

19 Blackwood Place
Bodicote
Oxfordshire
OX15 4BD

Dear Mr Neville,

Re: Planning application – 21/00026/F - 13 Blackwood Place

I wish to register my continued objection to this renewed application, further to my reasons previously detailed regarding the application (20/02152/F) withdrawn in October 2020.

To initially clarify however, I am not aware if consideration can be taken of previous objections when an application is withdrawn and an amended one submitted. Therefore some aspects of the below will duplicate my previous letter.

Blackwood Place is currently an established and appealing road to which we were attracted, with mature residential gardens and settled family homes. One we felt would not be tarnished by overdevelopment as this would be dramatically out of context with the established character.

During the year we have resided in Blackwood Place we have been very fortunate to witness much wildlife in our and other gardens. Wildlife no doubt attracted by the contiguous undergrowth and foliage as they travel between properties. Regular sightings include Foxes, Badgers, Shrews, Bats, Hedgehogs, many garden birds and Sparrowhawks. Imagery of all of these in the location can be provided upon request. Disruption of the local natural balance, as requested by this application, will no doubt affect the aforementioned fauna, some of which are protected by law. My specific concern is the creation of access via the Oxford Road, the erection of much new fencing and the removal of trees, bushes and undergrowth that currently provide habitat.

Remaining on the subject of the treeline removal, as previously outlined this currently forms a significant barrier to the Oxford Road, which is a busy thoroughfare. Whilst existence of the main road will always affect residences, the current foliage absorbs a considerable amount of noise and light as part of the highway's green infrastructure. Although I fully appreciate that this amended application constitutes a substantial reduction in the proposed volume of greenery to be felled, removal of any part of this barrier will permit intrusive noise and light pollution to the rear aspect of several properties, undermining residents' protection against traffic disturbance through open doors and windows and enjoyment of gardens. This can be evidenced to the south of the proposed development where deciduous trees currently create a stark seasonal contrast for residents.

In parallel to the previous point, acknowledgement is made of the access amendments incorporated in this application. The opening up and construction of a driveway directly on to Oxford Road continues to raise concerns however. Distractions will be created by indicating/turning vehicles in this section of the road and, due to the aggressive nature of people behind the wheel, drivers regularly speed through these lights to advance positions in the line of traffic. This is not the place to be entering or leaving the carriageway, especially if crossing to turn right. The application is not clear if a layby is to be included to mitigate this, it appears the Road Safety Audit, which recommends a layby, has been resubmitted, but no layby is proposed.

Supporting traffic flow information has also been resubmitted, again based on a previous survey, which unfortunately takes no account of scheduled developments that would dramatically increase the volume of vehicles using these roads; the completion of the bypass from Bloxham Road to the Bodicote flyover and the planned constructions surrounding the rugby grounds. With no enhancements or capacity improvements for the Oxford Road the flow will inevitably increase.

To reiterate, I would have made no objection to the previous expansion of number 13, it is in keeping with the size of the property and improvements to other residences in the road. Number 13 now appears to be an attractive, respectful dwelling with a beautifully mature garden.

However, whilst significant changes have been made to address objections, such as a reduction in dwelling size and position, this application remains over-development of the plot and not an empathetic family home. No other properties along the road, all with large gardens, have any secondary property development. I fear this would set a precedent. As this is proposed promptly after the completion of the original property being considerably expanded I would question if the second dwelling was included in the original consent, if that would have been approved as in keeping and if a new development remains true to the original consent.

One final detail as a matter of process; the unclear layby question previously highlighted is not the sole contradiction in this application. One of the documents attached, the Combined Planning and Transport Statement indicates a two bedroom dwelling, however the floor plans show three bedrooms. This is a significant aspect of the application, pointing to future occupation, vehicle numbers and use. As such I would be concerned if consultation and a decision was concluded without clarification.

I ask that you consider these objections to the potential long term effects, on neighbours and for the safety of road users.

Yours faithfully

Steven Hearn