

FAO: Mr J Kirkham  
Cherwell District Council



Reference: 20/00922/OUT

Application Site: Land West Of Foxden Way, Great Bourton, OX17 1QY

Proposal: OUTLINE Planning Application for up to 9 entry-level affordable houses - all matters reserved save for access

Dear Mr Kirkham

We have been made aware of the above outline planning application for nine dwellings which is currently under consideration.

We wish to raise our concerns with you which are set out in the following relevant sections.

#### Principle of Development

We understand that Cherwell District Council has an up to date Development Plan which was adopted in 2015 and that CDC is currently able to demonstrate an adequate land supply of deliverable housing sites. The site is situated outside of the defined development envelope for Great Bourton and is therefore within the countryside. While the NPPF supports the provision of affordable housing, this should not be to the detriment of other factors, and we consider that the negative impacts of the proposal significantly outweigh the benefits of the provision of these dwellings.

#### Highway Safety

Foxden Way and Crow Lane are extremely narrow, country lanes in an area which is dominated by agriculture. The lanes are too narrow for vehicles to pass one another side by side and meeting vehicles are forced to mount the verges in order to pass. The lanes are also heavily trafficked by agricultural vehicles and machinery. The NPPF makes it clear that transport issues should be considered at the earliest stage in order to address the potential issues from development, and determine the level of development that can be accommodated. The NPPF also sets out that the appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport should be ensured, and that safe and suitable access to the site for all users can be achieved. The NPPF prioritises pedestrian and cycle movements over vehicular movements and requires accessibility for emergency service.

As previously mentioned, Foxden Way and Crow Lane are single track lanes which are not served by any footways and there are no formalised passing bays to allow vehicles to pass one another. The proposal would result in nine dwellings which would be expected to result in relatively regular additional traffic movements taking place along the lanes. The lanes are not of appropriate specification to accommodate the additional vehicular movements that would result from the proposed development. Additionally, we would request that the emergency services are consulted on this application given the nature of the lanes as we do not consider that timely access can be achieved.

The plans submitted show that the proposed development would have internal footpaths, but that these do not link to any other footpaths outside the application site. Foxden Way and Crow Lane do not benefit from public footpaths and pedestrians attempting to access the village will be required to walk within the highway. It should also be noted that there is no street lighting, save for one light opposite the junction with Foxden Way, putting pedestrians at further risk. The site is set well away from the nearest bus stops in the village which would increase the reliance on private motor vehicles in order to access the nearest services and

facilities. It should be noted that the nearest shop is in the next village, and future occupiers are unlikely to use sustainable modes of transport in order to access this.

In summary we consider that there would be an increased likelihood of conflict occurring between users of the Lanes at various points, including pedestrians, cyclists, private motor vehicles and agricultural vehicles and machinery. This is likely to result in danger manoeuvres on the public highway in order to accommodate all users, to the detriment of highway safety and the safety of pedestrians. The proposal is contrary to the provisions of the NPPF as it does not promote sustainable methods of transport, nor does it prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.

We note that no consultation responses are currently displayed on public access from the Local Highways Authority.

#### Visual Impacts

While we understand that access is the only matter to be considered at outline stage, consideration must be given the suitability of the development in broad terms.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraphs 127 and 130 of the NPPF seek to secure visually attractive development which improves the overall quality of an area and is sympathetic to local character and history, as well as establishing or maintain a strong sense of place. The NPPF also makes it clear that Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot. The NPPF indicates that development should be refused which fails to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. The proposal would result in further encroachment into the countryside and does not have any particular visual or physical affinity with the existing pattern of development in the area. This would result in a hardening of the edge of the built-up extent of the village and the open countryside beyond and would erode the predominantly undeveloped nature of the fringe of Great Bourton. It would create an urbanisation of the countryside through the introduction of built-form, access arrangements, associated landscaping and boundary treatments. The site is part of the transition between Great Bourton and the open countryside, and would be harmful to the sensitive edge-of-settlement location. The area is predominantly undeveloped and Foxden Way has historically been the defining end point of development. The harm to the character of the area and the open countryside is significant and demonstrable.

#### Other Matters

The County Council should be consulted with regard to the capacity of local schools and doctors surgeries.

We ask that these concerns are considered in the determination of the application.

Kind regards

Mr I & Mrs L Hitchman

Einsiedeln, Crow Lane, Great Bourton, OX17 1RL