

Planning Application - 19/02350/OUT

Outline planning permission for 27 dwellings including Access, Land at Deerfields Farm, Canal Lane Bodicote

As a former member of a parish council and a father of two children, I understand the need for housing development. However, I also understand the need to plan such development in a manner which does not unduly compromise the surrounding environment. It is with this in mind that I voice the following concerns.

My concerns with this development are as follows:

Access

The Documentation supporting the applications shows a red access route via Silverweed and Mayweed roads. However three of the new houses will use the bridleway, known as Canal Lane as access. This is not explicitly stated, but can be ascertained by an examination of the included map.

The bridleway is wholly unsuitable for access to new-build houses:

1. The bridleway is used as a public amenity by walkers, cyclists, horses and most importantly parents and children accessing Longford Park Primary school.
The new development at Longford Park has greatly increased the pedestrian traffic especially in rush hours when, in addition to access to schools, commuters use it to access bus services on Oxford Road
There are no foot paths. Any increase in traffic would therefore put these users at risk.
2. The distance from Oxford Road to the first of the proposed houses is approximately 120 metres with no opportunity for vehicles to pass.
The bridleway is less than 4 metres wide (3.8 metres at my house, Crossways), so two cars are unable to pass.
Any increase in traffic on Canal Lane would result in vehicles using the verges belonging to the existing properties as "passing places"
3. There is no lighting on Canal Lane, further endangering pedestrians
4. There is no provision in the plans for any turning space for vehicles. There are only 2 parking spaces shown for the proposed 4 bedroom houses and 3 for the proposed 5 bedroom house. There is a danger of additional cars being parked on the bridleway causing obstructions, and further exacerbating traffic problems.
5. It is currently difficult to access Oxford Rd from the bridleway in a vehicle. Visibility is not good and Oxford Road is very busy. Residents of any new houses would inevitably use the bridleway in rush hour period for their daily commute. This would lead to queues of traffic waiting to exit Canal Lane.
As Canal Lane is single track, any cars waiting to exit Canal Lane would prevent traffic turning into the lane, leading to the traffic congestion spilling onto Oxford Road itself.
6. Canal Lane is an un-made road and suffers from potholes. Over the last 3 years on 3 occasions residents of Canal Lane have had broken springs replaced on their cars. Increasing

traffic would make this much worse, to the point where the lane would become a hazard to pedestrians and vehicles alike.

Tarmacking the lane would result in increased speed, further endangering pedestrian users.

See photograph of potholes at the Oxford road end of Canal Lane. Taken 24/12/2019



7. The bridleway is at a higher level than the existing houses, any impermeable surface would result in problems with water run-off, potentially flooding the existing properties. Water run-off has caused problems in the past even with a permeable road surface.

A new house was built on the bridleway following a planning application in 2014 (14/00260/F)

In the comments on this application Bodicote Parish Council, Cherwell District Council and The Oxfordshire County Council consultees, all raised concerns about the impact on the bridleway. The application was approved on the basis that, to quote the Rights of Way Officer “it is not considered that the traffic generated by one additional dwelling will have significant impact”. We now have another 3 dwellings proposed. This would be another step in the process of turning a rural bridleway into a de-facto road, at precisely the point where the need for a safe pedestrian route has increased due to the Longford Park development.

Drainage

The part of the land proposed has suffered some flooding in recent times, despite the installation of a large soak-away in the last few years.

See photographs of flooding Taken 15 November 2019:



and 20th December 2019



During the construction of Merlin Close adjacent to the proposed site, the ground level was raised to alleviate drainage problems. This caused some problems with run-off water into the back gardens of the existing houses on Canal Lane.

There is concern that with the additional impervious surfaces of a new development the water pictured above will also effect neighbouring properties.

Environment/Biodiversity

The hedges along the bridleway, together with those between the proposed site and the Merlin Close development are the last remains of the rural hedgerows in the area. They form a haven for birds and other wildlife and should be protected from any development.