

16 West Hawthorn Road  
Ambrosden  
Oxon  
OX25 2SE

14 September 2023

Rebecca Luxton  
The Planning Inspectorate  
Room Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

Dear Rebecca,

**Reference: APP/C3105/W/23/3327213 – Land East of Ploughley Road Ambrosden**

I wish to register my objections to the subject application.

I have attached a document, composed by a neighbour, which articulates commonly held objections to the development, to which I am in full accord. However, my strongest objection is to the inclusion of a pedestrian access through to West Hawthorn Road, necessitating the removal of a privately maintained hedgerow and access through a privately maintained estate.

For background information, West Hawthorn Road, is part of a former MOD married Quarters Estate. The roads, pavements etc on the estate are un-adopted as they do not meet local government standards; residents therefore pay an annual service charge to a management company for their maintenance. Years of underinvestment have resulted in roads and pavements that are potholed, uneven; potential hazards for pedestrians and road users alike. Creating access for additional footfall will lead to increased wear and tear and ultimately an uplift in the financial burden for estate residents.

The subject planning application includes provision of vehicular and pedestrian off Ploughley Road, the assumption is this meets all necessary planning conditions and therefore makes the requirement for additional access even more objectionable.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Jones

**Reference: APP/C3105/W/23/3327213 – Land East of Ploughley Road Ambrosden**

The basis for our objections are:

**It is against National Policy.** The developers intend to **concrete over the countryside** using a **greenfield site** rather than a brownfield site. On 23rd July 2023 (before this appeal was entered) The Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said *“We need to keep going because we want more people to realise the dream of owning their own home.*

*“We won’t do that by concreting over the countryside – our plan is to build the right homes where there is the most need and where there is local support, in the heart of Britain’s great cities.*

*“Our reforms today will help make that a reality, by regenerating disused brownfield land, streamlining planning process and helping homeowners to renovate and extend their houses outwards and upwards.”*

**.Adverse visual impact.** This development would be in a prominent position on rising land and would greatly change the visual impact on the approach to the village. The green fields form a visual indicator that Ambrosden is a rural village and any development on this land would be detrimental to the character of the village. On the other approaches to the village (East, West and South), the original vistas have all been destroyed by new developments and Ambrosden is in danger of losing its individuality. We need to preserve the approach from the North to indicate that Ambrosden is a separate village. As housing is planned for Wretchwick Green, less than 1 mile away from the site (just across the A41), any development on the North side of Ambrosden would lead to people assuming that Ambrosden is part of Bicester. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 aims to avoid the coalescence of towns and villages.

**Infrastructure inadequate for growing population.**

Census results:

Apr 2001 – 1786 people

Mar 2011 – 2174 people- 22% increase on 2001

Mar 2021 – 2736 people- 53% increase on 2001

84 dwellings – land north of Merton Road at say 3 people per house= 252 people bringing the estimated total to around 3000 people- a 68% increase on 2001 . The infrastructure has not improved to accommodate the increase in population and the school is now oversubscribed. This will also affect children from the Five Acres School catchment area including Arcott, Blackthorn, Piddington and Merton and the children of MOD employees. Already some children may have to be allocated to other primary schools which will erode and create barriers in the village community.

**Highway safety and traffic congestion.** This development would increase traffic through the village as it is used as a ‘rat-run’ through to Islip and the A34/A40 to avoid traffic in Bicester and Oxford at peak times. Outside the Post Office in Merton Road, there is always traffic congestion, and although

the Parish Council have considered many possibilities, there are no cost effective ways to improve the situation. At school start and finish times the roads around the school are severely congested and crossing East Hawthorn Road is very difficult. The proposed junction from the development is also a cause for concern as, assuming two vehicles per house, there would be 240 extra vehicles to accommodate on already busy roads. The parish council has speed signs in place to indicate the amount of vehicles that are speeding through the village.

**Lack of amenities** – hairdressers has recently closed, no doctors, one church, 1 out of village shop, 1 post office (but parking is atrocious) 1 pub for regulars only and offers no food, 1 pre-school provision (but the other pre-school has closed).

**Ambrosden has already had disproportionate amount of new houses.**

Planning approvals since 2014 (source: Cherwell District Council Housing Land Supply Statement February 2023- Appendix 2):

Springfield Farm – 89 houses – completed Sep 2016

Ambrosden Court – 44 houses – completed Sep 2017

Church Leys, Blackthorn Road – 85 houses – completed March 2021

North of Merton Road – 84 houses – in progress at September 2023

Home Farm Close – approx. 10 houses – in progress at September 2023

Land east of Allectus Avenue – 75 dwellings- approved in principle- subject to certain conditions

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Housing Trajectory suggested that there should be 750 new homes planned on sites of 10 houses or more for Category A villages between 2014 and 2031. Ambrosden has now had 312 homes approved for planning in this time period plus a further 75 approved in principle bring the total to 387. As you can see, this is more than 50% of the target amount and this is an inappropriate proportion for Ambrosden. Planning should be aimed at other Category A villages to have their fair share now. There are 24 Category A villages in Cherwell: Adderbury, Ambrosden, Arncott, Begbroke, Bletchingdon, Bloxham, Bodicote, Chesterton, Cropredy, Deddington, Finmere, Fringford, Fritwell, Hook Norton, Kidlington, Kirtlington, Launton, Milcombe, Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower, Steeple Aston, Weston on the Green, Wroxton and Yarnton.

**Have not consulted landowners about privately owned pathways that they intend to use.** The bridleway and West Hawthorn Road, Oak Lane, Ash Lane and East Hawthorn Road are not in public ownership and Ambrosden Residents Company Limited has paid for the upkeep of the part that they own. The developers are intending to push through the boundary causing damage to Ambrosden Residents Company Limited land, trees and hedgerow. Cherwell and Oxfordshire County Council have stated that they will not adopt the roads and footpaths on Ambrosden Residents Estate as they don't meet the council criteria. Therefore the developers should not be encouraging extra people to use the footpaths.

**Incorrect appeal form. The red line plan includes land owned by neighbours therefore the appellant is incorrect in saying on the appeal form that "I certify that, on the day 21 days before the date of this appeal, nobody, except the appellant, was the owner of any part of the land to which the appeal relates"** They have not included the land registry plan showing that the boundary to the north of West Hawthorn Road is not owned by the appellant.

**The appeal form says that this is not an agricultural holding. There does not appear to have been a planning application for change of use, therefore this is agricultural land.** This land is being used for agricultural purposes and recently a crop of hay has been baled and last year sheep were grazing there.