

Val Ingram, The Old Post Office, OX17 1HU

OBJECTION

IRO 23/00853/OUT Application for Land at Hanwell/Drayton Parish

Dear Mr Greig

I wish to register my personal objections to this proposal to take further good quality farmland out of agricultural production and in the process threaten to make Hanwell a suburb of Banbury instead of a small independent, historic rural settlement.

1. Hanwell & Drayton have already been subjected to unprecedented levels of development in both of their respective parishes and as such it is unreasonable to expect them to make over most of their land to housing.
2. The land in question is neither in the current Local Plan nor the emerging new Local Plan and therefore, such speculative development should be refused.
3. A promise was made not to develop beyond the well-established thick hedge line forming a green bund between Hanwell and Hanwell Chase (which has been recently absorbed into Banbury instead of remaining with Drayton parish). This commitment should not be broken given that this well-established tree line is a clear demarcation between rural and urban settlements. I remember clearly being at a meeting when this was discussed and agreed upon.
4. Cherwell LPA is able to demonstrate a five-year plus housing supply so should not fall prey to speculative development.
5. With the current crisis owing to the Ukraine/Russian conflict the importance of growing our own food has come to the fore and this land is listed as predominantly Grade 2 prime agricultural ground with excellent crop yields. This land should remain agricultural and continue to feed the Nation.
6. Hanwell is important and for that reason, it was granted a Conservation Area Status to recognise its historical importance and to conserve the existing. With its many listed buildings, the historic importance of which can not be understated, a Grade 1 status is not lightly given but Hanwell Church has been accorded this recognition. Anything which is built around a Conservation curtilage is significant and of equal importance. Hanwell Castle itself is Grade 1* we are indeed privileged to have such a building in our midst. The entrance to a Conservation Area and surrounding the boundary is equally as important as the defined area itself.
7. Hanwell has a well-recognised Observatory, which relies on dark skies in the application itself although it states it will try to avoid spoiling the night sky there is a caveat within the application which gives it a let-out clause and so can not be relied upon.

8. The existing water network infrastructure identified by Thames Water can not accommodate the needs of this development proposal. All the current utility services will suffer from this over-development of Banbury in general
9. Doctors' surgeries are at capacity levels, many of the buildings currently occupied/working as surgeries do not have the capacity to expand, and there are already staffing issues, particularly at Banbury Cross Health Centre. The BOB response, required levy does not guarantee that these funds will actually be spent in Banbury or enhance services in Banbury itself. Many satellite services such as Cropredy, Tysoe, Deddington and further afield such as Fenny Compton have already indicated the pressure that they are under. In essence, Banbury and its environs will suffer as a consequence if this proposal goes ahead.
10. Additional traffic on the B4100 will create additional pressure on Banbury and commuters alike, congestion is already severe and the road surfaces are abysmal.
11. The PROW team have not tried to protect a rural footpath over open fields teeming with wildlife from urbanisation, which is frankly shocking. Fresh air and countryside walks are important for physical and mental health and general well-being. Hanwell, unfortunately, lost some of its footpaths due to the construction of the M40, and the loss of more rural paths is a dreadful prospect. This is a well-trodden and valued path for the inhabitants of Banbury and Hanwell alike to enjoy, there's no pleasure in trudging through corridors of buildings. This is proposed ribbon development in open countryside (with views of the countryside stretching miles in each direction) on acknowledged landscape-valued land continued within the Cherwell Plan.
12. Identification of historical findings is an exciting prospect and should be a further consideration in preventing the potential loss. It demonstrates the intrinsic historic value of this settlement and the need for it to remain rural and retain its own identity.

The consultation by Vistry with the community was foolhardy to cite the "Keep Hanwell Rural Group" set up to oppose this speculative development as their main source of publication is an affront to the group. Local people canvassed have stated that they are vehemently opposed to further development in these fields, but it appears Vistry has paid little heed and ploughed on regardless so a tick-box exercise at best.

Banbury Town Council do not want this additional build, and neither do the surrounding villages.

To allow this travesty to go ahead would rob the heart and soul out of Hanwell. I hope that Cherwell LPA will see the merits of rejecting this application.

Val Ingram