

CAVERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Jane Olds, Parish Clerk

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George Smith
Planning officer
Cherwell District Council
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7 November 2019

Dear George,

Caversfield Parish Council met on 6 November to consider planning application reference 19/02075/F at The Old Vicarage, Fringford Road, Caversfield, OX27 8TH with the proposal "Erection of 4 No dwelling houses with associated garages, access and landscaping".

The Parish Council strongly **OBJECTS** to the application.

Caversfield was allocated Village Category C status in the 2011 – 2031 Local Plan. Category C allows for infilling and conversions. Infilling – as stated at C.264 of the Local Plan – refers to the development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage.

This application, in no way, constitutes infilling under the CDC definition.

Also, by its location, the application positions the houses outside the built-up limits of the village and would extend the village envelope.

Only very minor development has been allowed in the area over a number of years. The applicant cites a TPO and a minor single storey side extension and conservatory. No other major development has been permitted within the village. For clarification, the Elmsbrook Eco Town is not part of Caversfield and nor is Home Farm.

The only other larger development has been the sympathetic re-development of the former MoD DLO brown-field site which made use of original buildings within the curtilage of the built area of the village.

All applications for development of additional houses on the applicant's site have been refused. The only application permitted has been for "2 garages and a car port" which now appears to be three garages.

The Council noted with concern that the applicant's architect was not fully conversant with the location of the property as they state in their Design and Access Statement that the site is located at Fringford Road, Oxford. The site is accessed via Aunt Em's Lane, not Fringford Road and it is certainly not in Oxford.

The Applicant's Planning Statement has tried to state that Caversfield is a small suburb of Bicester. However, Caversfield may be only separated from Bicester by the ring road and some fields, but it has a very different nature from the neighbouring town. The Local Plan Section C 44 – re Strategic Development: Bicester 1 – North West Bicester Eco-Town states that planners for this development have to consider the impact on the surrounding area including the villages of Bucknell (also a Category C village and not mentioned by the applicant's agent) and Caversfield - this should apply to this developer too.

Considering the street scene, the four houses will appear incongruous and out of place in the context of what was probably the paddock for the Vicarage (which was formally connected with the Grade II* Listed 10th / 12th Century Church). The stone and white render and blue clay roof tiles may complement the Vicarage, but no other houses in the vicinity have this appearance.

The Council believes that the houses will have an impact on the privacy of the neighbouring properties and would have an overbearing impact on the adjacent gardens.

While the area does not lie in an Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone, the area proposed for development has flooded in previous years as has been evidenced by local knowledge and comments made by other responders to this application. No mitigation to ensure that the ditch surrounding the site is cleared on a regular basis has been provided.

Following the environmental concerns, the council noted with concern that Thames Water had not been consulted on the application. The site does not currently benefit from mains sewerage and there is nothing mentioned about disposal. It is understood that the septic tank which currently serves The Old Vicarage is within the area of the planned development, but there are no plans in place for either its replacement, how the additional houses will dispose of sewerage or how they intend to connect to the main sewer a great distance away.

The Council was also concerned about the loss of trees and the proposed alternatives together with the light pollution which would undoubtedly come from four substantial houses with security lighting.

For information, Aunt Em's Lane is regularly referred to in the documentation as the B4100, but this is not correct.

The E1 bus route is funded by the Eco-town developers and it is not certain whether it will continue to come through Caversfield once more of the Exemplar has been completed. No reliance on this route should be considered.

The proposal is for four 'market houses' and no effort has been made to make any of the houses 'affordable' which is what the village would need.

Concern was raised about the access from Aunt Em's Lane which is a National Speed Limit road of just a car and a half's width. Big vehicles such as the dustbin lorry or delivery vehicles would cause great disruption if they were permitted to stop on the road, so provision must be made to accommodate large vehicles on site.

The Parish Council **strongly objects** to this proposal. However, if you were minded to approve the application, the Council requests that the following conditions be included:

- No parking shall be allowed on Aunt Em's Lane
- The garages shall not be converted to living accommodation and the garages shall be large enough to accommodate SUV style cars
- Construction traffic shall be limited to between 10am and 2pm and must be taken off the road to make deliveries.

The Parish Council has requested that this application be taken to the Planning Committee at the earliest opportunity.

I trust that this is of help to you.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Olds