

From: Susan Golby
Sent: 09 October 2019 18:31
To: Samantha Taylor
Subject: Objection to application 19/01705/OUT

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It seems to me there are many grounds for rejecting this application and I object to it for the following reasons:

Overall there is no justification for another big housing development in Bloxham.

Bloxham has already more than fulfilled its share of new housing in Cherwell. Bloxham has also exceeded demand judging by the inability of developers to sell properties already built and the fifty or so established properties currently for sale across a wide range of prices. There is policy provision for conversion, infill and minor development which will satisfy the future housing needs of Bloxham.

The infrastructure and services of Bloxham are already under strain or overcapacity. The Primary school cannot accommodate more pupils and has no space to expand. Neither can the doctors surgery, dentist, shops and even the drainage/sewage system cope with further demand.

The roads are increasingly congested, particularly at key points such as the mini-roundabout at the South Newington Road, the centre of the village near the shops and near the Warriner School. Increasing numbers of cars use other minor roads as rat runs to bypass the congestion. This is particularly dangerous at school arrival and leaving times. I believe that the mini-roundabout has been recognised in the past as needing improvement but none was possible. The lack of parking near the shops is a longstanding concern but again, no solution has been identified. Therefore it is no good granting permission for even more housing on the assumption/hope that the infrastructure will catch up.

Bloxham does not need, want and cannot cope with another large housing estate.

This application contravenes policies BL1/BL2/BL9/NPPF 94/NPPF 108(c)/NPPF para 122 and the Cherwell Local Plan.

Regarding the location of the application site:

There are two aspects in particular that show a cavalier disregard towards the wellbeing of both the residents and wildlife of Bloxham.

1. The proposed sole access onto the A361 in that location is potentially dangerous due to poor visibility and speed of cars. I don't think that proposed mitigation will sufficiently overcome the likelihood of accidents on what is already a notoriously accident prone road.

All traffic will have to use the mini-roundabout that is already at or over capacity with no room for improvement.

Pedestrian access needs improvement but widening the narrow pavements is not possible. Increased traffic, increased pedestrians and no ability to improve footpaths is a potentially dangerous situation.

This application contravenes policies BL9/NPPF para 84/NPPF 108(c)

2. I am frankly appalled that this proposal is adjacent to The Slade – a designated nature reserve – and no mitigation they may propose will overcome the harm this development would cause. The ecological report commissioned by the developers to support their application, does not acknowledge the status of

The Slade, its wildlife surveys did not include The Slade and therefore its conclusions are flawed. Wildlife does not live in isolation of its surroundings but is inextricably dependent upon them. Destruction of the adjacent habitat will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect and drive away species from The Slade through destruction of fauna and flora and noise and light pollution.

In the case of bats, which are one of our most threatened species and widely regarded as indicators of the health of our wildlife and its environments (like a canary down a coal mine), The Slade and the development site are both important features in their landscape. Several species of bat were identified in the ecology report but worryingly, there were several echolocation calls which were not positively identified to a particular species. There has been other documented identification elsewhere in Bloxham of the most rare species under threat of extinction. The Slade and its environs provide many features that may support a wide variety of bat species and it's possible that rare species may forage or roost in this area. Even the more common species are protected by law and full consideration should be given to disturbance and interruption of possible roosts, flight lines and foraging features such as hedgerows. Several veteran trees were identified on site and are known to be particularly important to bats.

Cherwell declared a climate emergency in July this year and I would therefore hope that it will acknowledge that our wildlife does not need the additional stress of developments like this on top of the effects of climate change, as documented in The State of Nature report.

The development site was previously dismissed as being unsuitable for development and is known to be susceptible to flooding. It's currently a drainage area for excess water from the surrounding areas and may cause flooding to The Slade if built on. It may also exacerbate flooding risk in residential areas.

The application site is an edge of village location outside the built environment of the village and will be detrimental to the rural character of the recreation ground, nature reserve and village as a whole.

This application contravenes policies BL7/BL11/BL12/ESD10/ESD13/NPPF para 84/NPPF para 174.

I urge you to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Golby

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