

11th July 2025

FAO: Planning Department, Cherwell District Council

**Re: Objection to Planning Application 25/01346/OUT - Land North of The Moors, Kidlington, Oxfordshire**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to register our formal objection to the planning application **25/01346/OUT**, relating to the proposed residential development on **Part OS Parcel 0006 North Of The Moors, Kidlington** and its impact on the local area.

As residents of a private property directly adjoining the proposed development site, we have serious concerns about the direct impact this proposal will have on our home\* and garden, as well as the immediate environment, wider Kidlington community and amenities and of course the impact of the construction and the site's ongoing operational use.

\*Removal of protective bollards between our cottage, the grass verge and the current road (currently providing safety and privacy for us), creation of a new road and roundabout directly outside our living room window, both of which would lead to the destruction of local ecological habitats such as the pond, trees and hedgerows

**1. Inappropriate development of Green Belt Land**

The proposed development site lies within currently undeveloped green belt land comprising agricultural fields, hedgerows, field margins and accessible green spaces. It plays a vital role in supporting local biodiversity, and ecosystems, historical landscape character, and public wellbeing.

We note attempts to reclassify this land as "Grey Belt," but this appears unjustified, and simply a way of pushing construction at any cost, without due care for residents, the wider community and the environment. We feel strongly that this unique area should continue to be protected under green belt policies, which aim to prevent urban sprawl and preserve the character of rural areas.

The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 'Policy ESD 14: Oxford Green Belt' states that the Council will "*maintain the Green Belt*" and "*protect its special character and setting*" and so this development, by its very nature, fails to do this.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also states that "*inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved*

*except in very special circumstances.*" We cannot see that any "very special circumstances" have been demonstrated which would outweigh the harm caused by this proposed development.

The current site offers open, unrivalled views towards the historic St Mary's Church and Thrupp Community Woodland, which contribute to the "special character" that Policy ESD 14 is designed to protect. It is a verdant and accessible asset to our village, and is widely used by local residents, visitors and the wider public for walking and recreation. It is a place of peace and quiet enjoyed by many in Kidlington and beyond contributing to collective wellbeing and mental health within our community.

## **2. Ecological and Environmental Impact**

The site includes diverse wildlife habitats that will be irreparably damaged by the development:

- A pond directly adjoining the site is a known habitat for Great Crested Newts which are an endangered and protected species. This raises serious legal and ecological concerns, especially given how few habitats remain for these creatures.

We are particularly concerned about the potential impact on this historical and unique local habitat. The proximity of the development to the pond and its potential destruction raises serious concerns about potential pollution from construction runoff and surface water drainage.

- Bats are another endangered and protected species, regularly seen foraging and feeding in the area, suggesting there are community roosts nearby. Other key species known to inhabit the area include orchids, wild meadow and arable plants, slow worms, grass snakes, birds, bees, and butterflies.
- The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 'Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment' explicitly states that development will be expected to "avoid impacts on designated sites" and "secure a net gain in biodiversity". Thus the presence of protected species like Great Crested Newts and foraging bats means this policy is of critical importance.
- The planned removal of mature trees, hedgerows and field margins from this green space will directly impact biodiversity, shade and air quality as well as losing important ecological habitats.
- The proposed development and site is known to act as a natural floodplain in winter. The proposal lacks adequate detail on drainage or flood mitigation,

and increased hard surfacing may heighten flood risk in the surrounding area. The outline proposal does not have adequate drainage or flood prevention and this is an issue that will only increase as weather and climate change shifts in the coming years.

- There is insufficient detail on how construction runoff and surface water drainage will be managed to prevent pollution of the nearby pond and local watercourses.

### **3. Traffic and Impact on the Local Area and Road Safety**

The proposed development indicates changes and expansion to road infrastructure, including a new roundabout and access road directly adjacent and adjoining our property. This will result in:

- Significant increase in traffic volumes, both during any construction and as part of long term use and access. The Moors, and surrounding area, are growing increasingly busy, and this proposal will exacerbate congestion and have a detrimental effect on the relative safety of the area for pedestrians, cyclists, pets, elderly and disabled neighbours.
- Increased congestion and delays on The Moors and surrounding roads (particularly at peak times), which are already under pressure and not suited to high volumes of large vehicles.
- Proposed new bus routes on Benmead Road and The Moors which are incompatible with the area's narrow layout, parked cars and speed control measures. Benmead Road also adjoins a primary school, raising further safety concerns.
- The Moors has numerous speed bumps which aid traffic management but are unsuitable for this proposed increase in traffic. There simply is not space for additional large vehicles to safely pass, with the proposed new roundabout and access road directly adjoining properties increasing risk of damage.
- Further increases in traffic will cause further damage to roads and other travel infrastructure leading to potentially unsafe potholes.
- Existing protective bollards and green verges outside of our property create privacy and protection. The plan proposes removing these, which poses direct safety risks to us and our property outside our living room window and the side of our home and garden.

- Access roads are currently residential and form a peaceful, safe and pleasant area of the village, which is of huge benefit to local residents and others. This proposal will diminish these net benefit aspects of the area.
- The wider Kidlington area already has numerous developments which are compounding extant congestion and inhibitors to timely travel and safe active travel. This proposal will increase these negative aspects for all local and visiting users. In the wider area current and new planned developments will contribute to congestion and reduced safety for road users. This proposal will not offer mitigations to potential issues or benefits to travel.

#### **4. Noise, Pollution, and Loss of Amenity**

If this proposal were to be approved, the construction phase would bring years of noise, air pollution, and disruption to an otherwise peaceful and close knit community. This will reduce the quality of life for existing residents and risks damaging the mental and physical wellbeing benefits currently provided by this important open space.

This green space is a vital community amenity, with multiple public rights of way, open vistas, and peaceful surroundings. These contribute to the character of Kidlington and must be preserved for future generations.

#### **5. Pressure on Local Infrastructure**

The proposal will place additional pressure on already overstretched local services:

- GP surgeries and schools in the area are at or near capacity. The impact of similar Oxfordshire housing developments such as those in Upper Heyford is not to be underestimated, with huge burdens on primary care at Deddington Health Centre.
- Drainage and sewerage infrastructure is already under strain from existing developments, especially during winter floods. At present green spaces absorb much of this runoff, but this water will be displaced as a direct result of this proposed new development.

#### **6. Parking and Construction Impacts**

- The new development will likely increase demand for on-street parking in the area. We are concerned that this will exacerbate existing parking issues and

make it more difficult for residents to park near their homes.

- Construction traffic will exacerbate road damage, create safety risks for pedestrians, the elderly, the disabled, cyclists, and disrupt access for emergency and delivery vehicles.

This proposal represents a significant threat to the character, ecology, and safety of our community and area of Kidlington. It would cause permanent environmental damage, place strain on local infrastructure, and diminish the wellbeing of current residents. The area is of huge benefit to local residents and visitors as a large and peaceful area with many recognised public rights of way. The benefit of quiet, accessible and green spaces for people cannot be overestimated. There are currently numerous wide open vistas with a network of paths interconnecting them.

We strongly urge the council to reject this application and to protect the integrity of Kidlington's green spaces and the safety and wellbeing of its residents. The unspoilt views are a treasured resource for Kidlington, and have been for generations. This proposal will greatly inhibit the current use of this green and pleasant area.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention with regards to this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Gem Toes-Crichton and Greg Crichton  
Private owners: The Gatehouse, 36 The Moors, Kidlington