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My name is Chris Heath, I am the ward member for Bodicote and would just like to say a few words on behalf of Bodicote Parish Council with regard to this inquiry.

Firstly, I would just like to reiterate how long this piece of land has been under stress of possible development. For the past 7 years, since 2005, various applications for housing development have been lodged with Cherwell District Council, all of which have either been refused or withdrawn.

Bodicote Parish Council has strong objections to development on this piece of land – I won't go into all the planning reasons for these objections as these have already been well documented by the Planning Officer, but other items are considered to be important by the Parish Council.

First and foremost is the fact that this proposed development is outside the village boundary, encroaching onto green fields.

Secondly, they do not consider that this development will ever become part of the village as there is only a footpath linking the new development to the village, thereby making it an almost separate settlement – the distance from the school making it almost certain that cars would be used to get the children to school, rather than walking.

Whilst talking about schooling, I understand that the village school – Bishop Loveday – is virtually at capacity and would not be able to cope with the amount of children from a development of this size – so where will the children go to school – obviously outside of the village which would generate more traffic.

On the question of traffic, I know that Oxfordshire Highways Department state that "there are no outstanding concerns relating to the highways and transport issues" but the Parish Council are very concerned about this and probably have a little more knowledge about the area (at all times of the day) than Highways Dept who may make the odd visit for reporting purposes. I believe that the last traffic survey by the County was more than 10 years ago, in preparation for the Bodicote/Bankside development and in that 10 years there has been considerable changes to the area concerned and of course the general increase in traffic over those 10 years.

The applicant states that a Transport Assessment has been undertaken by the developers – the Parish Council was not informed of this – and with respect, a Traffic Assessment carried out by an interested party should not be considered as a fair assessment.

Since the original Highways traffic assessment, new developments in the particular area of Cotefield Farm include a large Health and Fitness Club on the opposite side of the Oxford Road, a Rugby Club/Sporting facility next door to the Health Club, an expanding garden centre to the east of the area and an auction house, also east of the area. All of this development has obviously added an enormous amount of traffic in and around the particular junction on the Oxford Road.

Anyone local to this area knows of the existing problems on the Oxford Road where the traffic flow is often at gridlock at peak times and also access from side roads in Bodicote is made almost impossible because of the continual stream of traffic. I personally know two people who live in Adderbury but rather than drive to work Along the Oxford road, they travel along the Milton Road and enter Banbury via Bloxham and the A361. These problems will obviously be exacerbated by bringing huge numbers of vehicles onto the Oxford Road from the proposed development.

The Parish Council also has concerns regarding flooding as the Sor Brook often floods after heavy rain and feel that the run off from this development would make things much worse

The Parish Council are also concerned at the possible loss of a particularly attractive area of landscape and the claim in the Planning Supporting Statement that this development would provide “a more visually attractive edge” to Bodicote is ludicrous, what could be more attractive than an undulating green field with far reaching views across the valley. This new housing will not add to or enhance the village of Bodicote in any way whatsoever but would result in an urbanisation of an attractive area of open countryside, which the Parish Council thought the present government was supposed to be against.

Apart from all the planning reasons why this development should not go ahead, all these items mentioned are very real concerns of Bodicote Parish Council and I would therefore respectfully request the Inspector to dismiss the appeal.