

14 September 2020
L 140920 JL Objection Letter Wigginton



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Dear Sir / Madam

Objection to planning application 20/01933/F - Proposed Single Dwelling for Multi-Generational Living (Para 79 house), Landscape Enhancements and Associated Works at Barn West Of Withycombe Farm, Wigginton

Savills (UK) Ltd is instructed by Oliver Langdale of Highwood Farm, OX7 4BE, to object to the above planning application for the erection of a dwelling sought under paragraph 79(e) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Our client would welcome the opportunity for you to visit the site and view in the wider context from various points including from the main access road and the A361.

The site is located 0.7km to the west of Wigginton and is not the subject of any specific planning or environmental designation.

Our objections are formulated on the following grounds:

Design

The application has been submitted on the basis that the applicants consider the proposal meets the criteria for an isolated dwelling in the open countryside under NPPF paragraph 79(e). This states:

Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling;* or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.***

We note that the site benefits from an extant permission for conversion of the stone barn to a dwelling under Class Q of the GPDO (ref: (18/00063/Q56). However, not only is the stone barn some distance from the development, according to the application form this current application has not undergone any pre-application discussions with Cherwell District Council Planning, Design or Landscape Officers. It has been presented to

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an independent Design Review Panel, to which iterations in November 2019 were considered by the Panel not to achieve the high design standards required by the Framework.

In our view the design, scale and form of the proposed development as submitted remains contrary to the NPPF criteria in that it would fail to represent:

- i. a truly outstanding or innovative scheme which reflects the highest standards of architecture;
- ii. demonstrate how the design proposals may raise standards of design more generally across rural areas; or
- iii. demonstrate a significant enhancement of the immediate setting; or sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area.

The scheme would also set an undesirable precedent for further sporadic development of this form in open rural landscapes. The Urban Design and Conservation Officer comments should also be sought prior to determination. It does not appear that they have been consulted.

A further point on design is that the essence of Paragraph 79 is that it allows for the consideration of a single dwelling in the open countryside. Whilst this application is described as a single 'multi-generational' dwelling, it does in fact comprise three self-contained units, each with their own facilities, tantamount to the erection of three dwellings within the open countryside.

Landscape Impact

Further to the lack of pre-application discussions, we do not consider the application has been given appropriate consideration by the Landscape Officer, having highlighted he has not visited the site. The response given concludes that *'observations are purely from the LVIA presented by Seed Landscapes'* and acknowledges the development would be visible from one, if not two, public footpaths.

While the LVIA (prepared by Seed Landscapes) provides a proportionate assessment of the proposed development, in our experience, there are potential omissions:

- i. The methodology states that for each landscape / visual receptor identified, judgements are made regarding susceptibility and value in order to determine the sensitivity of the receptor; and judgements are made regarding scale, duration and reversibility in order to determine the magnitude of effect. None of these steps appear to have been undertaken, making it difficult to justify the assessment findings.
- ii. No verifiable visualisations of the proposed development (such as wirelines or photomontages) have been prepared to support the LVIA. Given the ambitious design approach and sensitive countryside setting, it seems remiss that such material was not prepared.
- iii. The photo panels do not conform to latest Landscape institute guidance, which requires single frames images to fit the whole of an A3 page. Again, this makes it more difficult to accurately judge the likely landscape and visual effects.

As a result it is difficult to argue that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the landscape, having regard to Cherwell Local Plan Policy ***Policy ESD 13*** (Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The application proposes the erection of a large development, deemed a single dwelling, in an isolated open countryside location. The proposed development would conflict with the aims of NPPF paragraph 79(e).

For the reasons above, my clients request that planning permission for this development is refused.

Should you require any clarification on the matters outlined above, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Yours faithfully



Joanna Lishman
Associate Planner