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Cherwell District Council
Planning Dept.
Bodicote House
Banbury
OX15 4AA

25th February 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Application to Build @ South Lodge, Caversfield OX27 8TH - 24/00245/OUT

I object to the proposal to build at the site for the following reasons:

- **Emerging Local Plan** - First and foremost this is a Cat. C (Cat. 3 on the 1996 Local Plan) village and therefore the application should not even be considered.
 - *The emerging Local Plan for CDC categorises Caversfield as Cat C village with the only type of development agreed to as 'conversions' and no infilling or minor/major development. This development, therefore, does not conform to CDC's Local Plan.*
 - *The 1996 Local Plan classes Caversfield as Cat 3 settlement restricted to the conversion of non-residential buildings in accordance with policy H21, or a new dwelling (not dwellingS) when an essential need for agriculture or other existing undertaking can be established.*
 - *"Buffers will be kept free from built development to protect the identity of settlements, vulnerable gaps between the existing or planned built up developments of Banbury and Bicester and neighbouring villages, and to protect valuable landscape or historic features".*
 - The proposal is outside the built environment of the village and would set a precedent for the creation of a ribbon development all the way up the west side of the Fringford Rd.,
 - The Draft Cherwell Local Plan (2011 to 31) identifies in its vision, strategy and objectives an aim "to strictly control development in open countryside". The land in this application is currently a green space defining the village of Caversfield and preventing unsustainable urban sprawl and as such should remain as this green barrier.
 - Policy B.84 emphasises the importance of Cherwell's countryside, landscape and green spaces as a natural resource
 - Section B.3 of the Draft Local Plan reinforces this under policy B.175, which also states the requirement for "clear green boundaries to be established as buffers at the edge of where growth occurs", such as the North West Eco Town development, "to avoid coalescence between the areas for strategic development and neighbouring villages".
 - Policy ESD 15: Green Boundaries to Growth makes strong reference to the importance of these green buffers "to protect the identity of settlements, vulnerable gaps between the existing or planned built up limits of Banbury and Bicester and neighbouring villages".
- **Housing Mandate Met** - The Government mandate for housing in the area has already been met by the developments of: Kingsmere, The Eco-Village at Elmsbrook, The Gravenhill site and Langford Village. Therefore this development is not required to fill government quotas.

- **Previous Application Refusal Stands** - Apart from the current works to the Banbury Road roundabout and local speed limits nothing has changed since the Cala homes appeal was rejected.
- **Water Pressure** - Thames Water struggles to supply sufficient pressure to the properties currently in the village and adding to the system would exacerbate the issue.
- **Drainage** - Thames Water already expressed concerns over drainage.
- **Thames Water** – only has capacity to supply half the houses the developer is asking for but that is before all the empty houses on Caversfield are returned to the MOD and inhabited again (further draining the system).
- **Education** – local catchment schools are Southwold and Gaglebrook for Primary and The Bicester School for Secondary. Over-subscribed schools will need to adjust/extend to accommodate.
 - **Transport** of children will put more cars on already congested roads twice a day, more often for social and clubs.
 - **Vehicular Accessibility** - The Bicester School - car parking at Bicester Sports centre is already full at 3pm and school runs can be an hour roundtrip, with most of the time taken getting into and out of the car park and road adjacent to Queen's Avenue. Simply trying to cross the pedestrian crossings as wave after wave of children cross can add minutes, (and pollution to those developing lungs). Adding more houses = more cars = more congestion = more pollution and more time spent in the car on the road.
- **Not a walkable neighbourhood** - This development does not fit with the 10 minute walkable distance to any facilities or amenities.
- **Transport links** - The local bus service is not guaranteed and subject to subsidy, and therefore may be cut at any time.
- **Local Amenities** - The majority of residents do not want a pub or a shop.
 - When a shop/cafe was offered in the garden quarter no interest was raised to run/own it.
- **Access** in and out of the village is already difficult without increasing the weight of vehicular traffic.
- **Flooding** –
 - The Land IS prone to flooding and the Aunt Em's Lane junction with the B4100 has running water across it due to the stream on the NW of the area flooding.
 - Flood management scheme of raising the ground level will cause flooding of the existing home which currently do not flood as they will be downhill with the development.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain** is a joke! Nothing is more biodiverse than the area as it currently is, except for perhaps planting more trees to soak up some flood water. You only have to see the 'living wall' at the Kingsmere shopping complex (Pure Gym/Village Super) off Pioneer Way to know how much of a joke it is with all the plugs filled only with dead remnants of whatever had been in them. The little patches of green the developers do plant are not capable of sustaining life on anything but a minute scale of insects and smaller.
- **Historical** - The location is an historical and current buffer zone. The hedgerows, flora and fauna, circa 1000 years old, form part of an ancient historical site.
 - Dating back to the Bronze age – evidence of settlement
 - Dating back to Roman times – centurions' remains found in the pond circa 40 years ago.
- **Wildlife** - The wildlife, that call this site home, roam freely on the fields. Deer can often be seen grazing in the early mornings. There is a bat colony, barn owls, newts, rabbits, buzzards and red kites to name just a few species who will be made homeless by this development, forcing them towards the busy roads to die.
 - *"FPCR Environment and Design Ltd in July 2013 highlighted evidence of barns owls, 7 of the 25 bird species identified on the proposed development site appear on the BoCC Red or Amber lists as declining and/or are listed as Species of Principle Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act (16-7)."*
- **Nature** – Trees are needed to reduce flooding but they will not be saved or replaced after development.
- **Infestations** – vermin finding somewhere else to live because their homes are being developed are becoming an issue and local pest controllers have more work than they can cope with.

- **Electricity** – The system cannot cope! - the new forensics lab developers have been told they will not be able to connect to the grid for 2 years when it is complete as there isn't enough power, so they will have to build their own generators.
- **Gas** -Supply to Caversfield is already at capacity.
- **Pollution** -
 - **Light** -
 - **Traffic** – air pollution
 - **Waste** – More houses mean more bins full of rubbish
 - **Water** – Our waterways are already polluted because the water authorities cannot cope with the amount of waste we produce and they are throwing that dirty water into our rivers and killing what little life is in there.

In conclusion, I believe that the Government's own charter, citing Caversfield as a Category C village, entitling it to have a green buffer to separate it from the surrounding sprawl, to protect our already very endangered wildlife, flora and fauna, negates all other arguments and this application should be dismissed without possibility of appeal.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Jayne Herbert