

Comment for planning application 21/02231/F

Application Number	21/02231/F
Location	The Stables College Farm Main Street Wendlebury Bicester OX25 2PR
Proposal	Proposed conversion of existing barn and stable block, to form new family house
Case Officer	Gavin Forrest

Organisation	
Name	Philip Isherwood
Address	The Old Granary,4 Willow Court,Main Street,Wendlebury,Bicester,OX25 2JY
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour

Comments	<p>We have strong objections to this proposed development: Wendlebury is category C for planning, permitting only infill development and specifically prohibiting residential development beyond the existing building line. The proposed development is beyond the existing residential building line. The proposed development sits immediately behind our property on higher ground, 1.5M to 2M above the ground height of our property. For the 8 months of the year when there are few or no leaves on the trees, the existing stables development, with high single storey walls and a hip roof, already presents a looming presence over our house and garden. The proposed addition of second storey will present an overbearing presence over our property. When the original planning application for the stable block was made in 2014, the original submission included a second storey hay loft. After consultation, this plan was withdrawn and the existing single storey plus hip roof design was submitted. A second storey was deemed overbearing in 2014 and should be deemed again overbearing in 2021. The original stable block, as approved in 2014 and constructed in 2016, was substantially over specified for the single horse and dog that the Lewis family then owned. The footprint of the building was far larger than required for any conceivable domestic, equine purpose. As part of the planning submission, they were required to give undertakings that the building would not be used for any residential or business purpose - i.e. that the purpose of the development was for solely domestic, equine and storage purposes. With this new application for change of use to a family house that neatly fits the footprint of the stable block, the purpose of the suspiciously oversized stable block is made clear. The original stable block application was likely specifically designed to lead to a future change of use to a residential property. The original application to build the stable block in 2014 would never have been approved with an envisaged change of use just five years after construction. Approval of this application would sweep aside the undertakings given by Mr Lewis in 2014 as to the non-residential purpose of the stable development. This will necessarily cast doubt on all undertakings that may be given my Mr Lewis in the course of the present application or any future planning applications he might make. If this application is approved, it will set a problematic precedent for development of residential properties beyond the building line in Wendlebury and other category C villages across Cherwell District: that one can skirt around the existing planning laws by first applying to build an oversized stable block then applying to convert it to a residential property a short time later. This could have significant implications for local planning. In our view, this is a cynical and transparent bid to abuse the planning system. Although not included in the present application, Mrs Lewis has stated verbally to me that upon completion of the proposed development, they intend to divide the plot, move into the new house and sell the existing family home, The Old Stables. Once the proposed development is begun, the Lewis family will have no stabling facilities for their current three horses. It is conceivable that they may further apply to develop a stable block for this purpose. This could also prove to be oversized and later be developed into a residential property. They live on an extensive site of one to two acres, which has ample potential to be developed, one stable block at a time, into an estate of family homes, developed and sold for the enrichment of the Lewis family, despite the entire site being beyond the existing building line. Acceptance of the current application may provide all of the precedents they would require to support such future applications. The proposed development is not in a sustainable location given lack of public transport and cycle paths in Wendlebury. Local infrastructure, such as water and sewage services, are already under significant pressure in Wendlebury. Adding to the housing stock in the village will be problematic in these terms. Since the construction of the stables in 2016, the upper half of my garden has suffered from significant water logging each winter, rendering it marshy and unusable for months each year. Any expansion of hard standing areas in the new development risks exacerbating this</p>
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problem and raises the further risk of damage due to water run-off. The present application includes the construction of a new garage at the rear of the existing family home, The Old Stables. It is unclear whether this building is to serve the existing house or the proposed new house. If this building were to be extended in the future, it too could become the subject of a future change of use request and be developed into a residential property. No planning notice has been posted in Wendlebury with reference to this planning application. This has impacted the ability of Wendlebury residents to understand the nature of the development and raise objections.

Received Date

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Attachments