

Comment for planning application 21/01630/OUT

Application Number	21/01630/OUT
Location	Land at North West Bicester Home Farm, Lower Farm and SGR2 Caversfield
Proposal	Outline planning application for residential development (within Use Class C3), open space provision, access, drainage and all associated works and operations including but not limited to demolition, earthworks, and engineering operations, with the details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination
Case Officer	Caroline Ford
Organisation Name	Robert Evans
Address	1 Chervil Grove, Bicester, OX27 8ER
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>APPLICATION REF. 21/01630/OUT LAND AT NORTH WEST BICESTER - ON BEHALF OF FIRETHORN DEVELOPMENTS LTD Letter of Objection to be copied to Victoria Prentis MP In general, we have only recently moved into the Elmsbrook flagship 'ECO' development. We chose to move from Buckinghamshire into Oxfordshire to this specific development for its high Eco aims and credentials. We are then astounded and indeed angry that this revised application has been submitted by a developer which waters down these credentials and who in their own words state it would not be viable to deliver the new houses to meet the planning standards and policies laid out in the Bicester Master Plan for this area. Clearly they do not see a significant enough profit margin. We find it incredulous that our Local Authorities are even considering this revised application that clearly goes in the face of the principles of the Elmsbrook development against a background of global climate change (clearly something the developer is less interested in). If it is not viable for the developer then we suggest they should withdraw their application! We also find it incredulous that CDC Planning Dept have once again given so little time to respond to this application considering its magnitude and the huge amount of accompanying documentation. As such these comments are slightly late but we expect them to be taken into account. We now refer to the above planning application in more detail. We have seldom read a document that sets out to trivialise and avoid addressing the many points of objection previously raised by residents to the first Outline Planning Application by this Developer Firethorn. It appears designed to oblige CDC to compromise the ECO Town requirements and additionally in the words of the Developer "Ultimately the development will not be able to 'afford' all obligations and be viable for delivery, and without clarity from CDC as to those priorities, there is a risk that development will be delayed, with further pressure being placed on housing delivery in the district which in turn will place further pressure on windfall sites rather than focussing delivery on allocated sites such as North West Bicester.". The Developer wants residents and CDC to pay for that compromise and we decline to do so and object to this application. Our observations this time are as follows: 1. SSE Firethorn state "An interim report has been prepared by the consultants (a consortium led by Anthesis) working on behalf of BEIS that proposes a stepped approach to decarbonisation by first reducing flow and return temperatures on the existing heat network followed by installation of Air Source Heat Pumps in the existing Energy Centre in a modular fashion to gradually phase out the gas CHP at the end of the life of the boilers". This proposal is unacceptable as due to the poor build quality of the 393 homes in Phases 1,2 3 and 4 the thermal performance of the properties is significantly less than designed for and has been proven by a number of Thermographic Surveys in addition the radiators in Phase 1 are undersized as demonstrated by an expert report. As a consequence, any reduction in the flow temperature to existing homes will result in unacceptable temperatures within said homes. If CDC wish for a copy of a Thermographic Survey one is available for their attention for my property 4 Wintergreen Fields. It may be pertinent to state that draft pleadings are with my QC to be lodged against A2Dominion with thermal performance only one of the defects listed. 2. Homes The Developers arguments concerning the affordable volume of such homes is a cynical one seeking to force CCD to make concessions such as to relax zero carbon, relax policy commitments, which may include such things as transport and S106 contributions. The Developer is a commercial enterprise and if his financial model does not work he need not build, others will do so. CDC should not compromise their requirements which would in fact then be detrimental to the amenity that existing residents have. 3. Transport. a). Consultees are not aware of discussions between NH and they should be aware of those comments prior</p>

to limitation of objections being raised or the matter going before Planning for determination. b). The OCC Transport Software is defective a fact well known and the errors contained within which are then compounded by Firethorn in their response. Firethorn therefore assume their projected levels of traffic are acceptable we have demonstrated that they are not. Firethorn take the view that they do not need to provide for new signals at Charlotte Avenue I disagree. c). VTP are referencing a Hyder Consulting Report dated 2014, now 8 years out of date, which in their opinion allow the full development to be completed before upgrading the A4095. It is apparent that the A4095 is already struggling with traffic and the B4100 junction already backs up at peak traffic times. It cannot be acceptable to build first, create an issue and then at leisure undertake works to resolve the problem. This is what has happened in Banbury where traffic is often gridlocked. Common sense dictates that the infrastructure is built first to deal with the issue not the other way around. D) The lack of traffic cameras between Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the existing development means that new Firethorn Development traffic can simply access Charlotte Avenue again compounding the issue. The Phase 2 roads have not yet been adopted, when will they be adopted and when will traffic cameras be installed? This should happen before any Firethorn Development commences. Firethorn Traffic cannot use Phase 2 roads until adopted in any case as residents of Phase 1 and 2 pay for infrastructure upkeep. Developers must cash flow this themselves rather than expecting residents to put up with significant loss of amenity simply to make their business model work and CDC must not agree to this to meet housing targets without protecting residents. e) It is my contention for the above reasons that a Grampian Agreement must be applied to the 69 proposed properties utilising Phase 2 infrastructure. However, the Developer has calculated only 69 dwellings need to be modelled for but this is only from site access B not site access A which has a further 138 homes, The Eastern Phase, therefore the analysis is clearly flawed giving rise to a potential peak flow of some 111 vehicles two flow at peak. However again the Developer has not assessed this traffic to be one way and has ignored the existing load and impact across two road narrowing and two bottlenecks. The solution is to make the proposed temporary access 278 for the Eastern Phase a permanent one and also provide traffic lights at the end of Charlotte Avenue to the B4100 as the B4100 will inevitable become busier as vehicles exit Braeburn Avenue and the Eastern Phase. f). The Developer proposes to access Charlotte Road via the existing hammerhead which is directly adjacent to residents parking and electric charging points and is in my opinion unsafe to be used for the predicted travel movement suggested by Firethorn let alone the more realistic levels we anticipate as stated in the attached statement. How is this being addressed? Policy states that road access must be safe. There are no separate Cycle routes either. If the Eastern Phase is served by a permanent 278 junction, then the hammerhead can be utilised to allow cycle and footfall access to Phase 2 and the school. g). Historically A2Dominion did not complete infrastructure works, the bridge on phase 2, for at least 3.5 years after residents moved in which was unacceptable to residents so I would ask that any S106 improvements are in place prior to any approved development commencing. Hence the suggestion of a Grampian Agreement is sensible. 4. Water, Drainage and Flood Risk Thames water were clear in their original objection that without significant reinforcement new homes waste could not be handled by the existing system, the existing infrastructure could not cope. Thames Water calculated only 49 new homes discharging to the existing system could be accommodated. I would also point out that the existing system has also failed at certain points in the last 3 years peak flow times and the system has required cleaning several times due to blockages resulting in the surface spread of sewage. I do not see that this matter has been closed out and therefore it should not be possible to approve the application without details being agreed notwithstanding the Developers suggestion that it can be at a later stage. Surely as the application by the Developer is in respect of Infrastructure it is not unreasonable to oblige the Developer to demonstrate how they will deal with waste rather than making this a condition or reserved matter prior to occupation given that the Developer could effectively blackmail into a compromise if they are unable to resolve the issue. AS set out above they are already telling CDC that CDC have to compromise and this is before any approval of the development. 5. S106, viability and conditions. Again we would state that we are offended that the Developer is suggesting that CDC must make compromises or the Developers Scheme may not be viable, it is repugnant that they think CDC obligation to provide housing mean that compromises need to be made that would directly impact the amenity of existing residents. They need to be disabused off that notion and scale their development accordingly. If they cannot make their scheme viable they can withdraw it and other can make proposals to build out. If the principles of this flagship development, recognised throughout Europe are 'watered down' it will fast become a sinking ship rather than a flagship. The Members and Officers of CDC and indeed OCC should remain strong on this application and not let the developer 'sink this ship' for the sake of their profit margins!

Received Date

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Attachments