

## The Planning Inspectorate

### COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

### Appeal Reference: APP/C3105/W/23/3327213

#### DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/C3105/W/23/3327213
Appeal By	ARCHSTONE AMBROSDEN LTD, BELLWAY HOMES LTD AND ROSEMARY MAY
Site Address	Land East of Ploughley Road Ambrosden OX25 2AD Grid Ref Easting: 460471 Grid Ref Northing: 220023

#### SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS DAWN SEAWARD
Address	7 Chapel Drive Ambrosden BICESTER Oxon OX25 2RS

#### ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- Other

## YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

My objections to this application, which I would request are taken into consideration by the Planning Inspectorate and the enquiry, are:

- The area of this application is not in the current local plan up to 2031, or the plan which is currently in draft format by the local authority for 2041.
- The area of this application has never been zoned for development.
- Cherwell District now has its five-year land supply, so does not need to allow speculative development, in light of the two points above.
- Cumulatively, with other recently approved or delivered new housing developments, the proposed development would cause the level, scale and intensity of new housing growth in the village to be inappropriate and significantly prejudicial to the objectives of the Cherwell Local Plan to distribute limited housing growth across the rural areas.
- The development would result in the unnecessary development of greenfield land forming part of the open countryside, and is therefore detrimental to its intrinsic natural beauty, causing undue visual intrusion. Recent events have shown how a country should not rely on others to provide resources so this country should be encouraging the use of local land to provide local food with minimal carbon miles.
- The development fails to adequately provide for on and off-site infrastructure necessary to mitigate its impact, including provision or maintenance of affordable housing, play and public amenity facilities, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, community facilities, access and transport mitigation, on-site drainage, primary and secondary education and library book stock. It would lead to a significant adverse impact on wider public infrastructure to the detriment of the local community.
- Since 2014 the village has grown so much. As well as some minor infilling and the 75 houses on Blackthorn Road which were approved earlier this year, this includes 45 houses in Ambrosden Court, 87 in Springfields, 83 in Blackthorn Meadow, and then the 85 houses currently being built in Merton Road, which was only allowed after appeal to the Planning Inspector. Policy Villages 2 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015 states 'a total of 750 homes will be delivered at Category A villages', so that 375 is half of that number. Why should one village have to take so much of the area's development?
- Currently, 703 dwellings have been completed in Category A villages, with 101 under construction, and 270 dwellings with planning permission on sites which are not yet started. Therefore, the total number of dwellings delivered under Policy Villages 2 will soon exceed the 750 set out in the policy. Whilst we are aware this number was not a cap, again I ask, why so many in Ambrosden?
- The policy designates Ambrosden as a 'service village' where minor development, infilling and conversions are permissible. Supporting text to the policy states that infilling refers to the development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage. Under such a definition this proposal would not constitute infilling.
- The site is an undeveloped green field site that, given its physical and visual relationship to the existing built form, is outside of the existing built form of Ambrosden village and therefore within the countryside. The proposal to build on greenfield land would have an urbanising impact.
- The sprawl of the village is getting out of hand – if this development is built there will be one field and a road between Ambrosden where Wretchwick Green will be built – more sprawl eating into open fields and countryside. Ambrosden sits in a location where there has been a settlement since Roman times. Ambrosden is a village in its own right, with its own identity and history, and wishes to remain as such.

- The cumulative effect of continued development should also be considered. Applicants always refer to the shops (two small shops which would not provide a week's shopping, sending people out of the village), the pub (only open three evenings a week, no food, no children allowed), the lack of recreational facilities, the inadequate cycle route into Bicester (the cycle path into Bicester is badly maintained, dangerously narrow in places and crosses the road at least three times between Rodney House Roundabout and Ploughley Road), the lack of employment in the village, the fact that people have to travel to get to most facilities. This all points to more traffic on the already busy roads, more emissions in the atmosphere and a concern about road safety.
- The school is already full and, whilst funds can be paid to fund places at schools nearby, this again adds to the traffic on the roads and the additional road safety issues.
- Whilst the flood risk assessment provided by the applicant states this is not a high-risk flood area, increased flooding every year shows that there is a high risk, and increased development of the village will only increase that risk. We sit in the Ray Valley and neighbouring villages have also seen increased flooding in the past few years, which was confirmed in a meeting of those villages in May this year.
- The impact on the environment and the protected great crested newts living in abundance in the small paddock next to Briar Furlong will be huge. Baby newts have been seen in West Hawthorn Road recently and this shows a healthy environment for them. The developers have suggested a small gap between the building site and the paddock, which will still have an impact on their roaming area, will damage their numbers and, in all likelihood, will kill off the colony.
- Ploughley Road was identified by Highways as an extremely busy road, which is why traffic lights were added at the A41 junction. Traffic will only increase with the additional houses being built at Graven Hill and Wretchwick Green, and the village is already a known cut through for traffic avoiding the A34/M40 junction. A junction near the bend in Ploughley Road will put drivers at risk due to the inadequate visibility splays at the entrance to this proposed development.
- And lastly, the previous application which appealed the decision made by CDC, which was overturned by the planning inspectorate, is now being built. New residents of this estate are reporting of comments made that houses on that estate are not selling as well as they would have liked, and there are a lot of deals to be made. Huge incentives are being offered to buyers. With the current housing market slowing dramatically, is there still a need for so many houses and, if there is, why do they have to be built in this village. Are purchasers aware of the lack of facilities in the village? In two to three years' time, when these houses may potentially be built, will there be anything like the demand that Archstone and Bellway Homes expect? Or should consideration be given to the realisation that the housing market is slowing and, in all likelihood, there will be no demand for these houses anyway?