

# Consultee Comment for planning application 22/01773/F

<b>Application Number</b>	<input type="text" value="22/01773/F"/>
<b>Location</b>	<input type="text" value="Land South of Faraday House Woodway Road Sibford Ferris"/>
<b>Proposal</b>	<input type="text" value="Erection of 6 one storey age restricted dwellings (55 years) for older people with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure - re-submission of 21/04271/F"/>
<b>Case Officer</b>	<input type="text" value="Wayne Campbell"/>
<b>Organisation</b>	<input type="text" value="Clerk to Sibford Ferris PC"/>
<b>Name</b>	<input type="text" value="Kirsty Buttle"/>
<b>Address</b>	<input type="text" value="74 Beaulieu Close Banbury Oxfordshire OX16 4FQ"/>
<b>Type of Comment</b>	<input type="text" value="Object"/>
<b>Type</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Comments</b>	<input type="text" value="Sibford Ferris Parish Council object to this application. The full details of the objection are attached."/>
<b>Received Date</b>	<input type="text" value="15/07/2022 15:50:41"/>
<b>Attachments</b>	The following files have been uploaded: 2201773F Blue Cedar Response 15.07.22.pdf

## **Sibford Ferris Parish Council objects to this application.**

The “Planning Report Addendum” submitted among supporting documents makes explicitly clear that 22/01773/F is essentially a resubmission of 21/04271/F. It refers to an Appeal Statement (para 3vii) that “sets out the reasons why the planning officer was correct to recommend that planning permission be granted.....”. At the time of this Objection no such document has yet been loaded onto the CDC Planning Portal or been sent to SFPC by CDC. The significance of any such Appeal Statement in considering this Application is therefore unclear.

What is clear is that with the exception of a couple of documents (see later) the Application and supporting documents are substantial unchanged and no account has been taken of any of the points or objections raised in respect of 21/04271/F. Indeed, the site plan provided among the documents has reverted to that previously objected to by the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department and subsequently modified in application 21/04271/F.

**The issues raised by SFPC in relation to the previous application 21/04271/F are still valid. They are set out in succeeding paragraphs.**

### **Broader Context**

The Blue Cedar homes site needs to be considered in conjunction with the immediately adjacent Gade homes site, for 25 houses for which permission was given On Appeal.

It 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 physical access has already been agreed between the interested parties for all 3 sites. The single access point is opposite the main entrance to Sibford School, which raises serious traffic and safety concerns that cannot be considered individually for each phase of the development.

Moreover, such piecemeal development as three sites does not yield the most affordable homes and advantages for the broader community in Cherwell District.

### **Sustainability and Infrastructure.**

It is not yet fully established how the existing physical infrastructure will cope with the Gade Homes development for 25 new homes on the adjacent site. SFPC is particularly concerned about sewage and notes that Condition 8 (Sewage) of the Approval for the Gade Homes development has not yet been discharged. The relevant sewer is located in a steep valley and experience shows that any significant extra load risks foul sewage escaping into The River Sib, which is adjacent to it. The key services of Sewerage, Water Supply, Roads, have all yet to be tested in practice by the building of the new 25 homes being developed on the Hook Norton Road.

In addition to sewerage, there are a number of other elements of infrastructure where there is no proven capacity for increase adding further risk to key services as noted below.

- Limited access to appointments and parking at the local surgery located across the valley via steep inclines making walking or cycling challenging
- Lack of public transport with a single bus service currently being reduced in frequency
- Lack of pavements on key routes eg along Main Street to the only bus stop and beyond to the only shop
- Lack of reliable Broadband connectivity/capacity, especially during term time at Sibford School
- Water Pressure frequently low through lack of supply capacity

## **Traffic Safety Concerns with Concurrent Development and Subsequently**

The roads through Sibford Ferris are narrow with several sharp blind corners, and significant on street parking of cars of the occupants of the older properties fronting the street. Congestion is considerable, especially as the routes are regularly used by large agricultural vehicles.

Additionally, the proposed single access point into both developments will be located on Hook Norton Road opposite the main vehicle entrance to Sibford School and on a crest in the road limiting visibility in both directions.

The CDC Planning Committee attended a site visit in 2019 and witnessed first hand issues related to road layout and traffic congestion. More recently an officer of the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department visited in July 2022.

During the Construction Phase, 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. In particular there will be two lots of site traffic entering the site opposite the main entrance to Sibford School.

Subsequently, there would be potential for Blue Cedar site traffic to be moving through the Gade homes development site after those homes have been completed and families are living in them. And when both developments are complete there will be a significant amount of extra traffic generated by 25 new homes plus another 6 retirement homes with double garages and little or no public transport available.

All this will drive up CO2 emissions and drive down air quality.

Overall the proposal would 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. It is in conflict with LA housing strategy.

**The class A categorization of The Sibfords as a single village 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 takes no account of the topography with the two villages separated from each other by the steep valley of the Sib
- It has exposed the Sibfords to an inappropriate size and scale of development that is unsustainable given the very limited infrastructure in each village and the access difficulties between them.
- The Planning Inspector commenting on the appeal case of the Gade 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"
- The Craitlus Report of August 2009 concluded "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

**Housing delivery villages Vs CDC Local Plan 2011 – 2031**

There is a level of ambiguity in the current CDC Local Plan related to the figures for rural development. We understand that the plan talks about providing a total of 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. In practice;

- Since 2014 a total of 1062 dwellings have been identified to meet the Policy Villages 2 requirement for a total of 750. Any further permissions granted will increase divergence from this figure.
- 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.

### **Retirement Homes**

The Applicant 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. Modern practice is such that purchasers of these types of properties may well still be working or have family support roles (eg school run) and will almost certainly exacerbate traffic congestion at peak periods.

The Applicant also has assumed that the residents will be able to walk to community based services. Three cases of existing developments are cited as comparable. They are not. They are all close to the centre of significant villages/towns and consequently a range of services. This case is completely different with the rural setting, limited range of services, limited footpath network, topology (steep valley between Sibford Ferris and Gower) and limited public transport.

### **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 extremely limited investment in infrastructure or roads this is unrealistic and unsustainable.

### **Landscape Impact**

As the development is beyond the current built up area of Sibford Ferris there will be a significant adverse visual 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.

### **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.

### **The Proposals are not in Keeping with the Village**

In its layout, form, design and location the proposals 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.

**In addition to our previous comments SFPC add the following points**

**Traffic Data**

The traffic figures quoted are 7-9 years out of date and they are not for this area. There has been an accident in the village outside the shop involving a car and a farm vehicle for which SFPC has photographic evidence if required.

There are significant sections of Main Street between the site, bus stop and shop that are less than 4 metres wide but without pavements. SFPC question the validity of the OCC Highways data.

**Public Rights of Way**

The information provided in the application regarding public rights of way is incorrect – there is not a public right of way across the proposed site.

**Alternative Uses for the Site**

A letter understood to be from the site owners states that due to the Gade development, access to the site and the size of the site make it no longer viable for agricultural use. The Parish Council believe that a new entrance has been created from Woodway Road and that the entrance is wide enough for a tractor to access the field for agricultural purposes.

If the site owners' view is correct that this area is no longer viable it does not automatically mean that the only alternative use for the land is for housing. There is interest within the village to purchase the land for use as a green open space, play area, community orchard, wildflower area etc.

**Residents' Expressed Concerns**

Sibford Ferris Parish Council draws attention to the objection letter submitted by the Sibford Action Group which represents a large number of the residents of Sibford Ferris.

**Tilted Balance**

The Applicant has argued that the 'Tilted Balance' presumption in para 11(d) of NPPF is engaged because of the issue of land supply across the Cherwell District Council area.

SFPC's understanding of 'Tilted Balance' is that there is presumption that an Application should be approved unless there are 'adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits'.

Clear statements of specific adverse impacts of this proposed development have been identified in the objections. Therefore, the Tilted Balance presumption of Approval is not established in this case.