

Stewart and Katherine Roussel
Bramley House
Stewart's Court
Sibford Ferris,
OX15 5QX

Bob Neville
Bodicote House
White Post Rd
Bodicote,
Banbury
OX15 4AA

21st November 2018

Case: 18/01894/OUT

Dear Mr Neville,

We would like to object to the application by Land and Partners to develop up to 25 houses on Hook Norton Rd on the basis that the application doesn't comply with policy and is unsustainable. Also there is no demonstrable need to set precedent for building beyond the built up limits of the village.

Please see our concerns noted below;

The proposal does not comply with Policy

Last year, the 2017 Council's Annual Monitoring Report clearly demonstrated that 664 dwellings have already been identified to meet the Policy Villages 2 requirement. In addition, the Launton Appeal decision in July 2018 allowed further development of 72 dwellings, bringing the total permitted dwellings to at least 736 dwellings. Therefore the housing needs laid out in Policy Villages 2 have largely been met and

there is no need to set a precedent for a village of circa 160 existing homes by allowing a development of 25 houses on a rural exception site beyond the built up limits of the village.

If a precedent is set in Sibford and the number of houses built exceeds the 750 required homes, this could compromise the sustainable housing growth strategy inherent to the Local Plan Part 1 (i.e. this could set a precedent for unsustainable growth). In addition, Cherwell District Council is already able to display 5.4 years' housing land supply, at a time when Written Ministerial Statement HLWS924 states that Oxfordshire Local Authorities need only display a three-year housing land supply while the Joint Spatial Strategy Plan is being progressed; therefore there is no pressing need for this volume of housing in either Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower or Burdrop .

We would like to point out that Sibford Ferris is only classified as a Class A Village when amalgamated with the neighbouring villages of Burdrop and Sibford Gower. On it's own, Sibford Ferris would be classified as a Class B village and therefore not obliged to take such a large scale development.

Why then were only the Sibford Ferris Parish Council consulted in regard to this development and the separate Sibford Gower Parish Council have not been consulted?

That being said, the proposed development clearly contradicts Policy Villages 1. The Policy states that proposals for residential development - Minor Development, Infilling and Conversions within Category A Villages - within the built-up limits of villages will be considered.

This proposal is not within the built-up limits of the village.

Previously the same site was granted permission for development of up to 10 houses, only because that proposal fitted with the criteria of a rural

exception site i.e. “small scale affordable housing with the number of market homes being no more than 25% of the total number of houses”. This application for 25 houses, the majority of which are freely available for sale to anyone, is substantially different to the previous application which has since been withdrawn, why was that?

Furthermore, The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) only supports **sustainable developments** and the proposed development isn't sustainable - Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainability is therefore a key issue. The proposal is contrary to the development plan because of sustainability issues.

Sustainability Issues

In your pre-application consultations with Land and Partners you highlighted Sustainability as a key concern. Nothing in the Land and Partners application detracts from the fact that 25 additional houses is an unsustainable level of development for a village the size of Sibford Ferris. The developer will argue that necessary infrastructure can be provided and will be secured through a s106 agreement but such agreements cannot make unacceptable development acceptable.

Even when considered together, the Sibfords do not appear to be settlements able to absorb both the growth produced by these 25 dwellings in addition to windfall developments within the built-up limits of Sibford Ferris, Burdrop and Sibford Gower.

The majority of services in the locality are in Sibford Gower, which as discussed is unlikely to be accessed on foot, due to the lack of public

footpaths along the road between the villages. Therefore, the residents of the new development would have to drive to reach the Nursery, Primary School, Public House, Village Hall and the GP Surgery in Burdrop.

In addition, the small food shop located in Sibford Ferris, although within walking distance is not sufficient for use as more than a small 'essentials' shop. As the Sibfords' Community Plan (2012) detailed, nearly three quarters of respondents used the village shop, but only for up to 30% of their shopping overall. Therefore, villagers still need to drive to nearby settlements for a supermarket, or any other shops for that matter.



Our daughter and other children from Sibford school walk to the village shop and the road is narrow and there are no footpaths until you get close to the shop. This area is often gridlocked with traffic and parked cars as the photo shows. Additional traffic movements through the village will compound the traffic congestion already evident in the village.

We also have a significant safety concern about the proximity of the entrance of the development being opposite the entrance to the school, particularly as our own daughter, along with others from the village, walk to school.

The Transport Statement submitted by the applicants has made an assumption that most traffic would turn right down Hook Norton Road. This is a false assumption. Those travelling to Banbury train station are in fact most likely to turn left and drive through the village which already struggles to accommodate traffic at peak times. Anyone driving to the M40 Northbound junctions, will drive through Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower to travel cross country to the Gaydon junction.

The Transport Statement used assumptions based upon the 2011 Census travel to work data which is not comprehensive as the travel to work data would not include trips to Sibford Gower, accessible most easily through Sibford Ferris, where most of the services, including the primary school and nursery, for the Sibfords are located. People do drive to the Gower from the Ferris as the pedestrian connections between the villages are unsuitable due to the lack of a pedestrian footpath along parts of the route e.g. Hawks Lane.

Not enough Consideration has been given to other sites - The proposed site is one of the “best and most versatile” plots of agricultural land in the

village and not enough evidence or consideration has been given to as to whether other sites are more suitable. Development on rural exception sites requires this analysis to be completed and presented and the application falls short in this respect.

The development is against the needs of the village and the wishes of the community - In the Sibford's Community Plan (2012), 64% of people would be willing to envisage up to ten new houses, 31% up to 20 and only 3% over 20 houses. This proposal would be against the wishes of the community and the Parish Councils, whose members adopted and submitted the report to CDC. The HELAA (2018) states that a small scheme of 10 dwellings would be suitable for the site; the proposal is significantly in excess of this and goes far beyond meeting the needs of the village.

The Sibford Ferris parish council have heard the wishes of the villagers and submitted an objection. We hope you will listen to them. Parish councils care for the needs of the community and when their opinions, representing the needs of the village are overlooked the community starts to lose faith in the decision making process.

We note that Land & Partners have produced a response in an attempt to persuade the case officer that the development will not impact the views, however, the development will be visible from at least two public footpaths and the wider village, which would be a detriment to the character of the village as it is open countryside.

Also, the development will have a negative impact on the Ecology of the area and both the local bat and badger population - The Ecological Survey provided by Land and Partners identified the need for "Badger mitigation", due to the fact an outlier sett is proposed to be closed.

Simply “closing a badger” set is unacceptable and please note that the badgers have been observed in the property adjacent to the site.

The proposal that the bat population can be protected by retaining the existing hedgerows is questionable as it is likely that the bat population will not return following the disruption caused through the building process.

Finally, there is an outstanding question as to whether the current sewage processing facility can accommodate the increased volume of waste and as we and many others are living on the lower area of the site there is also a concern about possible flooding.

We sincerely hope that Cherwell district council will reject the planning application for the proposed development.

Stewart and Katherine Roussel.