

Simon & Isabel George
The Old House
Main Street
Sibford Ferris
Banbury
OX15 5RE

Mr Bob Neville
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4AA

29 November 2018

Dear Mr Neville,

Planning Application No: 18/01894/OUT

I write to raise 2 main objections to the above planning application, as follows:

1. Restricted Vehicular Access / Enhanced Traffic Congestion

As a resident of Main Street, Sibford Ferris, I am concerned about the impact a development of this size would have on the increase in traffic through the village, particularly at congested choke points. Main Street already has a number of bottle-necks where traffic has to wait for cars to pass. Where on-street parking is the only option, certain sections of Main Street are restricted to one-way traffic. ***This is particularly noticeable outside the front of our property (OX15 5RE).*** As well as a significant number of cars, we also see large farm machinery, school buses, HGVs and more prevalent of late, delivery vans speeding (as they descend the hill) through the village. These often screech to a halt outside our house as they have not seen that oncoming traffic is using the one lane available due to the bend in the road. Where we have a natural spring that permanently puddles the road at the point where the traffic has to stop rapidly, ***I deem this alone, to be particularly dangerous.***

Already I cannot let our young children or animals out at the front of our house during peak hours. Overall, the negative impact of a sizeable increase in vehicles using this road as the main route in and out of the village would be very significant; The layout and design of the road does not support such an increase in traffic volume. Given journeys to both the nearest school, Village Hall, Doctor's Surgery and other amenities in Sibford Gower and Burdrop involve travelling via Main Street, the likely increase in traffic would be huge; further, access to Gaydon/M40 and to Banbury/nearest train station also involve this route. Delivery Vans are adding significant weight to the levels of traffic we see as well as the proposed development resident's cars that will be required, likely be at least 2 cars per family, as it is deemed too impractical not to have them in a rural area.

There is no getting away from the fact that it is just at the wrong end of the village ***where all Banbury, Stratford and Gaydon traffic has to 'back track' through the village (Main Street).*** Already Sibford School traffic is hugely significant but given our community has been built up around the 'Friends'

School over the last 150 yrs – this can be forgiven. During rush hour this already over burdens this stretch of road. Significantly only part of Main Street has pavement; more traffic may well increase the risks to pedestrians. ***I would be happy to host a visit from the planning team to show you the impact. In the first instance, I would request that you consider surveying this choke point outside The Old House by arranging for a (temporary) automated system to be installed at this point.***

2. Inappropriate Development

Whilst I am also concerned about the scale and size of the development; I do recognise the need for new homes, but ones that should provide a more balanced community than that that exists. This has been considered in all of the community planning that has taken place over the last decade. Notwithstanding the social mix of housing, ***This proposed development of 25 homes goes against Cherwell's Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)*** which suggests that bigger housing developments are located in built-up areas such as Banbury or Bicester, where suitable infrastructure exists. ***As a relatively small 'Class A' village, Sibford Ferris is not suitable (or required) to have a development on this scale.*** Further, Cherwell's Plan suggests minor developments, infilling and conversions are appropriate ways of extending the housing stock for Class A villages, rather than larger sites which don't fall within the village limits, such as the one proposed.


I also refer to the Sibford Community Plan of 2012, which records that 64% of residents would be happy with a smaller, more appropriate developments of up to 10 new homes. Only a small number of residents indicated they would be happy with a development of over 20 houses. ***To allow this development would go against the Community viewpoint as expressed in that Plan.***

Summary

I understand a previous scheme proposed by this developer to build 8 houses with the majority of these being affordable homes was approved, however the developer choose not to go ahead. This new proposal for 25 homes suggests the developer is pushing the boundaries of the planning system to turn a far greater profit and is happy to ignore both community views and wider Cherwell Council policy reasons as to why this development is inappropriate for the setting.

In my view, the greed of the developer in pushing for a more ambitious plan is hugely detrimental to our villages and its residents. Most importantly, I have mapped out why I see this as a physical danger to residents as well as a dangerous precedent to set for rural communities of our type. ***I would be very happy to express these views in a public council planning meeting and host a visit / survey to understand the impact and danger of existing traffic at the choke points in our area of Main Street.***

Yours

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Simon George