

From: Kate Brown <

Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2023 3:03 PM

To: Planning <Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>; Linda Griffiths <Linda.Griffiths@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Planning notification for application reference: 23/00853/OUT

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Good Afternoon

Thank you for allowing Hanwell Parish Council an extension to submit their objection to the above application, to 1 June 2023.

Please find attached the response from Hanwell Parish Council to the above application. In Addition to the Parish Council's letter of objection, please also find attached a copy of the Stansgate Planning's report commissioned by the Keep Hanwell Village Rural Action Group which is referenced in our objection and whose conclusion and evidence are endorsed by Hanwell Parish Council.

Please can you confirm receipt of this email and attachments by return.

Kind Regards

Kate

Kate Nash

Clerk to Hanwell Parish Council

On Tue, Apr 11, 2023 at 12:09 PM CDC Development Management <planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk> wrote:

Please see the attached letter for details. Regards Development Management Cherwell District Council Direct Dial 01295 227006 planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk www.cherwell.gov.uk Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil Follow us on Twitter @Cherwellcouncil

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Hanwell Parish Council Response to planning application by Vistry 23/00853/OUT



Photo credit Derek Adams. St Peter's Church in Hanwell

Background:

Hanwell is a rural village with a rich farming heritage and is currently home to approximately 120 houses with fewer than 300 residents. Hanwell has a vibrant close-knit community which regularly gathers to celebrate momentous public occasions. Hanwell hosts two annual Festivals - HanFest and HanFestive which are extremely popular public events. Hanwell's separation from Banbury is both historic and integral to the identity of the village. Hanwell is the proud home of St Peter's Church (Grade I listed) which dates back as far as the 12th Century. It has the distinctive Hanwell Castle (Grade II listed) and the observatory, which sits within the Castle's extensive grounds.

Hanwell residents were made aware of a threatened development on a greenfield, agricultural site in June 2022 during a short consultation with the developer. This site forms a significant part of the setting of the conservation of Hanwell and as a direct result of this, residents in the village formed the Action Group - Keep Hanwell Village Rural (KHVR). The action group has raised funds and commissioned a report from a planning consultant. This is to independently assess the assertions made by the developer and highlight the true adverse impact that this proposal would have on the village of Hanwell. We, the Parish Council, fully endorse the report which has been submitted and stress the strength of feeling within the village against this proposal. Hanwell and the action group has the support of local MP, Victoria Prentis, who has publicly resolved to support our opposition and to escalate this proposal to her parliamentary colleagues.

Objection:

Hanwell Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to the planning application 23/00853/OUT, for the four reasons given by the Objection Report written by Keep Hanwell Village Rural Action Group (KHVRAG), which are:

1. Conflict with the spatial strategy, which sets limits to growth for Banbury and Hanwell.
2. Harm to character and appearance of the area, including coalescence.
3. Impact on heritage assets.
4. Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land

Regarding harm to the character and appearance of the area, Hanwell Parish Council make these further comments:

1. The proposed development is an incongruous outcrop jutting north from Banbury and south from Hanwell village, with open countryside surrounding its boundaries to the east, north and west. It will appear as a large, isolated housing estate, separate from the rest of Banbury.
2. Substantial harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside south of Hanwell, which is part of the rural setting of this historic village. Here, there is a clear transition between countryside and the developed part of Banbury. This positive role in defining village setting will be greatly harmed by the proposal, which causes a substantial urbanising change to the character of the field, from an attractive rural landscape to housing, roads, streetlighting and other urban paraphernalia.
3. The proposed development will be clearly visible from public rights of way, whose users currently appreciate the application site being part of the attractive rural landscape around Banbury and Hanwell.

In addition to the reports obtained by KHVR Action Group, we would like to observe the following:

- Initial access to the site would be via Gullicote Lane (not Gulliwel Lane as labelled in Image EDP A1.15 by the applicant), which is wholly unsuitable for construction traffic and moreover emphasises our assertions as to coalescence.
- There is direct intervisibility between Hanwell conservation area and Parcel A. Photograph EDP A1.14 is taken from within the conservation area not at the boundary of it which is at the other end of the agricultural building rather than screened by it as the applicant asserts.
- In their statement of community engagement, the applicant states that all feedback has been considered in the evolution of their plans. In actual fact there has been no evolution in the plans as presented during the initial, very brief, public consultation period in June 2022 and the plans submitted to CDC in April 2023. We therefore strongly contest the applicant's assertion that the public engagement was in any way meaningful or effective.
- The plans include a footpath connection between the proposed development and the village of Hanwell which again contradicts the assertion that there would be no coalescence.
- With reference to the loss of Best Most Versatile farmland and the stated biodiversity net gain put forward by Vistry we would like to highlight the evidence submitted the Parliament by Professor Mike Alder in 2022¹. The cumulative loss of farmland in the UK critically endangers our food security and the biodiversity metric used to calculate a net gain is fundamentally flawed. The established habitats on this site include native hedgerow birds, bats and badgers (whose setts are protected by law). This loss cannot be compensated artificially.

Furthermore, there would be direct impacts on the village of Hanwell which would include but not be limited to:

- a) Increased traffic through the village. The junction on to the B4100 is already treacherous and the road through the village, which is single track in places, is poorly maintained.
- b) Light pollution – please see the report from Christopher Taylor of Hanwell Observatory. Mr believes that Taylor contrary to the claims made by Vistry, any lighting within this development would have a catastrophic impact on the views from the observatory.
- c) Noise pollution – Both due to building works and latterly, the occupation of dwellings. For example – the use of fireworks, within the proposed development, would be in close proximity to thatched dwellings and livestock and could endanger both.
- d) Potential for increased footfall and petty crime including littering that may be associated with this.
- e) Setting a very negative precedent for further speculative development and infill between Hanwell and Banbury if this ‘permanent buffer’ is allowed to be breached.

Contraventions to Local Adopted Planning Policy:

- Policy ESD 13 – Local Landscape and enhancement, which specifically names Hanwell in B.252
- Policy ESD 1 – Distributing growth to the most sustainable locations as defined by the Local Plan. The local plan is valid until 2031 and in the presence (and even absence) of a five-year housing land supply, this site is not identified as a sustainable location, being geographically separated from sites of education, employment, public transport and healthcare (to correct Vistry’s submission the surgery in Hardwick is no longer open).
- Policy BSC2 – Hanwell Parish council firmly believe in the use of brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites. ~~WE would like to~~ draw reference to Canalside in Banbury where the recent development of The Light is providing much needed renewal of the area. Development within this locality would have a far greater impact on local business prosperity than an isolated enclave on precious farmland.
- Policy ESD 10 – This proposal clearly does not protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment. It is currently farmed by a farmer who adheres to ELMS – Environmental Land Management Scheme which encourages large wildflower borders for our pollinator species, not to mention the well-established hedgerow, 95m of which would be wantonly destroyed by this proposal. We assert that any artificial net gain would be hugely offset and outweighed by that which would be lost in the process.
- Retained policy C8 – this would represent sporadic development in the open countryside
- **RETAINED POLICY C15 – Prevention of coalescence of settlements.** Illustrative plans show that existing landscape features such as field boundaries will be retained and additional soft landscaping is proposed. However, the existing and proposed landscaping has only limited mitigating effect on the very harmful aspects of the development. New landscaping will take many years to mature and will only partially filter views of the built development. Additional landscaping will not adequately compensate the overall large-scale urbanising effect of the proposed development.

Conclusion:

It is clear and unequivocal to Hanwell Parish Council and to the residents of the village that this application **MUST BE DECLINED**. It was equally clear to the planning officers who assessed Vistry’s pre-application whose response was

I will not be able to support the proposal in its current form because of the following deficiencies/issues: 1. The potential landscape impacts of the proposal are significant and demonstrable; therefore, they do not outweigh the benefits of providing additional residential development to address the Council's 5-year housing land supply position. 2. The proposal would reduce the existing gap between the settlements of Banbury and Hanwell, creating a perception of coalescence between the two settlements and having a detrimental impact on the setting of the Hanwell Conservation Area. 3. The submitted documents have inadequately assessed issues relating to landscape impact, heritage impacts and ecology. 4. The development would likely be detrimental to the rural character and landscape appearance of the countryside on the northern edge of Banbury and would threaten coalescence with nearby Hanwell village

It is demonstrated by the volume of written objections received by the council to this proposal (at time of writing in excess of 470 and expected to rise further).

It was clear to those who created the 2018 HELAA – site HELAA030 who concluded

'Greenfield site outside the built-up limits. There would be a direct risk of coalescence of Banbury and Hanwell village which development would lead to impacts on the Hanwell Conservation Area and the high landscape value and visual sensitivity of the site. The site is in a prominent position therefore unsuitable for development.'

It is clear to those working on the emerging plan, presented at the recent planning committee meeting, whereby this site was rejected from the local plan and the emerging plan has already been used in the decision making process where other proposals have been considered.

We find the application itself to be an affront to the planning process and the local plan and it is littered with inconsistencies and errors which show a flagrant disregard to attention to detail and a total absence of knowledge of the local area.

This site is and **always will be** unsuitable for development due to the permanent detrimental and destructive effect it would have on the character of the local area, the native wildlife and the food supply chain, regardless of whatever 5-year housing land supply exists at the time of evaluation.

ⁱ <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/107786/pdf/>