as such, cannot be considered to be an appropriate form of development. In addition, it also fails to form acceptable relationships with the existing built environment, the local landscape setting and will have substantial harm on a number of heritage assets.

## **Objection point 3 – Access and Impact on Trees**

The proposed development seeks to utilise the existing track access serving the four houses, known as Jersey Cottages, for a total of 18 units (including the 4 existing). The existing access is formed within an opening in the historic boundary wall of Kirtlington Park. Behind this wall lie a substantial number of mature and established trees, which form a critical component of the village character in this location and lie within a registered park and garden. The Conservation Area designation offers additional protection to these trees.

The proposed widening of the access will place unacceptable pressures on the trees immediately adjacent to the access. It is noted that the submitted AIA begins to address the impact of this widening on the RPA of trees 2 & 3, however this report only describes a method for removing and replacing hard surfacing with respect to these trees, and does not acknowledge the foundations required for the proposed boundary wall amendments, which will fall within the RPA for these trees. It is important that the Case Officer and Tree Officer are provided with a clear picture of what engineering work is required here, so that a fair and balanced assessment can be made. This should not be dealt with under a planning condition, due to the potential impact on important and irreplaceable trees who contributed highly to the character of the village in this location. Details of new surface build ups and levels should also be requested to ensure that the new road surface is capable of being formed on top of the existing sub-base. The intensification of use – from 4 to 18 units, and future adoption of the new access road is likely to require a different build up to the existing private road.

Details on location / siting for service trenches also need to be understood with respect to these and other trees.

## **Objection point 4 – Harmful Impact on Heritage Assets**

The proposed development site lies in close proximity to the following designated heritage assets;

- Kirtlington Conservation Area.
- Kirtlington Park – Grade II Registered Park and Garden.
- Kirtlington Park House – Grade I
- Home Farmhouse – Grade II
- Foxtownsend Cottages Nos 1 & 2 – Grade II
- Foxtownsend Cottages Nos 3 & 4 – Grade II

- Foxtownsend Farmhouse, Foxtownsend Flat – Grade II
- Foxtownsend Lodge North – Grade II
- Park View Cottage – Grade II
- Lodge and Attached Gates to Kirtlington Park – Grade II

The mature trees and planting which line the Western boundary of the application site are deciduous, and whilst they provide good screening of the proposed development from many of the heritage assets named above, during the winter months, this screening is lost, and clear visibility of the site, between the trunks of the trees, from Heyford Road and listed building can be achieved. It is offered that these designated heritage assets **do** hold individual relationships with the application site, contrary to the statement made on paragraph 6.2 of the submitted Heritage Statement. Light pollution will be worse in winter months, when the loss of the foliage and screening is most pronounced, which will significantly impact the setting of the heritage assets.

The failure of the proposed development to respect or reflect the established pattern or grain of development, is harmful to the Kirtlington Conservation Area, and constitutes a sprawl of urban development towards a Grade I listed asset. This cannot be considered represent an acceptable form of development or an acceptable development site. It introduces a new pattern of development which is inconsistent with the linear existing form, and therefore fails to reinforce the existing street pattern – contrary to the CDC Countryside Design Summary SPD. Furthermore, the proposed development would have very limited connectivity with the remainder of the village and reads as distinct and separate housing development, on the edge of the settlement and out of kilter with the prevailing development pattern. It is, by definition, harmful to the rural character of the village and would have a significantly adverse impact on Kirtlington Park. The proposed development is therefore considered to cause significant harm to the individual heritage assets, their settings, and the wider conservation area, and as such should be refused permission.