

To: Ms Sarah Greenall, Planning and Economy, Cherwell District Council Bodicote House Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX 15 4AA

29<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

Dear Ms Greenall

FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 19/01271/F: THE BOTHY, BRASHFIELD HOUSE

As the nearest householder on the Brashfield estate to the proposed development I wish to object to the proposal to sub divide the existing house into two and substantially add to both parts. My grounds for doing so are as follows.

- (1) **Inadequate access.** The Bothy is accessed by a rear drive which goes round the Coach House where I live and across my land. The drive is maintained by Brashfield Management Ltd as it also leads to the sewerage treatment plant which is located behind my back garden and in front of the Bothy. It also provides access to two other properties for the removal of garden waste. The drive is narrow, with no room for vehicles to pass, and there is a particularly tight corner where the drive turns around my conservatory. When we bought our house in 1982 we did not consider that a shared drive with only one other property would be an issue, particularly as this was before the development of take away deliveries, on line shopping, four by four cars and multi car ownership. The development of this (already) large house into two expanded dwellings would generate an unreasonable level of wear and tear on the drive and increase the traffic, noise and nuisance to an unacceptable level.
- (2) **Contravention of conservation area guidelines.** The Council's Guidelines on living in a conservation area refer, amongst other things, to the demolition of walls, two storey and side extensions and to the placing of outbuildings in sensitive locations. This proposal contravenes all three of these. The applicants are proposing to demolish the stone walls of the walled inner garden (originally the vegetable garden to Brashfield House) and to use the stone to build a new wall separating the two properties. The original planning permission for the conversion of the stables (Bothy) for residential use stipulated that the building had to be limited to single storey to preserve the original roof line. The proposal to build a second storey on Plot 2 contravenes this, and along with the demolition of the walled garden will destroy the visual heritage link to Brashfield House. The placing of two large garages with ancillary accommodation in the walled garden area is insensitive both in terms of scale and visual intrusion). Nor is it inconceivable that they could at some point in future be turned into two separate dwellings or granny annexes.
- (3) **Size and scale of the development.** A substantial two storey stone extension to the original L shaped Bothy conversion was built in 1992. Both parts on proposed Plots 1 and 2 purport to be 4 bed roomed houses but the amount of accommodation provided could easily provide more bedrooms than this. For example, Plot 2 proposes a large 'games' room over the current living room as well as a new gym (which the applicant proposes to build right up

to the boundary to my property). These spaces could become another 2/3 bedrooms making proposed Plot 2 a 6 or 7 bedroomed house – a considerable over development of the site. The scale of what is proposed for both houses seems totally out of keeping with what would effectively be a pair of semi detached houses.

- (4) **Design.** The development proposed does not recognize that this is a sensitive site in a conservation area surrounding a Grade 2 Listed building. What is proposed would not be out of place on an executive estate but is not sympathetic with the other four properties at Brashfield.
- (5) **Capacity of local water and sewerage.** Brashfield Management Ltd maintains a water borehole and sewerage treatment plant. This was designed for the number of dwellings on the Brashfield estate, including for the provision of water to the two properties at the foot of the drive. (See separate comments from Brashfield Management Ltd). Drainage is an issue here as the water table has risen since the original conversions were undertaken in 1982 and several of us do have problems with drains. The addition of more hard surfaces will exacerbate this problem. If approved the applicant has told us that he will make good the rear drive, which will be further eroded by construction traffic, by using block paving which is neither in keeping with the area nor eco friendly.
- (6) **Highways.** The inadequate site location plan barely acknowledges the existence of the other properties at Brashfield or the access to the 4421 Buckingham Road. The drive emerges just short of the turn to Stratton Audley. There have been a considerable number of accidents over the years at this point. The traffic backs up because of the right hand turn from Bicester and traffic approaching at 50 mph around the bend ploughs into the waiting cars. Leaving the Brashfield Drive can be quite hazardous and increased car use from the proposed development would exacerbate this problem.

In conclusion, I am concerned that approval to this proposal could prove to be the thin edge of the wedge. The future of the Brashfield estate could well be compromised as any subsequent applications for developing the site could be difficult to resist. The area is a recognized wild life haven. With the development of greater Bicester areas like this are very precious and should be preserved for future generations.

Yours sincerely,

June Nisbet

The Coach House, Brashfield House, Bicester, Oxon, OX27 8RE