

67 Germander Way

Bicester

OX26 3QD

22 January 2021

I am writing in response to the application reference 21/04275/OUT for a mixed use development of up to 3100 dwellings with associated infrastructure, services and landscaping. We have known the wider North-West Bicester development was in the pipeline since before moving to the area, and working in the construction industry myself can see some positives in the design and services that it will provide, however as new details have emerged with this latest Outline application we feel obliged to respond and raise our concerns.

As residents of 67 Germander Way, located on the corner of Germander Way with the A4095 we are arguably impacted more by the project than most other existing properties in Bicester. This is because under the latest proposals, we are due to be situated directly on the crossroads for the main entrance of the development.

Although we are currently subject to road traffic noise given the property location, under current circumstances this is a continuous drone and we have become accustomed to it. Under the proposals however, there will be four-way traffic lights installed along the A4095 in either direction, as well as on Germander Way. The noise from traffic (including a high volume of goods vehicles, as well as sports cars and motorbikes given the number of persons employed in motorsport within Bicester) braking in one direction, and then accelerating again is a very different beast, and I can see this has potential to significantly negatively impact on our quality of life.

- We therefore seek mitigation for the impacts of increased noise through the proposals, whether creation of a bund and/or additional planting between our property and the crossroads, or a grant to allow us to improve sound insulation of our property (for example window replacement). We also request that the existing screening in front of our property is retained.

We also have safety concerns about this new crossroads. The A4095 in this location is currently a 50mph limit, which we feel will be too high for the volume of traffic likely to be turning onto it from the new development, the existing estates to the west and the envisaged increase of traffic from the nearby Wretchwick, Kingsmere and Howes Lane developments. It will be very difficult for the vehicles at other entrances to the Bure Park estate to turn right onto the A4095 without further traffic lights installed; this may increase the risk of accidents along the route. It is also noted that pedestrians will need to cross both at the junction location and westwards, and the junction is a short distance from both the existing traffic lights to the east.

Personally I feel that the absence of a main entrance to this development from the B4100 is a design flaw at the Master planning stage. However, given the stage of these proposals we recommend the following:

- We request that the speed limit either side of the junction is reduced to 30mph, and the rest of this section of the A4095 is no higher than 40mph. This will again help improve safety at the junction and elsewhere along the A4095, as well as reducing the noise impact.

As a further safety concern, there are typically a large number of vehicles parked at the entrance to Germander Way (including several from one property along the access road parallel to the A4095). This therefore currently necessitates single file traffic along the first fifty metres of Germander Way, and can cause issues when turning onto the road if more than one vehicle is waiting to leave the estate. We therefore have genuine concerns that as traffic lights are installed, and it becomes more usual for traffic to queue to leave Germander Way, that this would create a dangerous situation for any cars turning into the estate.

- We therefore request that parking in this area is restricted for a minimum 25m distance from the junction to allow space for multiple vehicles to pass each other if required.

As a more general comment, it will be critical that the new development has adequate services provision, for example GP services, schools, shops, public houses and fuel stations. GP and dentistry services in particular are already at crisis levels in Bicester. The recent loss of the Bure Park Medical Centre is astonishing given the population growth in the area (note existing properties are increasingly being used as HMOs).

I would also ask that retained boundaries in the development are enhanced for wildlife, for example through additional planting of native fruit/seed producing species, and minimising any hedgerow loss. It is noted that farmland birds, including migratory species (such as redwing, fieldfare) and those declining within the UK (such as yellowhammer) regularly use the existing hedgerows, and these groups therefore have potential to be negatively impacted by the development.

Finally, we are pleased to see that there are proposals to introduce new bus routes to the new development. We would however ask for an additional bus stop to be created at the south of development areas and/or on the A4095 so that residents of Bure Park can also benefit from this service.

Regards,

Kate Rooney & Thomas Blanchier