

Planning application 23/02098/OUT

OBJECTION

The application and initial comments considered at the meeting of Begbroke parish council 04/09/2023

- a) Consists of over 220 comprehensive technical documents and impossible to consider in a lay group especially with a limited timescale.
- b) The committee are impressed with the detail and research presented in this application. However, we also find it difficult to see how the members of a Cherwell Planning committee can assess the application unless they are guided to a decision.
- c) The committee appreciate that OUD and Murray associates have engaged with residents and the parish councils whilst formulating their plan and continue to offer advice if necessary.
- d) We do not consider this application has been publicised sufficiently. Site notices (15/08/2023) went up after being brought to attention of the applicant, nearly two weeks after the publication on Cherwell Planning Portal (4th August 2023) and Bicester Advertiser – published 10th August 2023.
- e) We do not consider the Bicester Advertiser to be a local publication to the southern part of CDC's area and should be Oxford Times or Mail – especially as this has arisen as a result of the fictional "Oxfords unmet housing need". **The lack of public comments at time of writing may well demonstrate the lack of public awareness concerning this application.**
- f) We are concerned regarding the neighbour list on the CDC Planning Portal and how these specific properties were on the list. How can a property in Lamarsh Road in Oxford be considered a neighbour? The parish council may submit a Freedom of information request to discover the process for neighbour selection.
- g) Begbroke parish council consider that this outline application is too ambitious, especially when assessed with other cumulative construction applications detailed in Appendix 3.4. This scheme and others such as PR9 if approved, will destroy the identities of Begbroke Yarnton and Kidlington and merge our villages.
- h) We initially objected to this scheme following the Cherwell Local Review in 2017 and material consideration should be applied.
- i) Residents have commented that it is simply another university campus and nothing to do with the "Oxfords unmet housing need"
- j) There are many sites in Oxford that could be developed for housing in Oxford that could reduce this scheme leaving some science park expansion with limited housing to reflect the science park needs. We identified many of these in a PowerPoint presentation to previous plans.
- k) The committee consider that some development would be acceptable, 1800 homes with other nearby developments is **excessive**, not acceptable and is **Gross Overdevelopment of the site**.

Method of consideration

- In order to attempt a rational appraisal, the documents were downloaded, distributed on data sticks and searched for key words, for example footpath, public rights of way, housing, doctor, dentist, skylark's amenities, surface water and flooding.

Observations and Material Considerations

- The Statement of Community Involvement July 2023 does highlight, after direct face to face meetings, many resident's concerns. It is for example, the only one of over 200 documents that refers, as an example, to doctors or dentists and perhaps should be part of the actual research presented with solutions.

What does Begbroke (and Yarnton) lose if this application is granted?

- Loss of Green belt and open spaces that have existed for many years (recorded in BPC minutes February 1957 following the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949)

- Loss of views in every direction
- Development encroaching on the existing village
- Worsening traffic – everywhere, reduced highway safety and more problems for residents both in the village and the new developments. See cumulative development document ES Vol 3 App 3.4 ES Cumulative Scheme information which documents numerous surrounding development proposals.
- Increased nearby populations resulting increasing pressures on services such as medical, shopping, social services and many others.
- Increased pressure on reduced open space.
- **Increased noise and pollution** especially during a construction over several years. The recent construction of two building has generated noise. **Footpaths have been closed for months.**
- Pressure on the Oxford Canal and the towpaths.
- The proposed local centre has been placed in Yarnton parish near to old entrance to science park and a great distance from Begbroke Village.
- No nearby retail or facilities for Begbroke – but two in Yarnton.
- The loss of existing green space and threat to the environment.
- Loss of habitat for many species of wildlife including birds' insects and mammals
- Possible loss of Sandy Lane to motor vehicles.

There may be some benefits such as sporting facilities and employment at the Science Park. **However, we cannot see many gains for this village.** Will the public house, Hot food takeaway, theatre, live music venue be open to the general public? They will generate additional traffic and require parking space – but not reasons to take away Green Belt when similar facilities exist relatively nearby.

Footpaths. "Potential alterations to public rights of way"

- Concerned that the University or OCC Countryside services has little regard for existing footpath rights – especially having changed existing paths –124/8/10 (4ft width along whole length of path; 124/7/20 8ft wide -Kidlington inclosure award; 420/19/10 & 265/22/10 8ft wide Kidlington inclosure award – into a shared cycle path/pedestrian routes (RUPP) without any apparent legal basis. The section up to the junction with FP 8 has some parts divided with cycle signs and other sections, the full width as a shared path with signage to that effect.
- We understand from our research, that the correct procedure should have been to maintain the existing footpath width, provide an adjacent cycle path if a cycle track order is not involved and not make the existing path shared use.



Fig 1 Shared Footpath /Cycle path - 265/22/10 looking west.

- We are concerned that similar work may occur on other paths on the site and in some instances provide vehicular access such as to the Community Farm and allotments to the north of the site.
- A risk assessment was requested for the footpath work but not supplied.
- There has been an incident of two motorcycles using the tarmac surface.
- A recent incident reported to us involved a skateboarder who fell off on 12/4/8/10. An ambulance was called and we understand he was carried off on a stretcher.

Parkers Farm Footpath

- Begbroke parish council have submitted a Definitive Map Modification Order with supporting evidence to Oxfordshire Countryside Services in a bid to get the footpath commonly known as "Parker's Farm re-opened. This path went from Yarnton to Kidlington. Images from the 1910 Finance Act Maps have been supplied to CDC, OUD and Murray Associates.
- This has been supported by Yarnton parish council.

Houses and other comments (from a resident)

- "That document does make it easier to understand the whole concept of the development. The Description of Development (item 2.2) explains it all in a nutshell. It all sounds really good BUT when I moved to Begbroke I chose the area because it was rural. A small village with easy access to Oxford, local schools, shops and all necessary amenities but most of all RURAL. Lots of open spaces, woods and quiet places. What they are now proposing is giving something we have not asked for or need - an urban landscape with shops, eating places, cinemas, etc. Why? We already have the amenities they are planning in the surrounding area - Kidlington, Woodstock, Oxford, Witney. I quite understand the need for research hubs and a certain amount of new housing but the vision I have of this development is a new mini town. Do we really need all this? There are probably areas in the County that would really benefit from the amenities a development like this would bring so why place it somewhere that already has these amenities close by. The answer is probably the same as it always is - making money. In this time of environmental uncertainty, we should be putting more value into protecting our green spaces not making them into urban landscapes - once they are gone, they are gone"

South Area Planning Committee - 14 February 2002 – some extracts of what was recorded

- CPRE consider that this is a major increase in footprint in this proposed major developed site and that the proposal would therefore be contrary to policy and is also concerned that the proposal may extend beyond the limits of the existing site. The large increase in employment on site and the consequent increase in traffic and the proposal to build a link road will all be contrary to current Green Belt policy.
- The Oxford Green Belt Network acknowledge the importance of science-based industry but point out that **the University would have been aware of the Green Belt restrictions when it acquired the site and would therefore question the argument that the need is sufficient to override Green Belt policy.** They are conscious of the considerable pressures now being put upon the Green Belt in the vicinity of Begbroke/Yarnton/Kidlington and fears for the future of the Green Belt unless the Local Planning Authority adheres strictly to its policy.

Wildlife

- There appears to be little protection for existing wildlife such as Skylarks and Badgers and almost dismissive as the reality is wildlife will disappear once construction commences. Ponds have been neglected such as the one adjacent to FP 7 which was once a haven of wildlife. Skylarks: UK Conservation status: **RED** and protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Documents state the promotion of the use of Agri-environment schemes such as conservation headlands, over-wintered stubbles, and winter-sown crops to benefit farmland birds such as skylarks and yellowhammers – where would this scheme be as agriculture of this type will cease? The statement simply appears to be generic.

Flooding

- In areas adjacent to Rowel Brook in the north, and land east of the railway, there are areas identified as either primarily Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. The remainder of the site is shown as Flood Zone 1. It appears that the proposed Rowel Brook Park is exactly on the flood zone and accompanying images demonstrate this.
- Cannot find that any account has been taken of rainwater from the west namely Spring Hill and proposed PR9 development. This area floods and images can be provided. The parish council and residents are aware of the results of heavy rainfall.
- Report ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 16.5.55 acknowledges: The key areas at flood risk in all return events are: ♣ Sections of the Site along the length of Rowel Brook; and ♣ The parcel of land immediately to the west of the Oxford Canal



Fig 2. Flood Zone



Fig 3 Proposed Rowel Brook Park compared to flood zone



Fig 4 Looking south – floodwater discharging to Oxford Canal looking south towards part of Rowel Brook Park



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8

Figs 5 – 8 above -images of flooding on proposed “Rowel Brook Park”



Fig 9 Flooded Garden – Fernhill Road

Sandy Lane

- We are very concerned about a potential closure of Sandy Lane to vehicles Network Rail closing the crossing. There has been much correspondence regarding this essential road and we urge OUD to provide a bridge suitable for vehicles to and from Kidlington. We have statistics showing how heavily used this road is.
- Vehicles travelling to and from Kidlington and other destinations frequently use this road. Closure will have a major impact on Begbroke, Frieze Way, Langford Lane and the A4260.
- Sandy Lane has recorded 1187 vehicles in 18 hrs with a peak flow of 201 vehicles in the period 8.00 to 9.00 a.m. This has never abated.
- The paradox is that plans seeking to reduce A4260 traffic with bus lanes and diversion of traffic to the A44. Some of this traffic will then seek other ways to Kidlington – via A44 Frieze Way and Langford Lane – ending up on the A4260
- Is this a proposition by the railway authority to rid itself of a barrier crossing?
- If there were demonstrations at Campsfield House – the plan is to close Langford Lane.
- Closing the crossing would make no difference to Network Rail as increased train services would mean the barrier coming down more often and delaying road users.
- Traffic Data Appendix 11.4 Scenario 2 is considered the future baseline. The closure of Sandy Lane is planned in the future with or without the Proposed Development. The closure will lead to a redistribution of traffic across the network. Therefore, considering this scenario as the future baseline is a worst-case assumption.

Access road from A44

- This road was required if traffic in Sandy Lane increased beyond a set value.
- 01/00662/OUT "It is therefore recommended that if planning permission is granted it should be on the condition that if the peak hour generation to the site during the interim development exceeds 80 vehicles (including cars delivery, mini buses etc) averaged over any one working week then the applicant will be required to construct the new access road ahead of the long-term phase"
Construction of the road demonstrated the use and need of Sandy Lane.

Science Park Expansion

Application No: 01/00662/OUT - Proposed new research buildings (long term phase of site development- some decision comments **and is a Material Consideration:**

- The floor area of the development hereby approved shall not exceed 21,236 square metres as determined by external measurement.
- Reason - In order to achieve a satisfactory form of development, **to ensure that the site is not overdeveloped** and to comply with Policy C28 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- Other than what is permitted by condition 6, the premises shall be used only for the purposes falling within class B1(b) and B1 (c) and ancillary D1 uses as specified in the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005 and for no other purposes whatsoever.
- Reason - in order to maintain the research and **development focus** of the Begbroke Science Park and to comply with Government Guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Begbroke Science Park screening trees

- Mature planted boundary of site conforming to application 01/00662/OUT screening the buildings now appears to be at risk. (See Fig 9 below) with the park expanding beyond.



Fig 10

Sandy lane Landfill Site

- It appears from the research OUD has presented is that this land is clearly unsuitable for any development given the objects found and the odours – **see below.**



Fig 11 Sandy Lane landfill site in late 1970's

From ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Ground Conditions Contamination.

- **5.4.16** The Landfill Made Ground was highly variable. However, it generally consisted of a mixture of greyish, orangish brown, gravelly sand (predominantly ash) with abundant man-made putrescible waste and gravel sized fragments of fine to coarse, angular to sub-rounded concrete, slag and brick, glass bottles (containing unknown liquid), plastic bottles, plastic wrapping, scrap metal, wires, batteries, bike frames, animal bones and newspaper (dated 1960's). Locally cobbles and boulders of concrete were encountered. Towards the base of the landfill the colour notably changed to dark grey and black.
- **15.4.17** During the investigation it was noted that the Landfill Made Ground had a putrid odour in all locations that increased with depth and in one location a strong hydrocarbon odour was noted between 1.40m and 3.20m bgl.

Jeffrey Wright Clerk on behalf of Begbroke parish council 4th September 2023

The Planning proposal

Outline application, with all matters reserved, for a multi-phased (severable), comprehensive residential-led mixed use development comprising: Up to 215,000 square metres gross external area of residential floorspace (or c.1,800 homes which depending on the housing mix could result in a higher or lower number of housing units) within Use Class C3/C4 and large houses of multiple occupation (Sui Generis); Supporting social infrastructure including secondary school/primary schools) (Use Class F1), health, indoor sport and recreation, emergency and nursery facilities (Class E(d)-(f)). Supporting retail, leisure and community uses, including retail (Class E(a)), cafes and restaurants (Class E(b)), commercial and professional services (Class E(c)), a hotel (Use Class C1), local community uses (Class F2), and other local centre uses within a Sui Generis use including public houses, bars and drinking establishments (including with expanded food provision), hot food takeaways, venues for live music performance, theatre, and cinema. Up to 155,000 net additional square metres (gross external area of flexible employment uses including research and development, office and workspace and associated uses (Use E(g)), industrial (Use Class B2) and storage (Use Class B8) in connection with the expansion of Begbroke Science Park; Highway works, including new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian roads and paths, improvements to the existing Sandy Lane and Begbroke Hill road, a bridge over the Oxford Canal, safeguarded land for a rail halt, and car and cycle parking with associated electric vehicle charging infrastructure; Landscape and public realm, including areas for sustainable urban drainage systems, allotments, biodiversity areas, outdoor play and sports facilities (Use Class F2(c)); Utility, energy, water, and waste water facilities and infrastructure; together with enabling, site clearance, demolition and associated works, including temporary meanwhile uses. The Proposed Development affects the setting of a listed building and includes potential alterations to public rights of way. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement