

Good Afternoon Mr Ward, Sir, (Ladies and Gentlemen) I'm Jonathan Stowell , Vice Chair of Minster Lovell Parish Council.

Many of the Villages' strong objections to this proposed development have been eloquently expressed by our friends in the Society for the Protection of Minster Lovell as well as in the two objection letters sent by the Parish Council on the 23rd December 2022 (to the original application) and the 12th December 2023 as input to this enquiry

Because you will be familiar with these, I am going to make my contribution today fairly short. I want to address firstly, the impact of development on the Village, and secondly the unsustainability and therefor unsuitability of the proposed site.

First the impact on the Village. Until 2 years ago Minster Lovell was a fairly compact village with Non Designated Heritage Asset Status as probably the best preserved of the five original Chartist Villages. In the Upper Village there were some 550 or so houses and a population of around 1200 Then came the Bovis Development (Dovecote Park) which immediately added some 130 homes to the size of the Village and extended the Village significantly in a Westerly direction. Now comes this proposal that adds another 140 or so houses that would result in a near 50% increase in the size of the Village when taken with the Bovis development. Minster Lovell, as it was, is in danger of losing its Village character as it grapples with the extra traffic on its roads – especially the narrow Brize Norton Road. Moreover, there is very little parking in the Village so increasingly, cars are being 'dumped' in the side or residential roads.

Secondly, and most importantly, is the unsustainability of the proposed development. At no time and in no Plan has this piece of land ever been included as potential development land, and there is good reason for this. First of all it is too far away from the centre of the Village where the shops are. A round trip of 40 minutes to get to the Spar Shop is not a feasible option for walking or with small

children if the weather is poor. Cars will predominantly be used for this journey and, as the Appellants own estimates show, this will lead to about 660 traffic movements on and off the site each day.

Public transport connection to the outside world is limited.

Stagecoach 234 would pass this development on an hourly basis from 07.03 to Witney and 18.30 from Witney on Weekdays. Weekends the service is sparse. There is the Stagecoach route 233 that runs through the Village on the Brize Norton road but the nearest stop to the new development is again about 20 mins walk away. There is the Service S1 to Oxford that can be joined at the by-pass but this is nearly 2 miles away. There are no 'park and ride' facilities for either of these last two routes. The net net is that if you work odd hours, you will need a car; if you don't have a car then your only real option is an expensive taxi.

The proposed development is certainly not self-sustainable. There is no provision for any facilities contained in the plans as they stand. The only way such a development could claim 'sustainability' would be if it was within easy 'walking distance' of good existing Village facilities. But here lies a problem. The only 'daily' facilities within the Village are the Spar Shop and a Post Office. There is no Doctor, there is no Dentist and after the end of this year, there will be no Primary School availability as it will be full – with no realistic means of expansion on its enclosed site. For any of these facilities it will be into the car and off to Carterton, Burford or Witney.

Finally, in this enquiry there will be a lot of talk around 'Five Year Land Supply' and perhaps less about Affordable Housing. As a Parish Council we are not equipped to enter such debates. All we can do is point out as strongly as we can that whatever the outcome of such discussions, we strongly believe that it can never be right to put a dormitory suburb such as this into an isolated and unsustainable location such as that proposed. That Mr Inspector Sir is why Minster Lovell Parish Council and the majority of Villagers have consistently opposed this whole project from the outset.