

Key Points for SFPC Objection to PLANNING APPLICATION – 21/04271/F

Note; The Blue Cedar homes site needs to be considered, not separate to, but in relation to the adjacent Gade homes site, which will begin construction 04/22. Reasons for this are stated below.

This is clearly a phase 2 extension of the Hook Norton Road site, with a phase 3 site also put forward as part of the Local Plan review.

Land registry document Title Numbers ON196300 and ON239204 show that access has already been established for all 3 sites. The access point is opposite the main entrance to Sibford School, which raises serious traffic and safety concerns.

Why was the village not informed at the outset so that these sites would yield the most affordable homes and advantages for the village?

1.Sustainability and Infrastructure.

We do not yet know how the infrastructure will cope with the Gade Homes development for 25 new homes on the adjacent site. We are particularly concerned about sewage and note that Condition 8 (Sewage) has not yet been discharged for the Gade Homes development. Our sewer is located in a steep valley and we do not want to risk foul sewage escaping into The Sib, which is adjacent to it.

The key services of Sewerage, Water Supply, Roads, have all yet to be tested by the building of the new 25 homes being developed on the Hook Norton Road.

As such we object on the basis that there is as yet no proven capacity so why would CDC support adding further risk to these key services noted below?

- Sewerage system is at capacity.
- Limited access to appointments and parking at the local surgery
- Lack of public transport
- Lack of pavements
- Lack of Broadband
- Water Pressure
- Blocked drains are already a problem in the village

2. Traffic Safety Concerns with Concurrent Development

The 25 homes on Hook Norton Road to be developed by Gade Homes are due to break ground 04/2022. If the Blue Cedar Homes application is approved there will be two lots of independent construction traffic overlapping for a period of potentially two years. The impact on the village and road infrastructure will cause even further congestion on what are already badly congested roads during peak school and commute times. The CDC Planning Committee attended a site visit in 2019 and witnessed first hand issues related to road layout and traffic congestion.

- Two lots of site traffic entering the site opposite the main entrance to Sibford Friends School
- The potential for site traffic to be moving through the Gade homes development site after the homes have been completed and families are living in them

- The amount of extra traffic generated by 25 new homes plus another 6 retirement homes with double garages and little or no public transport available. This will drive up CO2 emissions and drive down air quality.
- This proposal will result in development in an isolated location, remote from key services and facilities, and with increased reliance on private car journeys, contrary to CLP 2015 Policy ESD1 and saved policy H18 and so is in conflict with LA housing strategy.

3. The class A categorization of The Sibfords is already under review as part of the CDC Local Plan Review, with both communities and our local MP Victoria Prentis seeking a review on this as soon as possible.

- This Categorisation has exposed the Sibfords to inappropriate size and scale of development that is unsustainable.

The Planning Inspector commenting on the appeal case of the Hook Norton Rd Development stated,

- “Given the spread of services across each settlement, it is unlikely that the development of any site around the Sibfords would readily enable access by sustainable transport modes. This is an argument against the inclusion of the Sibfords as a Category A Village, but is not a matter before me in this appeal”
- “Of 33 Villages only 4 show little capability to sustainably support additional housing. Shennington, Sibford Ferris/Sibford Gower and Charlton-on-Otmoor perform poorly due to their location on minor roads with long travel times and distances to access key facilities. CRAITLUS Report August 2009

4. Housing delivery villages Vs CDC Local Plan 2011 – 2031

Due to the wording of the current plan there is a level of ambiguity related to the development figure set for rural development. We understand that the plan talks about providing 750 dwellings in rural areas for the planning period 2011 to 2031 but this is not tightly worded and so open to interpretation as being: a ceiling, a goal, a minimum etc. However, we would like it noted that,

- Since 2014 a total of 1062 dwellings have been identified to meet the Policy Villages 2 requirement for 750. Any further permissions granted will be a material exceedence of this target and at present the plan still has 10 years to run.
- There are 8293 permissions granted for homes, which haven’t been built yet around Bicester, Banbury and Upper Heyford. This highlights the contentious issue of land banking.
- Developers are still being allowed to put land forward for development in rural areas on good agricultural land where targets have already been exceeded and the homes have already been built.

5. Retirement Homes

The developer is age restricting the sale of the proposed houses to 55+. The assumption is that these purchasers will be retired and generate little additional traffic movements. The reality is that purchasers of these types of properties will still be working, have family support roles (school run) and will almost certainly exacerbate traffic congestion at peak periods.

The developer also has assumed that the residents will be able to walk to community based services. This is unrealistic given the limited footpath network, topology (steep valley between Sibford Ferris and Gower) and limited public transport.

6. Unsustainable Increase in Housing in Sibford Ferris.

Sibford Ferris has a housing density of 148 properties. The Hook Norton Road Development being built by Gade Homes will add 17% additional homes, adding the Blue Cedar Home Development will increase the housing density to 22% or approaching a quarter. For a village that has seen limited if any investment in infrastructure or roads this is unrealistic and unsustainable.

7) Landscape Impact

- The proposed development will adversely affect the local character of the village and the outlook over the AONB.
- Looking across the valley from The Colony in Sibford Gower, the second site will be more visible than the Gade Homes site as it extends further West.

8) The Application goes against The Sibfords Community Plan

- In the Sibford's Community Plan (2012), 64% of people said they would be willing to envisage up to 10 new houses, 31% up to 20 and only 3% over 20 houses. These needs have been exceeded by the Hook Norton Road site and there is no further local requirement.

9) This development is Unnecessary, Inappropriate and Unsustainable.

- Extending beyond the built up limits of the village into the attractive open countryside surrounding Sibford Ferris. Its layout, form, design and location for older people is unsuitable and would produce an incongruous and cramped form of development, which fails to respond to local character, landscape and surrounding context and should be refused as harming the visual and rural amenities of the area.
 - The proposal is contrary to Policy C28 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, Policy villages 2 and Policies ESD13 and ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 part 1 and Government guidance contained within the National Policy Framework and the National Design Guide.
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