



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

HM Planning Inspectorate  
c/o Caroline Harvey  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

8 January 2024

Dear Ms Harvey,

I am writing with reference to Planning Appeal: **APP/C3105/W/23/3329834 – Erection of 5no two storey age restricted dwellings (55 years) for older people with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure, at Land South of Faraday House, Woodway Road, Sibford Ferris.**

This Appeal relates to Planning Application ref. 23/01316/F, which was refused permission by Cherwell District Council in August 2023. Two reasons were provided for this refusal: the proposed development would undermine the housing strategy in the Cherwell Local Plan in view of its location, and would be out of keeping with the form and character of the surrounding area.

Since this Appeal was lodged, I have received representations from constituents, including Sibford Ferris Parish Council, who object to these proposals. My constituents support the decision of Cherwell District Council, which I understand is the same decision that has been reached on a number of similar, previous applications for this site.

Following the submission of an earlier application, ref. 21/04271/F, for six age-restricted dwellings on this site, I was contacted by a number of constituents with significant concerns about the proposals. I wrote to Cherwell District Council on 18 February 2022 to highlight those concerns which had been raised with me. A copy of that letter is included with this submission.

In the proposals being considered by this Appeal, there have been changes to the site layout and a reduction in the number of dwellings from six to five when compared against those put forward in 2021. Despite this, it is clear that the current proposals do not sufficiently mitigate the concerns set out in my earlier letter. This would still be a greenfield housing development in an isolated rural village, which would only exacerbate existing pressures on services and amenities.

Events since my earlier response have only reinforced the concerns of my constituents. Planning Appeal ref. APP/C3105/W/22/3298098, against Cherwell District Council's decision to refuse permission for the previous application, was dismissed. In the planning balance, it was concluded that the harm of the proposals to the rural character and appearance of the surrounding area outweighed their modest benefits. My constituents feel strongly that this harm has not been materially reduced in the current proposals.

In addition, since the previous application was submitted, Cherwell District Council has reached Regulation 18 stage in its Local Plan Review 2040. The consultation draft rightly recognises that Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower are in fact separate "Smaller Villages", rather than the larger "Category A" village they were previously classified as. This reflects the



villages' relative lack of services and facilities, specifying that any limited infill development should be in keeping with local character, proportionate in scale and meet local housing needs.

In this context, I trust that my constituents' concerns will be fully considered when this Appeal is assessed.

Yours sincerely,

*Victoria Prentis*

**Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP**