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Development Management
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
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OX15 4AA

11 Apr 21

Dear Sir/Madam,

PLANNING APPLICATION 21/00922/OUT
UP TO NINE ENTRY-LEVEL AFFORDABLE HOUSES AT LAND WEST OF
FOXDEN WAY, GREAT BOURTON

References:

- A. Planning Design and Access Statement – Fernhill Estates March 2021.
- B. Land at Foxden Way, Great Bourton Landscape and Technical Note – Turnstone Ecology for Fernhill Estates March 2021.
- C. Design and Access Statement, Land adjacent to Stonelea, Roger Coy Partnerships April 2020.
- D. Final Local Adopted Plan 2011 – 2031 – Cherwell District Council.
- E. Transport Technical Note Hub Transport Planning Ltd for Fernhill Estates 12 Mar 2021.

1. This letter sets out our comments on the proposed development of up to nine dwellings with access on Foxden Way, Great Bourton.
2. **Rural Exception Site.** In Reference A paragraph 4.12 it refers to the Council's Housing Strategy and delivery of rural exception sites. The Cherwell District Council website contains the following definition. 'A rural exception site is an exception to normal planning policy. Planning permission is only granted on sites where housing need has been demonstrated and the homes provided will be affordable and reserved for local people in perpetuity. On rural exception sites there is usually a mix of homes which are for sale on a Shared Ownership basis (part rent part buy) and for rent.' In Reference A paragraph 5.13 it states 'given the Outline nature of these proposals it is not possible to assess the proposals against local design policies and standards and this could be appraised robustly at the Reserved Matters stage'. This should not be a rural exception site unless this can be proved and detail secured in advance. There is concern that this outline application only contains detail on access with no details on what will make the housing affordable and reserved for local people in perpetuity.
3. **Wider Housing Need.** Planning permission has been granted to sites south of the Crematorium/North of Hanwell Fields, on the outskirts of Banbury but building land remains available, with much of the housing yet to be built. These locations are:
 - a. Better for traffic access.
 - b. The provision of public transport is more likely to be viable.

- c. Are closer to transport links i.e. rail and motorway.
 - d. Nearer to employment and facilities.
4. **Site and Surroundings.** In the Planning Design and Access Statement Reference A paragraph 2.6 it states ‘To the south of the site are the allotments; a facility that is well-used and clearly related to the settlement.’ Reference B Table 2, Landscape Quality states ‘on this map the site appears to form part of the wider field to the south, with the more recent allotments and southern boundary fencing reflecting a more contemporary boundary change’. Reference B paragraph 2.1.9 states ‘The allotments extend the perceived presence of the settlement to the south of the site.’ Please note that this was a move of the allotments from one field environment immediately adjacent to Bourtonfields Farm, to another field environment, both external to the village, which despite ‘perception’, is not part of a village boundary change.
 5. **Extension of the Village Boundary.** Garners Field housing estate was recently built on the western edge of Great Bourton which substantially increased the size of the village and included affordable housing. Our concern is that this application for Foxden Way extends in another direction, the built up area of the village boundary, in a village not earmarked for substantial development. Reference B paragraph 4.2.4 states ‘The proposal would retain and reinforce the existing boundary hedgerows and establish a new planted southern boundary’. Clearly this will be an extension of the village envelope.
 6. **The proposed development.** In the Planning Design and Access Statement Reference A paragraph 3.3 it states ‘The development proposals also incorporate a pedestrian linkage from South View to the allotments, which will enhance pedestrian safety for existing residents who currently access the allotments by walking along School Lane, Crow Lane and Foxden Way.’ It should be noted that often users of the Allotment drive along Foxden Way to transport equipment and other items.
 7. Great Bourton is a Category 2 village where new development should be restricted to conversions and infilling within the village. The Allotments were re-located only one field south of this proposed development in 2017. We were concerned prior to the move that the re-location of the Allotments would extend the village envelope. I contacted Cherwell District Council and was assured that this would not be the case as the allotments are not a built environment. Therefore, the proposed development should not be considered to be “infill”.
 8. **Wider open countryside.** The neighbouring site at Stonelea (Ref: 20/01110/F) was approved in its amended format in 2020 as ‘the proposals would not significantly intrude into the wider open countryside or be to the detriment of the visual amenities of the site or its wider setting, sustaining the character and appearance of this edge of village location.’ The Stonelea site, north of the proposed application won its appeal. In the Design and Access Statement for land adjacent to Stonelea and north of the proposed Foxden Way application, Reference C paragraph 6.3 states ‘The dwellings have been positioned to allow glimpsed and clear views through and over the development and to the countryside beyond the residential garden’. If the proposed Foxden Way development goes ahead, it will remove these glimpsed views and intrude further into the wider open countryside. This development would cause unnecessary harm to the rural landscape setting of the village and undue visual intrusion into the open countryside against the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Policy ESD 13, Reference D.

9. **Traffic Flow.** The increase of traffic onto Foxden Way is problematic, being a narrow country lane with no footpath, which is currently well-used by vehicles to drive between the two villages, to the allotments and, enjoyed by walkers, runners, cyclists and horse-riders. It is considered that, due to very limited public transport, most households in Great Bourton have at least two vehicles. The assessment of potential traffic entering and leaving the proposed site contained in Reference E paragraph 4.4 Table 4 of 6 vehicles at morning peak time and 6 vehicles during p.m. peak time seems optimistic for 9 houses and does not account for additional journeys required at other times for school, shopping, leisure, work trips and deliveries. Foxden Way is a narrow country lane which leads onto either Spring Lane/Chapel Lane in Little Bourton, or School Lane/Crow Lane in Great Bourton. These are all narrow minor roads. There is a lack of public transport available in Great Bourton.
10. **Surface Water.** Reference A paragraph 5.18 states ‘surface water runoff will be conveyed, stored and treated within a proposed attenuation basin on site. This will discharge into the existing ditch network along the eastern boundary of the site’. There is concern that this puts further pressure on the local ditch system which is designed to deal with field drainage and not household surface water. It should also be noted that the ditch is poorly maintained. This Winter the allotments were waterlogged and the increase in hardstanding that this development would bring, potentially worsens this problem.
11. **Effect upon the Visual Environment.** Reference C paragraph 4.3.2 refers to viewpoints from the South and states ‘the primary receptors for these viewpoints will be motorists passing through the landscape at speed and thus, the views are naturally less sensitive to change’. However, despite the lack of footways, Foxden Way is also used frequently by walkers and runners, in addition to horse riders, coming from the direction of Mill Lane and Little Bourton, and the southern viewpoints are visible to those on the allotments and nearby bridleway south of the allotments.
12. **Historic Environment.** The roof of the historic Bourtons Parish Church Clock Tower is visible from the allotments (photograph attached) and part of the skyline on the southern edge of the village. The clock tower was built in 1883. This will be obscured from view by the proposed development.
13. For the above reasons we object to this planning application.

Yours faithfully,

Margaret and Martin Damen



Photograph of Clock Tower and Skyline taken from the Allotments and overlooking the proposed site - 6 Apr 2021.