



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Sharon Palmer

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Date: 23rd December 2022

Planning Department
West Oxfordshire District Council
Elmfield
New Yatt Road
Witney
Oxon
OX28 1PB

RECEIVED
03 JAN 2023

Dear Sir

Re: Planning Application 22/03240/OUT - Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell

Minster Lovell Parish Council are **Objecting Strongly** to the above outline Planning Application. The reasons for this are outlined below :-

1. Local Environment

The application appears contrary to a number of WOLP 2031 Policies and the NPPF 2021.

- 1.1 The Application is a purely opportunistic attempt to exploit WODC's temporary mismatch in the realisation of its 5-year land supply.

2. OS2 – Locating Development in the right places

- 2.1 This development will have a very detrimental impact on the distinctive character and setting of Minster Lovell. The Village has been recognised as a Non Designated Heritage Asset, and its linear plan of Chartist dwellings, many of them with listed status, together with the 'backlands' and open aspects, have been recognised by at least four Planning Inspectors when rejecting recent development proposals. This application significantly intrudes on that open aspect at its southern part.

- 2.2 This development has no integration with the Village. It is another 'dormitory' suburb set beyond the existing new Bovis development. This remoteness will force extensive car use for the new residents if they wish to go to the Primary School or visit the Village shops. It is just too far to walk - especially in inclement weather.

3. EH1 – Cotswold Area of Outstanding natural Beauty & EH2 – Landscape Character

- 3.1 This development will detract significantly from the landscape and the setting of the AONB. It will not assimilate into the landscape and will sit as a blot on the southern edge of the Windrush Valley.

4. T3 – Public Transport, Walking and Cycling

- 4.1 This development does little to provide opportunities for walking, cycling and use of



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public transport. The present footpath alongside the B4047 which provides access to the Village and the wider countryside is in a very poor state of repair for much of its length. Its proximity to the busy B4047 in places is dangerous.

- 4.2 There is no provision for safe cycling to the Village, and use of the existing 'Sustrans' Cycle Route from Minster Lovell is precarious. It runs through an area used by OCC as a store for road chippings, and the following half mile or so is partially overgrown with brambles.
- 4.3 There is no direct bus service to Oxford – just the 233 to Witney. The nearest Minster Lovell to Oxford service is the S1. The bus stop for this is at the A40/Brize Norton Road junction – nearly 2 miles away from this development. There are no 'park and ride' facilities at these bus stops.

5. OS5 – Supporting Infrastructure

- 5.1 The upper Village of Minster Lovell, before the Bovis estate and this development, comprised some 600 dwellings. The combined effect of these new housing developments is to increase this by some 45% and the resulting increase of population is not sustainable with the current infrastructure.
- 5.2 There is little public parking in the Village and none for the School. Already at 'peak' times the traffic/parking problems are intense. These can only get far worse with the proposed development and its distance from the Village
- 5.3 There is no Chemist in the Village : there is no Doctor : there is no Dentist.
- 5.4 St Kenelm's CofE Primary School is effectively full – it was oversubscribed by 22 places in 2020/2021. The School is located on a small site and any enlargement will impinge on the recreational facilities for the pupils.
- 5.5 Water and Sewage. The existing Village often suffers from low water pressure owing to problems at the Worsham Reservoir. More houses will only equate to more problems without significant new investment

Similarly with sewage. The pumping station on the Burford Road struggles with the volume of waste water/sewage at times. Recent remedial action was only a partial 'band aid' that is likely to become inadequate with the proposed development.

6. Other Matters

- 6.1 Archaeology. From the comments of the Lead Archaeologist it would appear that only a superficial and imperfect survey has been conducted into known archaeological features on the site. Once these are built over, they are lost forever so it is imperative that a formal and precise investigation is undertaken before this application can be considered.



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- 6.2 Assessing development proposals on Agricultural land. Local Planning Authorities are required to carry out Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) assessments for developments - especially those that are not in accordance with an approved development plan. As this site is likely to be classified as at least Grade 3 'Good to Moderate Quality Agricultural Land', the value of this land in terms of food production at a time of forecast food shortage should be assessed against the value of a non-planned housing development.
- 6.3 This development will set a dangerous precedent for further similar sized developments West along the Burford Road. The Application already contains a Plan that shows what could easily become a further phase of development by delineating 'Other Land in Applicants Control'. This 'Other Land' is much larger in extent than the current Application.
- 6.4 Five Year Land Supply. The current glitch in the progress towards the 5 year land supply targets needs to be put in the context of three things :
- 6.4.1 If the glitch is temporary, then it should not influence the Local Planning Authority in its consideration of speculative proposals such as this one.
- 6.4.2 There is already significant discussion about the level of targets built into the current LTP These may change and, because of that, caution should be exercised about being stampeded into a decision based on current figures.
- 6.4.3 Much talk in Government circles is about making targets 'advisory' rather than 'mandatory'. Should this come to pass, then proposals such as this one should not be considered.

For all of the above reasons Minster Lovell Parish Council **STRONGLY OBJECTS** to this outline Planning Application and requests that WODC refuse it.

Yours faithfully

David Haley

Chairman
Minster Lovell Parish Council