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From: [planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) <[planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)>

Sent: Tuesday, October 8, 2019 4:33 PM

To: Planning <[Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)>

Subject: New comments for application 19/01705/OUT

New comments have been received for application 19/01705/OUT at site address: Land Adjoining And West Of Bloxham Recreation Ground South Newington Road Bloxham

from P Beddall

Address:

The Old Barn,Cumberford,Bloxham,Banbury,OX15 4QG

Comment type:

Objection

Comments:

I would like to object to the proposed Gladman development in Bloxham.

Bloxham has been subjected to significant housing developments in recent years and its infrastructure is no longer capable of supporting further significant developments as proposed. Furthermore Cherwell's plans requiring 750 homes for category A villages (Policy Villages 2) has already been met. I am also very concerned that the Gladman proposals appear to ride roughshod over Bloxham's Neighbourhood plan using quite spurious arguments that many of its policies be disregarded. I therefore believe that Cherwell Council should reject this outline planning application and strenuously fight any subsequent appeals.

My specific concerns are as follows:

Cherwell Policy Villages 2 requires 750 houses from the 24 Category A villages of which Bloxham is one. I understand this target has already been met though identified sites. Also if one were to distribute these houses equally across the 24 villages, Bloxham would require 31 houses - This has already been met in the construction of 85 houses off Milton Road. (Bloxham BL1)

Bloxham BL2 requires that any further development beyond BL1 are of a small scale and of 5 dwellings or fewer. Gladman reference the successful Launton appeal as justification for exceeding this requirement. Such an argument should be disregarded as Launton has no Neighbourhood Plan in place and the appeal decision (Para 21) states that "The number of units proposed would not be excessive in relation to the services and facilities available in the village." This is not the case with Bloxham which has an approved Neighbourhood Plan and, as will be shown later, does not have sufficient available services.

Gladman further suggest that Policy BL2 should be of "limited weight" as the Policy Villages 2 cannot be superseded by a subsequent Neighbourhood Plan. However C252 states "Where Neighbourhood Plans have been prepared, formally examined, and have been supported through a local referendum, they will be adopted as part of the statutory Development Plan. The Council will advise and support Parish Councils and relevant Neighbourhood Forums in preparing their Plans." In addition Policy Villages 2 clearly states "Sites will be identified through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans where applicable", i.e. That Neighbourhood Plans can be developed subsequently and will be used in determination of suitable sites.

BL2 states "the following sustainable development will also be permitted: conversion, infilling and minor development within the existing built up limits

The proposed development is clearly outside existing built up limits and is beyond the natural boundary of the old railway line.

Once again, Gladman seek to belittle BL2. They suggest (4.6.2) that "policies Villages 1 and Villages 2 which expressly seek to allow flexibility to deliver housing in Category A settlements beyond the defined boundaries." I can find no reference in these policies that expressly seeks to permit development beyond existing boundaries. Their suggestion that the Policy H18 restricting development beyond existing build-up limits be ignored should be rejected.

Gladman go on to suggest that Cherwell's response to Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs of 4,400 houses which does provide development beyond existing boundaries should be used as a justification for going beyond Bloxham's existing boundaries. This again is a spurious argument. This arises out of an urgent and special need to help other councils meet their housing needs; It is a special case and should not be used as a green flag to permit development outside existing boundaries elsewhere. Policy BL2 should be upheld.

Should this development take place beyond existing boundaries, then it opens the door to untold future developments within Bloxham, either on the adjoining fields or on the opposite side of the A361. This would totally destroy any concept of Bloxham remaining a rural village.

BL11 includes a number of statements intended to preserve the rural nature of the village.

"It should: c. Make a positive contribution to the character of Bloxham and its rural feel; f. Preserve existing areas of open space and take every available opportunity to create new open space to help retain rural character; i. Take opportunities to protect and wherever possible enhance biodiversity and habitats."

This policy is further supported by Cherwell's vision (A9) to "cherish protect and enhance our distinctive natural and built environment and our rich historic heritage. Cherwell will maintain its rural character where its landscapes, its vast range of natural and built heritage and its market towns define its distinctiveness."

The planned development site is a much loved open area that adjoins the Slade Nature Reserve and is part of the Bloxham Circular Walk route. Developing this site would destroy much of the rural nature of the village. When approaching the village from the south, the first thing someone would see is a large modern housing development as opposed to green fields and a recreation ground.

The Slade Nature Reserve is a real gem, but relatively small in area. Its existence and bio-diversity undoubtedly depends upon the surrounding open fields. Developing the land so close to this reserve is likely to have a detrimental impact upon it. The fact that it is now officially recognised as nature reserve, which endows additional obligations and protection, has not been recognised by the Gladman proposal or its Ecology report where it states (para 3.5) "The Slade Nature Reserve is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designation." This must surely cast doubt on the conclusions made in that report (para 1.2) that "Development of the site is not expected to

negatively impact on any statutory or non-statutory designated sites located in proximity to the site." Furthermore NPPF 174 states "To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation"

BL9 states "All development shall where appropriate: ..d. For new housing developments, ensure that a sufficient supply of local primary school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new residents." This supports the requirement in NPPF 94 "It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities."

Oxfordshire County Council has stated that "Bloxham Primary School has been expanded to the full extent of its site capacity." The suggestion by Gladman (3.2.4) that "Growth at South Newington Road will both support, and be supported by a range of services and facilities These include, but are not limited to: a primary school" should therefore be considered unfounded. Lack of primary school places for children within the village should, by itself, be grounds for rejection of this application.

BL9 also states "All development shall where appropriate: c. Ensure that the impact of any additional traffic likely to be generated by the development has been satisfactorily mitigated and will not adversely affect the highway network." This supports NPPF 108 "In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree."

Especially at peak times, traffic in Bloxham can become very congested. OCC have already identified that capacity at the South Newington Road roundabout cannot be increased. In the recent past the A361 between Banbury and Chipping Norton has been identified as the 8th most dangerous single carriageway road in the UK. A Sustrans report (April 2015) describes the cycle route to Banbury as, "unsuitable for cycling at present." Bloxham's pavements are also inadequate, particularly the sections near to St.Mary's church where the footpath is either non-existent or significantly less than the suggested 2m width.

As such walking or cycling to Bloxham's shops and schools is considered by many residents to be extremely dangerous. As such many people take to their cars for even short journeys, particularly the school runs. The planned 95 houses would probably mean at least an additional 150 cars, not to mention the additional cars from other developments in surrounding villages. The lack of suitable parking merely exacerbates the situation, increasing congestion and making driving, cycling and walking more dangerous.

The traffic mitigation proposals from Gladman therefore seem totally inadequate and therefore are unlikely to meet the requirements of BL9. Their suggestion (Para 3.2.3) that "The site access is close to existing shops, services and employment opportunities in the village allowing easy access by foot and bicycle." Is to my mind simply untrue.

Case Officer:

Samantha Taylor

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