

Comment for planning application 21/03522/OUT

Application Number	21/03522/OUT
Location	Os Parcel 3673 Adjoining And West Of 161 Rutten Lane Yarnton OX5 1LT Cross Parish Boundary Application: Begbroke and Yarnton Parish Councils
Proposal	The erection of up to 540 dwellings (Class C3), up to 9,000sqm GEA of elderly/extra care residential floorspace (Class C2), a Community Home Work Hub (up to 200sqm)(Class E), alongside the creation of two locally equipped areas for play, one NEAP, up to 1.8 hectares of playing pitches and amenity space for the William Fletcher Primary School, two vehicular access points, green infrastructure, areas of public open space, two community woodland areas, a local nature reserve, footpaths, tree planting, restoration of historic hedgerow, and associated works. All matters are reserved, save for the principal access points.
Case Officer	Samantha Taylor
Organisation Name	Jon Mason
Address	127 Rutten Lane, Yarnton, Kidlington, OX5 1LT
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>As a home owner on Rutten Lane, parent of children at William Fletcher Primary School, and simply someone who enjoys the local Green Belt countryside, I wholeheartedly object to these plans, for the following reasons: 1. Illegal destruction of protected Green Belt land. The law states that Green Belt land may only be built on in 'exceptional circumstances'. I cannot see how this development can be considered to meet this legal requirement. 2. An assessment of housing need that was debatable to begin with and certainly needs re-evaluating given how the world has changed in the last 18 months. 3. Destruction of natural habitats for a diverse variety of wildlife - bats, rabbits, deer, birds, etc. 4. Development taking place on top of a site of known archaeological importance. 5. Damaging effect on the character and identity of historic villages. This and the related local developments will essentially merge the villages of Begbroke and Yarnton together, and also into Kidlington. Oxfordshire villages, and their close-knit communities, are special places with rich, individual histories and deserve protection from urban sprawl. 6. Increased flood risk in an area already highly prone to flooding. Recent flooding events have had a disastrous impact on local residents and this development will only add to this risk. 7. Unacceptable increase in traffic along Rutten Lane, which is already a problematic rat-run. The volume, and often the speed, of traffic along Rutten Lane already poses a significant risk to the non-vehicular users of this road, in particular the most vulnerable members of our community - William Fletcher Primary School children, nursery home residents and users of the doctor's surgery. 8. Inadequate transport infrastructure into Oxford to support the development and insufficient plans to improve this. While coronavirus has slightly diminished traffic in and out of the city in the short term, it would be foolish to think that it will not return to its previous levels in due course. The traffic situation was already unacceptable, to the extent that I changed my working hours (I am fortunate to be in a position to do so) in order to avoid travelling during peak periods. Even having done that, my bus journeys were regularly significantly delayed, and any sort of incident within the local transport network seemed to cause extended gridlock, particularly around the Wolvercote and Peartree roundabouts, which indicates how close the transport network is to capacity. Significant disruption to 'improve' the flow of traffic around Wolvercote roundabout did not appear to have any meaningful affect, suggested this is not a problem that can be easily solved given the minimal space available to expand capacity. 9. Negative impact on residents living adjacent or near to the development site. On a personal level, we moved to our current house on Rutten Lane 5 years ago. One of the primary reasons for doing so was to give our young children a connection to the natural environment as they grew up, as well as a sense of breathing space in our over-developed country. This has been crucial to both our physical and mental health, as well as contributing to our children's education about their natural world. This development would take that away and turn the beautiful, natural countryside that we moved here for into first a building site and then further evidence of over-development. Please also note: - It is particularly galling that the original plans for this development did not have housing extending as far south (to the west of the area set aside for school playing fields) as the more recent plans. The extension of the planned housing area will have a significant additional negative impact on our immediate environment. Furthermore, an additional green buffer in the form of an area of allotments to the north of the playing field</p>

has, disappointingly, been removed from the plans. - We have significant concerns about the interface between the rear of the existing properties and the area of development. There has been mention of an 'acoustic barrier' between the existing properties and the playing field, which sounds like an unsightly, artificial obstruction. Should these plans proceed, I sincerely hope that this will be a natural, unobtrusive barrier. - No consideration appears to have been given to providing access from the rear of the existing properties to the green corridor through the development. Should these plans proceed, such access would at least provide a small mitigation for the distraction of the countryside to the rear of our property. These proposals are causing me, my family and our local community great frustration, worry and upset. It has been extremely hard to live with this hanging over us for a number of years already, and even more so the pandemic, where the sense of what will be lost, and the affects it will have on our community, has become even more acute. It is also very difficult to explain to tearful primary school children why 'they' are taking away the countryside and harming the animals that live there. Thank you for taking the time to consider the points above and your empathy in putting yourself in the place of local residents while you consider whether these plans are justifiable, sustainable and acceptable. If you wish to discuss any of these points further, please feel free to contact me. Best wishes, Jon Mason

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Attachments