

The Bourtons Parish Council
Great & Little Bourton, Banbury, Oxfordshire

Mr Bob Neville,
Senior Planning Officer
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House,
Bodicote, Banbury

Sent electronically September 09 2020

Dear Mr Neville
Response to planning application 20/02060/F
Change of use : The Stables, Main Street, Great Bourton

This Council wishes to **OBJECT** to this application for the occupation of this site for residential purposes, but would **SUPPORT** its continued use for pony grazing. Our grounds for objection are :

1. Need for site

Reference is made in the application supporting letter that CDC has a significant deficit in its provision of traveller pitches, quoting a shortage of up to 27 pitches, based on a 2017 assessment report. Recently CDC have lost 2 applications for new traveller sites on appeal and it is now believed that they meet the requirement for traveller site provision over a five year period. This raises the question as to whether this site is now required.

2. Landscape value

The area in which this site lies has previously been described by Cherwell District Council in its Local Plan and in connection with previous applications as being of "high landscape value". This Council believes that this application would indeed intrude into this rural landscape and despite the comments made in the supporting documents, due to the topography of the site can be clearly seen from Great Bourton where houses overlook the valley.

Permission for such a development appears to be contrary to policy ESD13 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, Local landscape protection and Enhancement ¹ and the government's National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) PPS7

'iv) New building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled; the Government's overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.

¹Footnote¹ Local Plan 2011-2031, Local landscape protection and Enhancement ¹
'Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character*

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- *Impact on area judged to have a high level of tranquillity*
- *Harm the setting of settlements, building, structures or other landscape features*
- *Harm the historic value of the landscape'*

The proposed site lies well outside the boundary of the built settlement of The Bourtons and the neighbouring parish of Cropredy, thus encroaching into open countryside. The adjacent parcel of land has previously been refused use for domestic residence.

'DCLG (Aug2015) Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

Policy H. Determining Planning Applications for Traveller Sites

22.Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

*24.LPA should consider: a. existing levels of local provision and need for sites
b. availability (or lack) of alternative accommodation for applicants.*

25.LPA should very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan.'

3. Public right of way

The proposed site is crossed by footpath 138/8 which is not mentioned in the application supporting documents. This path has previously created some concern due to loose dogs causing problems for walkers and OCC Rights of Way officers have already objected to this application on this basis.

4. Light pollution

No mention is made of any external lighting which is evident on other traveller sites. Since an application has been made for the connection of electricity to the site, we presume that external lighting may be installed but this has not been clarified. External lighting would create a significant visual intrusion into the landscape at night.

5. Drainage & flooding

The supporting letter to the application clearly states this land being designated as Flood Zone 1 and not subject to flooding. Local knowledge would suggest that this is incorrect and pictures supporting previous winter flooding are viewable in documents already submitted to the planning website. There is a long history of flooding in the area which has significantly affected the school and adjoining property, resulting in school closures and residents having to evacuate their properties. The Environment Agency has been involved on all these occasions and have invested heavily to minimise any further flooding of properties. We believe they should be made aware of this proposed development but they do not appear on the Planning department's consultation list – we believe they should be consulted. Any increases of run- off in extreme weather conditions would threaten the viability of use of the adjacent parish charity land to the east which is let as pony pasture.

The dumping of tons of rubble to create a base for buildings already on this and the adjacent site have blocked the original ridge and furrow drainage scheme causing the annual winter flooding that now occurs. This Council believes that without significant new drainage works the site is unsuitable for residential occupation.

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6. Traffic

The application letter refers to the site being adjacent to the Cropredy-Great Bourton road and that safe access is easily achieved. The site is located very close to the railway overbridge and the emergence of slow-moving vehicles, potentially towing caravans, could cause a hazard.

Access to the site for caravans or mobile homes through Great Bourton is limited by the narrow road through the centre of the village, exacerbated by many parked cars.

7. Facilities.

In describing the sustainability of the site the agent states that the resources of a category A village are available nearby for families living on the site, but those facilities are very limited in scope, and many needs would have to be met by visiting Banbury. It is stated that a bus service runs past the site, but officers should be aware that this is one bus to Banbury and return on a Saturday only, and an occasional bookable community bus, of very limited capacity, serving the whole cluster of N Oxon villages, part-funded by the parishes. Most journeys would have to be by private vehicle.

8. Noise disturbance.

The proposed residential site is in close proximity to a busy railway line that is projected to be more heavily used in the future. There are 230 diagrammed potential train movements on the railway line through Cropredy during the period of 24hrs from midnight (in this case for the date 8th September 2020), of which 41 services are shown to pass between midnight and 0700hrs (Data drawn from the published Network Rail Working Timetable.)

Although many brick and mortar homes are built close to railway lines mobile homes, and more particularly caravans, are not routinely well insulated to resist noise pollution, so this location would not be beneficial for the peaceful welfare of traveller residents.

For all of the above reasons Bourtons Parish Council believes this application should be **refused**.

If this application were to be granted by CDC, despite objections, then Bourton Parish Council requests that the following conditions are imposed:

a) Tree planting

Although the application does mention additional tree planting, we think that a suitable scheme for additional screening planting should be agreed together with a time clause for completion.

b) Sewage disposal

The application mentions the provision of a "package sewage treatment plant" but no specific details are provided regarding this, nor the disposal of effluent. Such arrangements should also be agreed with the Environment Agency. As the site drains indirectly into the Sow Burge brook, which runs through the Cropredy School site, located close by, attention is required to ensure that no pollution can occur that could become an environmental threat and place children in the school grounds at risk.

- c) Use of existing buildings
Limitations should be placed on the use to which the existing buildings are put without further change of use permission, for the avoidance of noise and additional visual intrusion.
- d) Light pollution
Restrictions on the siting and intensity of any external lighting should be imposed to minimise light pollution.
- e) Site capacity
Limitations on the total capacity of the site and on the number and length of stay of additional visiting caravans etc. should be imposed. Further extension of the site should be subject to a new planning application.

Clerk to the Council
for and on behalf of
The Bourtons Parish Council

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