

Our Ref: PJF/fa/PF/10456
(Please reply to Banbury office)

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14th September 2020

Mr David Peckford
Assistant Director of Planning and Development
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
White Post Road
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA

Dear David,

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING APPLICATION 20/02060/F**

I write on behalf of Mr and Mrs T Brooks, residents in Great Bourton who wish to make representations against the granting of planning permission for the above development as a matter of principle when considered against development plan and national planning policy for development in the open countryside. The starting point for determination of this application is the provision of Policy BSC6 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2031. The policy requires the provision of 19 (net) additional pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Thereafter, the policy sets out the approach to be taken in plan-making (Part 2 Local Plan) or **decision-taking in order to meet this need**. Policy BSC 6 does not provide a permissive policy for the provision of further gypsy and traveller sites, merely because a particular site may satisfy the principle of the 'sequential approach'.

In short form, the sequential approach is a policy means to deliver the 'need' that has been identified. It is understood that the District Council has already met the need identified by Policy BSC1. The proposal therefore falls to be considered on its individual merits and does not attract direct support from Policy BSC1.

The Framework (4) states it 'should be read in conjunction with the Government's planning policy for traveller sites...' The Framework states (79):

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

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The proposed development is for the provision of new homes. The site lies in the open countryside, detached from existing patterns of settlement. The proposal is for 'isolated' homes in the open countryside. None of the circumstances identified at a) – e) of paragraph 79 provide policy support in principle for the provision of isolate homes for members of the Gypsy and Traveller Community.

National planning policy for the provision of traveller sites (August 2015) has a specific policy provision (Policy U) for sites in the open countryside to ensure that the 'scale' of sites does not dominate the nearest settled community. It would be an inappropriate reading of this policy to suggest that subject to this specific spatial consideration, there is a policy 'free for all' for gypsy and traveller sites to be located anywhere in the countryside. Policy U does not override the control of development of isolated homes in the countryside -because the 'Traveller Site' policy and the Framework are to be read together.

The Framework (170b) states that:

'planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside...*

This policy imperative applies to **all** forms of development. The development of a G&T site is not exempt from the core planning principles which seek to achieve sustainable patterns of development.

The open tract of countryside between Great Bourton and Cropredy has a particular character forming the valley side to the River Cherwell. This character should be safeguarded by planning decisions made by Cherwell DC. The gap between the two villages- which contributes to the setting and distinctiveness of both villages- should not be detracted from by the introduction of other development such as the proposed encampment.

Cherwell Local Plan 2031 Policy ESD 13 aligns with national planning policy in expecting 'development to respect and enhance local landscape character' The Policy states:

'Proposals will not be permitted if they would;

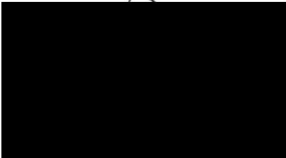
- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character*
- *Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity'.*

While it may be accepted that the last criterion is not especially relevant to this location, the proposal does offend the other criteria. As Policy ESD13 is particularly relevant to the proposal (and there is no need for additional G&T sites in the District to an extent that 'need' may be argued by an applicant as a consideration to override other policy considerations) the proposal should be regarded as being in conflict with the development plan .

In conclusion, in the absence of a demonstrable need for the provision of additional G &T sites in the District, this application falls to be considered against policies which control all forms of development in the countryside. The proposal represents sporadic and isolated development in a tract of attractive open countryside which should be protected for its intrinsic character. Planning permission should be refused

for the conflict with the development plan. The application of relevant national planning policy similarly tells against the granting of planning permission. There are considered to be no material considerations of such weight which might suggest planning permission should be allowed contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

Yours sincerely



Peter J Frampton

Cc: Cllr Phil Chapman