

# Comment for planning application 24/00245/OUT

<b>Application Number</b>	24/00245/OUT
<b>Location</b>	South Lodge Fringford Road Caversfield Bicester OX27 8TH
<b>Proposal</b>	Outline application for demolition of existing structures and erection of up to 99 dwellings, access, open space and associated works with all matters reserved except for access
<b>Case Officer</b>	Andrew Thompson
<b>Organisation Name</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Isabel Lloyd-Jones
<b>Address</b>	Cuckoo Cottage, Fringford Road, Caversfield, Bicester, OX27 8TL
<b>Type of Comment</b>	Objection
<b>Type</b>	neighbour
<b>Comments</b>	<p>The proposed development would impact to a significantly detrimental degree on the adjacent group of buildings, two of them grade 2 listed and all three of historic interest. The application appears to place weight on the reference, in the decision relating to Charlotte Avenue, to the fact that the Charlotte Avenue development will not impact the setting of these historic buildings. This is irrelevant to this proposed development which, at risk of stating the obvious, is in a different place. The fields where development is proposed constitute an important part of the setting of Caversfield House, Home farm and the Church all of which are already infringed upon from the west. The development would conflict with the presumption in favour of preserving the setting of designated heritage assets and would add to the cumulative harm to the setting of the group of three taken as a whole. The character of the area on the other side is unique arising from the construction of most of the houses as military accommodation which still form a unique community in spite of, or possibly because of, the lack of amenities.</p> <p>There are many references to the lack of visibility of the site from the surrounding area. First, this is not correct - it is clearly visible even through the wide copse on the Fringford Road side especially in winter and second, to the extent it is correct now, this will completely alter were the site to change from empty fields with nothing above ground level to a site containing at least 100 houses which will be far more visible.</p> <p>There is no public right of way over the fields to the north of the development which are in separate ownership and therefore no access to other footpaths or to the lane at any point other than the single access road. If views out to the north of the development are to be exploited as suggested it would infringe the rural nature of the public right of way to the north of the area which at present is enjoyed by local dog walkers and by many others who come by car for the purpose of walking in the countryside. It would cease to be a rural walk and become suburban.</p> <p>The access to the development area is not sufficient to be safe at present and any development will severely impact the rural nature of the surrounding area generally. Fringford road is a country lane which is well used at rush hour but is otherwise mostly quiet. There is unlikely to be sufficient width to build a safe cycle path compliant with regulations along the whole of the distance from the development to the ring road without narrowing the road, which in itself would be undesirable. In addition, the proposed access road is almost directly opposite Skimmingdish lane which will effectively create a crossroads and have a major impact on traffic in rush hours. It will turn what is at present a country lane which is mostly unlit, into an urban road.</p> <p>It is difficult to see that even if a cycle path were possible, it would significantly reduce vehicle traffic given the distance to local schools and the town centre. The cyclists who use Fringford road at present are almost exclusively leisure cyclists. Given that there are no active bus routes at present and it is a rural setting with no amenities, it is likely that almost all journeys will be by car. It is also likely that many of the houses on the development will be occupied by families with adult children at home and their own cars .ie more than 2 cars per household. Assuming the proposed housing to be mostly family housing it is not clear how it is suggested children will access local secondary schools without being taken by car. Overall, car use on what is at present a country lane will inevitably be hugely increased. Previous attempts to introduce amenities to Caversfield, such as a shop in the garden quarter, have been unsuccessful and therefore it is likely to be a development without any amenities increasing road use for travel to work, school, shopping, GP and dentist surgeries and all other amenities.</p> <p>There are in fact no bus routes and the bus stop on Buckingham Road referred to in the application is just over half a mile away along an unlit road. It is unrealistic to consider it an</p>

amenity at all except in daylight hours. It will not be suitable for use by children returning from school in winter. The development would be too far away for them to walk to school and it will not be safe for them to cycle.

The proposed development does not fit within the existing plan nor the emerging plan for Cherwell and is not in an area which is designated for development at present nor is likely to be in the emerging plan. If the emerging plan is ignored and outline permission is granted in an area intended to act as a green buffer to Bicester it will risk setting off a series of similar applications and piecemeal development outside the plan. The application refers to land to the south of the proposed development being occupied by housing. The area immediately to the south is in fact a field lying between the development and the ring road. The already existing dwellings are in four almost separate developments which have the character of small developments in a rural setting. It is disingenuous to characterise the proposed development as a development on a village edge location.

The assessment of flood risk from surface water was carried out in August 2023 when the risk of surface water flooding would have been lower than normal due to lower than average rainfall at that time. Even so, if I understand the assessment correctly, they were unable to make an assessment based on one of the tests because the bore hole was full of water. They say;

' Tentative infiltration rates have been derived for SA02-SA04 ranging between 1.53 and 3.79 x 10<sup>-5</sup> m/s, however these cannot be used for design purposes due to the presence of groundwater at shallow depth and only reflect infiltration into the pits sides within the stated depth ranges.'

Recent rainfall has left large areas of agricultural land in the area under water to a greater degree than normal. Given the applicant's own test results great caution should be exercised in assuming this development will not itself be subject to a flood risk or cause risk of flooding to the existing developments some of which already have precarious arrangements for drainage and fresh water.

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**Attachments**