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I strongly object to this application for the following reasons:

1. Settlement Boundary & Village size

Kirtlington is a historical village dating back to A.D.945 with a clearly defined settlement boundary.

The proposed development appears to completely disregard the settlement boundary.

The site layout is somewhat arbitrary and is not defined by landscape features or plot boundaries, which is beyond the acceptable settlement boundary. The linear settlement pattern of the village has been long established along the core through-road of the A4095 and has been carefully preserved over the years to the present day. The comparison of historic maps from 1898 and 1981 below demonstrates the how the settlement boundary and linear pattern has been preserved as the village has evolved over time. The red line clearly shows how the western settlement boundary has been preserved over many years.

The historic hedgerow along the public right-of-way (to the East of the site) has evolved to become the boundary for the settlement, which would be breached by the proposed development.

The proposals do not integrate with the grain / character of the village and appears to be detached from the village core. The scheme configuration and siting 'turns-it's-back' on the village by way of orientation and fails to engage with the public realm in the way that existing houses do currently. All of these points emphasise how the proposal is an unacceptable form of development. The principles of Planning Policy ESD 15 are applicable here, to safe-guard the character of built and historic environment.



Fig.1 – Kirtlington in 1898

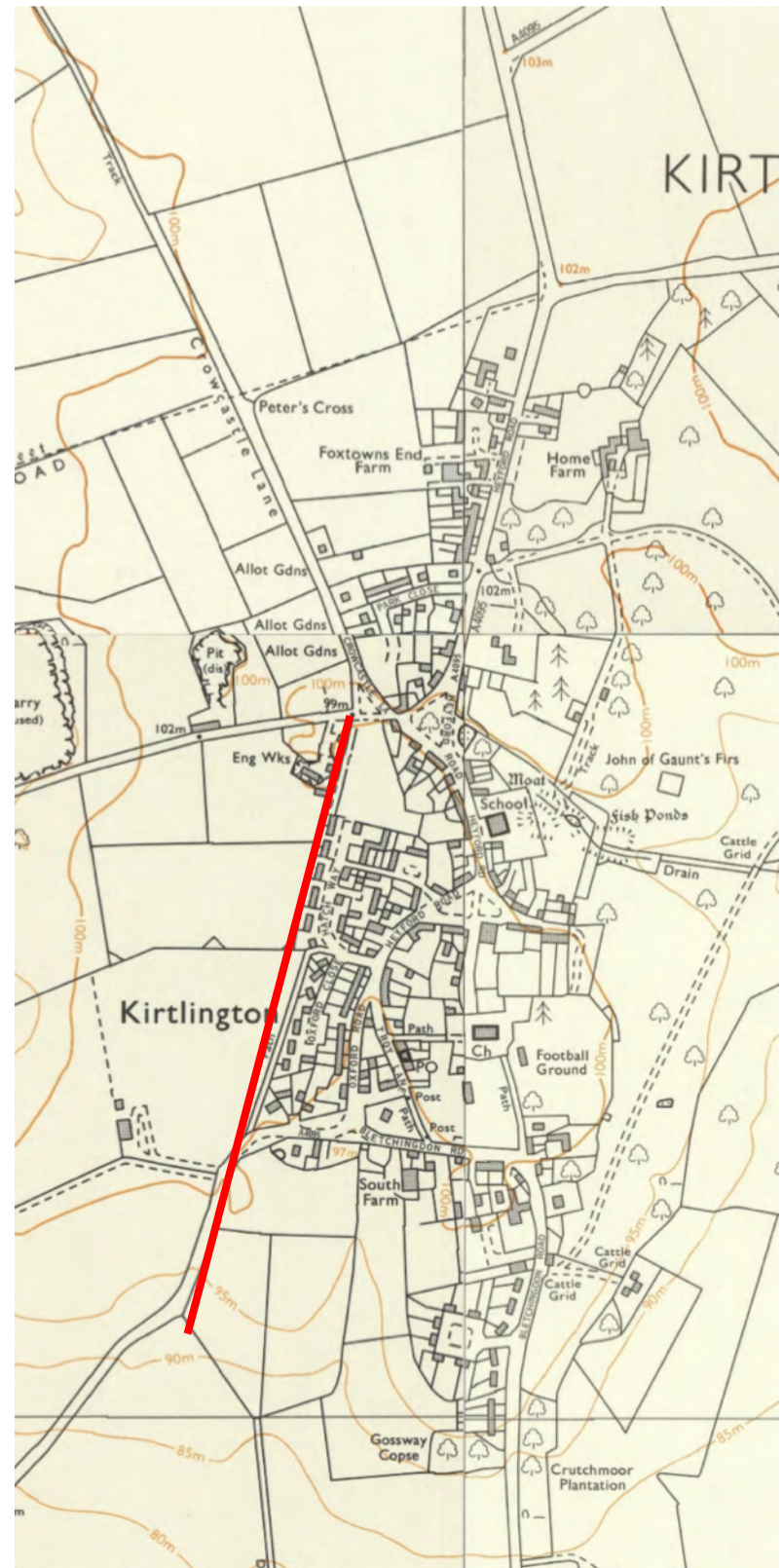


Fig.2 – Kirtlington in 1981

2. Sustainability

Kirtlington is currently designated as a Category 'A' village. The loss of the village shop/post-office in early 2020, the withdrawal of the 250 bus at the end of 2022, and the recent loss of 'The Dashwood Arms' as a public house, brings in to question the appropriateness of the Categorisation. Does the village currently have sufficient amenities to be classed as being one of the more sustainable settlements in the district?

Planning policy for Category 'A' villages permits minor development and infilling. Minor development assessments are made on the following criteria;

-Size and level of service provision of village

As already mentioned with regard to the loss of the shop, post office, 250 bus, & one public house, the service provision in this village has been significantly diminished, where the proposed development will directly impact with an increased volume of traffic.

-Context within existing built environment

The proposed development does not respond to the existing village context and seems somewhat detached by way of the 'bolted-on' design of the development layout. This does not integrate into its surroundings.

-In-keeping with character and form of village

The proposed street elevations appear to be in-keeping with the character and form of the village

-Landscape setting

The development would be the first thing to be seen when entering the village, which would appear jarring and too prominent for the gateway into this historic village. The location of this development does not integrate effectively with the surrounding landscape

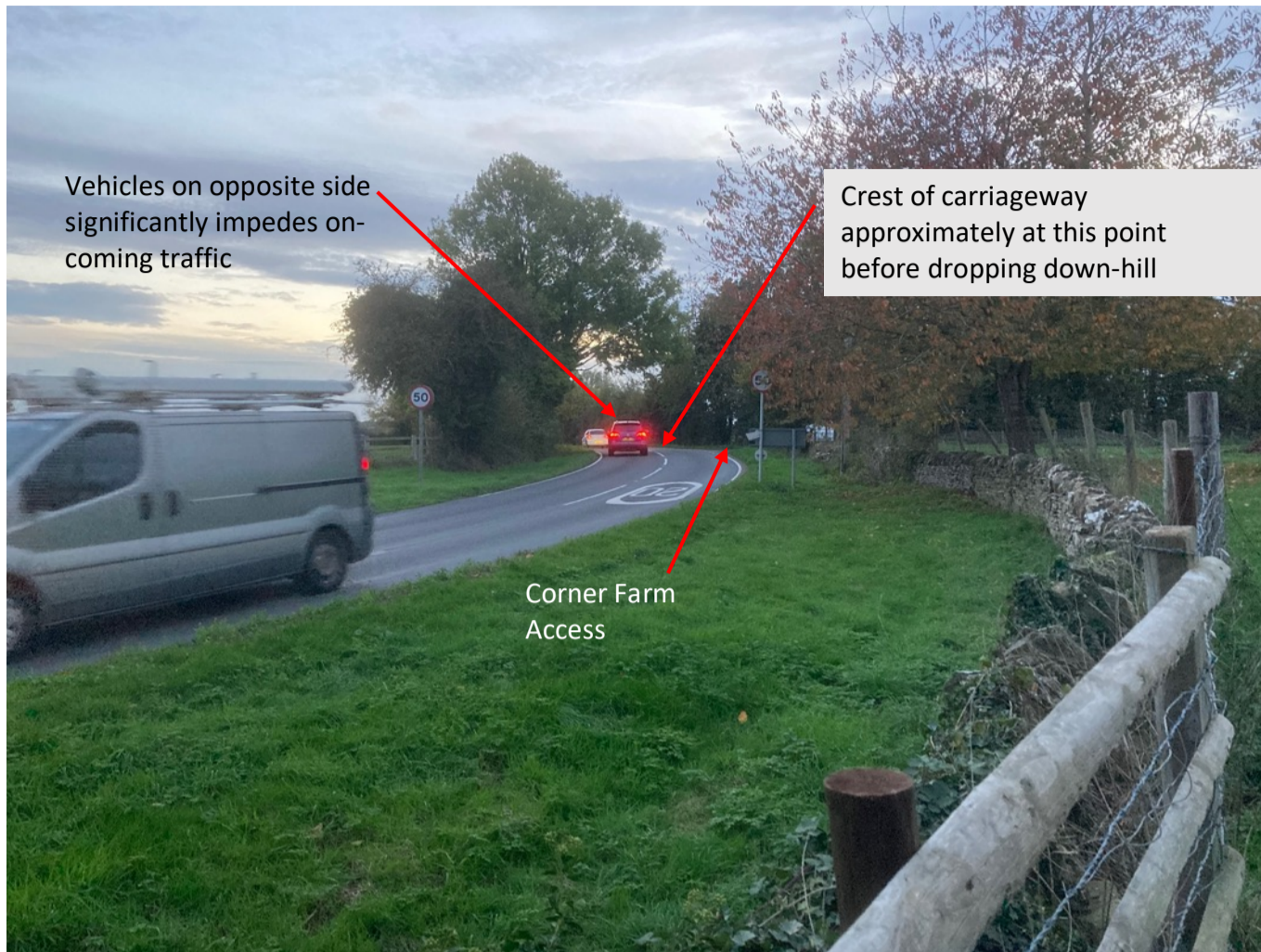
The proposed development is NOT infilling and therefore should only be assessed on the criteria set out above for Minor Development.

3. Highway safety

After reviewing the Transport Statement prepared by TPA, the forward visibility splays for the new access appear to be inadequate and not in-line with county highway standards. For the right-hand splay (exiting the proposed development towards the 50mph speed limit), both the visibility distance and the set-back from the junction are less than the required distances. A 50mph speed limit requires a 160m visibility line from a 4.5m set-back, not 120m with 2.4m set-back as shown on the TPA Drawing No. VS01 revision B.

Furthermore, this drawing, does not take in to account the incline of the road, and the 'actual' encroachment of existing hedgerows and planting. The below photograph (Fig.3) demonstrates that the 'actual' visibility from the proposed access barely goes beyond the existing access to Corner Farm. It is also worth noting that this photo was taken from a standing position, whereas in reality when seated in a car, the point of visibility is much lower. Finally, even if the existing hedgerows and planting were cut back, it would still not provide the 160m required, and this is also on the basis that the hedgerows and planting are to be maintained indefinitely. It is also worth noting that the grass verges, trees and hedgerows on council land are not sufficiently maintained throughout the year. Having lived in this location for the past 14 years or so, I have been frustrated year after year with the lack of grass cutting to the verges, as they are left to grow wild and will often become so tall, that it creates a dangerous junction for us to pull out on to the main road as visibility is severely diminished. There are no street-lights in this location which has not been considered in terms of visibility. Head-lights of on-coming vehicles beyond the bending crest of carriageway within the 50mph limit, are the only means of spotting on-coming traffic at night, which would not be seen at the required visibility distance due to the fact that on-coming vehicles would be much lower down at that distance where head-lights would not project over the crest in the road, due to the incline of the road. Worst case scenario is pulling out from the proposed access at night, in bad weather conditions such as fog which would severely reduce visibility.

Fig.3 – Visibility from new access position



With the loss of the No. 250 bus service, this makes the proposed development more reliant on the use of cars which will undoubtedly add further disruption to this village with the prospect of increased vehicle numbers, assuming there will be at least two cars per dwelling. Furthermore, the increase in housing will only add to additional vehicular activity in form of delivery vans, from on-line shopping, which is common-place in recent times.

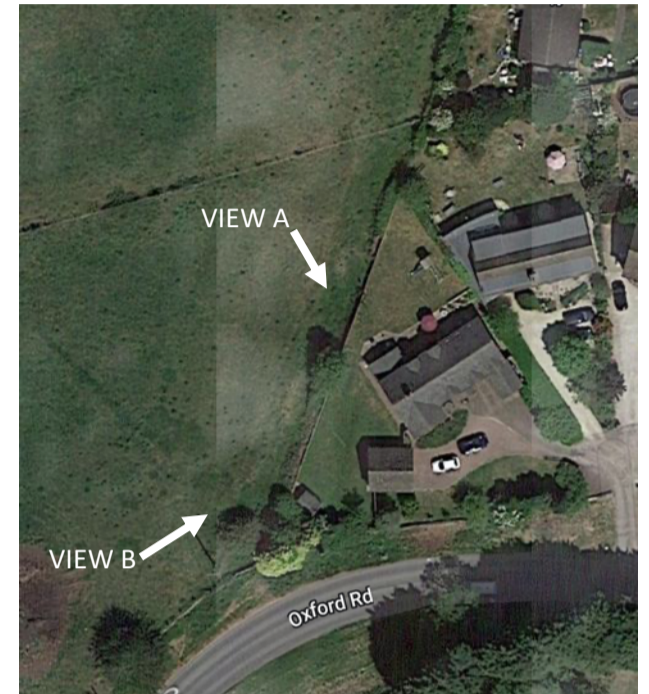
It is widely known that Kirtlington is often used as a 'rat-run' particularly where there are traffic delays on A34. The addition of the new development access to the A4095, will exacerbate any traffic turmoil that this village already experiences.

The Transport Statement does mention the occurrence of 2 accidents along this road which highlights the existing safety concerns, therefore the new proposed access will only exacerbate the potential for accidents, over and above the existing dangers. The recent traffic calming measures such as the raised planters at various locations along the A4095, and the reduction of the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph further reinforces the safety concerns.

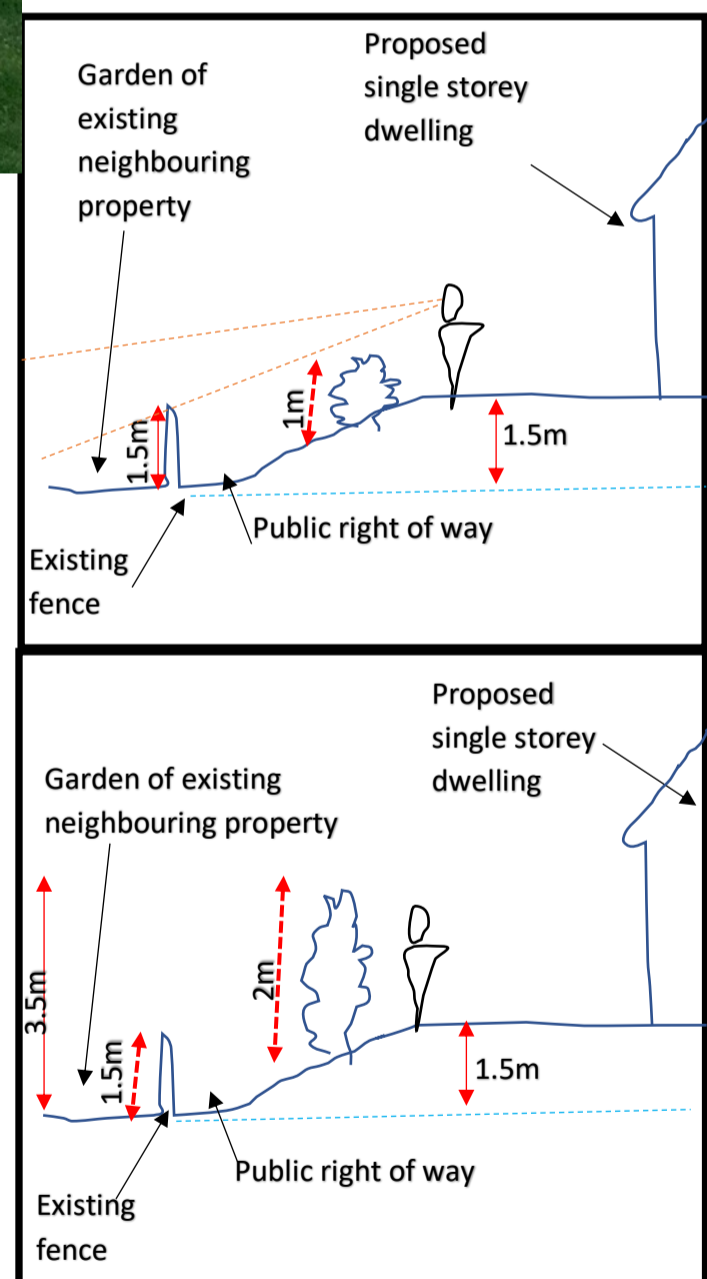
4. Loss of privacy & Over-looking

The site is elevated approximately 1.5metres higher than the gardens of the neighbouring properties. The existing fence that separates the Public Right-of-Way from the neighbouring dwelling is also only 1.5metres high with no trees or hedging in place. Considering this level difference, this will make the proposed dwellings become very over-bearing. See photos below to show the difference of topography.

VIEW A



VIEW B



I note the proposed hedging which would run alongside the public footpath, however the height of the hedging would need to be substantial to overcome any over-looking / loss of privacy issues – therefore, fully established plants. Although I accept that tall established planting along this boundary would overcome any over-looking issues, it may conversely result in loss of light to the eastern side of my property. A full right-to-light assessment should be undertaken to address these potential issues.

Although the dwellings proposed at this end of the site are single storey, the higher level of the site means that these dwellings will appear much taller in reality, thus feeling very over-bearing. The perception of over-looking will be as 'Harmful' to neighbours as 'actual' overlooking.

5. Surface-water run-off

It is clear that the submitted drainage strategy denotes the main access road through the development will be permeable construction (SUDS). My concern is that the ground level of the existing farmland is roughly 1.5metres higher than the garden of our house, with the ground steeply sloping towards our boundary. Although the surface run-off is alleviated by the use of permeable material, it will still be worse than the existing farmland as more surface water is displaced by the whole development. Furthermore, the drainage strategy depicts soakaways to ALL rear gardens of the development which are very close to the neighbouring boundary, where the topography starts to bank down towards the public right of way. Surely this will encourage storm water to percolate down in the direction of the neighbouring boundaries, resulting in localised increases in the water table level.

The recent heavy rainfall has resulted in localised flooding to the main road through Kirtlington where the existing combined sewer is not able to cope with such extreme weather conditions. As these weather events are becoming more frequent, it is important to consider the future impact that such a development will have on the existing sewer.

6. Construction traffic, noise & dust

In the short term, it's inevitable there will be many large dusty construction vehicles entering and exiting the village. This will pose a significant risk to children, dog-walkers and cyclists alike, not to mention the danger of the temporary construction access to the site, with the fast-flowing traffic entering the village from the 50mph bend. Installation of new below ground utilities (Water/electric etc...) will likely cause traffic disruption with possible road or lane closures to facilitate the works.

Noise and dust will cause a significant nuisance to the areas that surround the site.

7. Future development concerns

There have been many planning applications on this site in recent years, with proposals of 125 dwellings, 95 dwellings and 75 dwellings – none of which have been successful. I note that the most recent application from Manorwood Homes for 8no. dwellings, has yet to be determined, as there is no sign of a decision shown on the planning portal, and it far exceeded the required target determination period, originally scheduled for 30th November 2022. Looking at the site layout and the relatively small allocation of land given to this proposed development for 15 dwellings, together with the orientation of the access road, my concern is that the land owner will seek to gain permission for further parcels of land in the future, and this application is merely an alternative route to achieve the overall objective to fill the entire area within his ownership with more housing. Over time, I fear that the settlement boundary will be lost, with the village becoming unrecognisable with the onset of mass developer housing.

8. Cherwell district housing land supply

Considering the harm that the proposed development will bring to this historic village, it is arguably a completely unnecessary addition. The relatively recent developments within the village such as Gossway Fields by Bloor Homes and the new houses at Akeman Spinney have provided more than enough to meet local demand. Furthermore, Cherwell district have now secured a 5.4 year housing land supply for the period 2022-2027, meaning a development of this nature that breaches the settlement boundary with a dangerous access to the highway is a totally unnecessary development.