

Mr and Mrs M Allen  
Woodhall  
Backside Lane  
Sibford Gower  
Banbury  
OX15 5RS

27<sup>th</sup> January 2020

To whom it may concern

**Objection to application number 19/02700/F** - *Conversion of existing stone/brick barns to 1 no. dwelling and conversion of existing steel pole barn to 1 no. dwelling. Associated works including landscaping and new access at **Mawles Farm, Sibford Gower***

We live in Backside Lane, Sibford Gower, a short distance from the application property, and have two children who attend the primary school situated close to the application site.

Firstly, we are very much in support of the principal of reusing the redundant traditional barn and residential would seem the most appropriate use, albeit the size of the dwelling could be questioned in that setting. However, the principal of 'converting' the predominately open sided steel portal framed building to a residential dwelling seems very much out of keeping with the surroundings and is only very loosely supported by the recent changes to planning policy.

However, the main consideration and objection we have is the proposed access onto Main Street. This involves opening up an 8 metre wide gap on a wall that has been in place for over 100 years and possibly before that. The reason for opening up this gap would not seem to be of either planning or highways benefit, but ultimately to only serve to give more amenity and perhaps financial value to the traditional barn, which we understand will be sold away once planning is obtained. The applicants also own Mawles Cottage which is the principal dwelling connected with the farmyard and is currently being sold away from the farmstead. This large four bedroom property is not being sold with the benefit of its existing access from Pound Lane and will therefore only benefit from on street parking on the already congested Main Street.

Whilst we do not object to the principal of the two dwellings we would suggest that the whole site and ownership of the applicant should be taken into consideration and the impact the whole property will have on the intensification of parking pressure if this consent is approved. The yard area and the amenity ground the applicant owns extends to circa 1.5 acres, which gives ample space to create off street parking whilst also providing enough amenity space for the proposed dwellings. Indeed, if Mawles Cottage were not to be sold away, that property and the traditional barn could both have parking, garaging and a large amount of amenity space if the modern general purpose barn was removed from the site.

Furthermore, with particular regard to the opening of the wall on main street, this is already causing serious safety concerns for both pedestrians and vehicles. This section of path is extremely well used by school children and their parents walking to and from the primary school twice a day, as well as people from the west of the village utilising the other services of the village such as the village hall, church, surgery and shop in Sibford Ferris. Young children seeking their independence will regularly run or scoot ahead of their parents and, with vehicles from a six bedroom property going in and out of this access on a regular basis, would be a serious safety matter and one which highways must carefully consider. However, this appears to have been given little consideration in the highways report already submitted by Oxfordshire

County Highways. There have already been a number of near misses on the main junction which is just a few feet away from this proposed opening.

This area is also fully utilised for roadside parking with a mixture of residents, visitors, parents parking to drop off children at the primary school as well as teachers and support staff as there is not a large enough parking facility within the primary school grounds.

Equally, the difficulties of vehicles coming out of the proposed access and particularly going into this drive will be challenging when cars regularly park all the way down this side of the road. When parked cars are there, visibility of oncoming traffic will be virtually impossible. We note from the applicants submission that they say highways are supportive of this opening but have they fully considered utilising the yard area rather than on street parking and the impact of parked cars all the way along this road at certain points in the day? We also note that the access is one metre above the current road level so vehicles will be accelerating on exit and entry to take this into account, which gives added danger.

The other added pressure here is the public bus that is a vital community facility and stops in this vicinity, together with the Primary School and Warriner School buses that both come through this area at different times of the day. There are regular occasions when this is a narrow pinch point causing the need for vehicles to reverse and make way for the buses so any added parking and accessing pressure that this new opening will cause with the loss of three spaces (8 metres), together with the use of the access itself will simply add to the problem and is not acceptable.

It is one thing for an application such as this to satisfy planning policy, but there also needs to be a strong element of common sense regarding what impact this new opening will have.

To reiterate, we are broadly in support of a residential scheme which would improve the site and it would be fabulous to have a new young family in the village, but more consideration needs to be given to the proposed scheme and the impact it is deemed to have before it can be considered acceptable.

Yours faithfully

Mr and Mrs M Allen