

New Traveller Site in Piddington – Planning Application 24/00097/F

We are writing to strongly object to this planning application on the grounds of justification, scale, and location.

Justification

There is no evidence of a requirement for a site in this area. This is a speculative development. The owner has no links with the village.

The closure of sites at a considerable distance from Piddington have no relevance. The Bloxham site housed families working in the Bloxham area and their children go to Bloxham schools, over 20 miles from Piddington. The Station Caravan Park at Banbury was never a designated Gypsy/Traveller site. Its closure does not represent a loss of Gypsy/Traveller pitches.

The applicant has invalidated the existing planning consent for 6 pitches by starting work before fulfilling the conditions that were required before work started.

Scale

The proposed scale of this site is completely out of proportion to the size of Piddington, a village of less than 150 houses without a school, pub, shop, and employment. This is contrary to the government's guidance for gypsy/traveller sites.

Location

Brownfield sites should be considered before greenfield sites as part of a sustainable plan for the whole of Cherwell District. This is in an area of landscape value of importance to the identity of the village, as recognised in Cherwell District Council's plan. This is close to significant village assets – the Jubilee Reserve, Widnell Park and the Village Playing Field would all suffer if this development went ahead. It would be of major concern if lorries, caravans and trailers were accessing the site when residents, children and parents were walking along the road from the centre of Piddington.

The site is Grade 3 Agricultural land, prone to flooding. Hard standings will increase water run-off and add to the existing drainage and flooding problems that are already a major problem for the village. The possibility of leakage from septic tanks when the water table is too high is a considerable risk.

The protected species of Great Crested Newts are present at the site.

This is an isolated site where no other residential development would be allowed. There are no local amenities or services. If this were to go ahead there would be a considerable increase in journeys to schools, workplaces and to shops, increasing traffic in the area.

The site is on a narrow unclassified road with a 60-mph speed limit, poor visibility on the bends and on the junction with the busy B4011. There are no footpaths and even now there is much evidence of damage to verges from large vehicles. The road is not safe for pedestrians and certainly totally unsafe if large vehicles and trailers are allowed access to this site.

We strongly urge the planning committee to reject this application.