

Bicester Local History Society
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For the attention of Bernadette Owens
Senior Planning Officer
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House, Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA

2nd November 2020

Dear Bernadette,

Ref: 20/02469/SCOP Scoping Opinion – Environmental Impact Assessment of the allocated Gavray Drive site in Bicester.

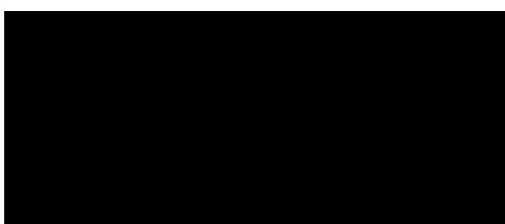
Please find below comments raised by the Bicester Local History Committee to this Assessment.

The historical features present on this site are documented in an Archaeological Evaluation Report (Oxford Archaeological Unit, August 1997). The site comprises several small and ancient fields with green lanes. The boundaries can be seen on old maps dating back to 1607 and match the pattern of hedges present today. The report confirms the date of these hedges as late 16th century. The ground has ridge and furrow formation derived from medieval ploughing methods, demonstrating that this land has not been intensively farmed by modern equipment. Ridge and furrow formations of national importance in the Bicester area are now rare because of the extensive development of the town.

We support the comments made by the County Council Archaeologists report (Richard Oram), that since the initial assessment, further archaeological investigations have been carried out and archaeological remains in the area have been discovered and these should be incorporated into the new assessment.

The site has considerable landscape value for the town. Several ancient footpaths run through the site. One marks the historic Launton village parish boundary and is lined by an ancient hedgerow. The planned linear development along Gavray Drive (as marked in a previously submitted scoping report) would detrimentally affect this historic feature.

As this site is very close to the town centre, we argue that it is of great historic value for the community as an education resource. Designating this area for housing will destroy historical evidence, reduce biodiversity and amenity value.



Bob Hessian, Chairman, Bicester Local History Society Committee.