



THE SOCIETY
FOR THE
PROTECTION OF
MINSTER LOVELL

Statement of Case

This Statement of Case will deal with a number of issues which are considered very relevant to the Appeal Ref APP/D3125/W/23/3331279.

They include:-

1. Surface Water flooding on the site
2. Foul Drainage..
3. Sustainability- Village Infrastructure.
4. Village Integration.
5. Primary Education
6. Charterville: Effect on the Heritage and History of Minster Lovell.
7. Village Objections.
8. Witnesses.
9. Appendix – Photographs & Valley Pumps Report.

1. Surface Water Flooding.

The proposed site regularly floods. We have provided photographic evidence to support this. Village residents living close to the site have reported large areas of standing water on the surface of the site especially following bad weather. This can take some time to clear.

Repeater House: One of our members owns Repeater House which stands on the west side of the site with a garden of approximately one acre of land. The garden land was originally sold to the then owner of the house by the landowner of the development site. The house owner has experienced regular flooding in their garden and also in the basement of the house. They have consulted Ross Lamburn, Valley Pumps, who submitted a report which you will have already seen, but is attached again.

The Society believes there is a substantial underlay of clay which prevents drainage.

The Society would like to ask how the Appellants intend to dispose of the **surface water** in times of a heavy storm such as the recent bad weather.

2. Foul Drainage

This is also a major problem in Minster Lovell. The present foul drainage system is pumped to Brize Norton, where it is further pumped to Witney. In wet weather the system will not take the volume at present and two 40 ft tankers are constantly on standby to take the overload at a pumping station at the south end of Brize Norton village.

The Society does not accept that simply stating that this is Thames Water's responsibility is anywhere near sufficient reason to overlook these challenges. Thames Water publically stated in 2023 that they are in severe financial difficulties. The Society is not aware of any substantial improvements to the foul water drainage since before 2011.

Thames Water stated in their original response to the planning application :

“they have identified an inability of the existing Foul Water infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal”.

The LDE Report on behalf of the Appellants confirms that “the sewage network may not have the capacity”.

However, it appears the Developers are overlooking these challenges as once Outline Consent is granted then Thames Water (at their own expense and over several months) will allegedly design a new Foul Water drainage system that will work! This will be a new experience for Minster Lovell.

The Dovecote development has experienced several foul drainage issues including foul drains backing up into baths and shower trays. This was most recently in the first week of January 2024. It was reported by residents that despite emergency calls to Bovis and Thames Water no-one would take immediate responsibility and it took nearly 4 days to resolve the issue. This should never happen in a modern drainage system. Details of the internal messages on Face Book are available.

3. Village Infrastructure.

Minster Lovell has very limited facilities to support the current residents and even more limited parking on the main roads. The majority of support services are based in Witney (3 miles) or Burford (7 miles) including GP practice and dentists.

Village amenities include:

- A SPAR shop in the village with very limited parking (Photo) Limited parking for eight cars.
- A furniture shop (Quality Oak & Pine)
- A Post Office and store
- A kitchen designer (Boxwood Kitchens)
- A hair dressing saloon (Fringe)
- There is temporary parking for approx 16 cars . (Photo)
- There is a primary School – details to follow (section 3 below)
- Church Hall (capacity 100)

The village has no facilities for:

- Doctor
- Dentist
- Fuel

The current proposal in addition to Bovis's Dovecote development will mean that the population of the village will increase in size by 50% over a 5 year period.

4. Village Integration.

The Appellant's site is some way west of the village and will create an almost “dormitory” estate with no infrastructure attached. This has already been experienced at Dovecote (Bovis) when it is found many of the occupiers consider themselves as living at Dovecote rather than Minster Lovell.

It takes 22 minutes to walk directly from the Spar Shop in Minster Lovell to the centre of the Appellant's site. A shopping trip of 40 mins plus is unlikely to attract, and therefore the site is too far even for the Spar Shop for walking, and cars will be used, although there is very limited parking.

There is little or no work available in Minster Lovell, and therefore inhabitants of the new development will find work mostly by travel to the west via the A40. The shortest route to the A40 is via Brize Norton Road through the centre of the village.

This road is already heavily used and is narrow (16-17 feet wide with one 4.5ft pavement). All the internal village roads join it and the pavement is heavily used by pedestrians. Heavy trucks meeting each other often have to temporarily move onto the pavement. (Photo).

The two main roads in the village have also witnessed a significant increase in traffic from the hundreds of new houses built in Carterton whose owners use the Brize Norton Road and the Burford Road to reach Witney.

For these reasons The Society objects to this planning application and objects to the continued expansion of the village. The lack of local facilities means that any new residents will have no choice but to use cars to drive to Witney or Burford. This will increase the number of car movements in the village significantly and the new development will be no more than a dormitory cluster of houses and will add NOTHING to the village itself. This is not sustainable.

5. Primary Education

St Kenelm's CE Primary School in Minster Lovell is stated to be full from November 2024 and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The school site is fully land locked and there is no obvious area for expansion. The Appellant's development is projected to require 40 primary school places and therefore there does not appear to be space available for them in the Village School.

6. Charterville.

The Charterville estate makes up the largest section of Minster Lovell village and yet other than a few cottages that have been listed grade 2 there is limited protection of the unique layout of the estate. The protection of Charterville we believe to be of national importance as it represents the largest of the five Chartist villages built and one of the best preserved. However, erosion of the estates character has continued due to infilling of the village plots. With the further development of significant housing estates this unique layout is being removed and although the development in question moves away from the Chartist layout it cannot be seen in isolation as the developer openly states its intention to develop further on land it has control over. Such a domino plan of development must be seen as a whole rather than single plots.

County policy clearly states that such development must be protected against. Minster Lovell's Charterville estate must be protected.

POLICY EH13: Historic landscape character

In determining applications that affect the historic character of the landscape or townscape, particular attention will be paid to the following:

- *the age, distinctiveness, rarity, sensitivity and capacity of the particular historic landscape or townscape characteristics affected.*

- *the extent to which key historic features resonant of the area's character, such as hedgerows,*

watercourses and woodland, will be retained or replicated.

- *the degree to which the form and layout of the development will respect and build on the preexisting historic character (including e.g. street and building layouts)*

- *the degree to which the form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development conserves or enhances the special historic character of its surroundings.*

7. Village Objection

In short there is very strong opposition to this proposal from the Village. It has also been objected to by the County Council, refused by the District Council, and objected to by the Parish Council.

The site is not in the Local Plan for residential development.

The sharp increase in population will swamp the infrastructure, increase the traffic flows on Brize Norton Road, and increase the use of the dangerous junction between it and the B4047. The Appellants are strategic land promoters and, if given consent, will merely sell on the development site to a builder /developer - removing themselves from any responsibility in the future for the area.

To people who just drive through the village, the field which the Appellants want to develop is just an empty area, with a crop or two once or twice a year. To the villagers who live nearby it is a rich habitat of a variety of wildlife, including, a badger sett, foxes, hedgehogs, deer and a wide range of bird life, all of which need protection.

Lastly the Village is very worried that if this site is given consent, in the near future the same will happen to the adjoining land in the same ownership, turning Minster Lovell into a speculative Town.

Minster Lovell is a village with heritage sites that The Society wishes to protect from inappropriate unsustainable developments such as this.

8. Witnesses on behalf of The Society for The Protection of Minster Lovell

1. Andrew Feilden FRICS
2. Paul Eaglestone.
3. Richard Clayton
4. Ross Lamburn or another.

9. Appendix - Photographs & Notes.

1. Limited parking at the Village Shopping Centre.
2. Brize Norton Rd restricted width.
3. Walking Route from The SPAR to the site
4. Limited parking at the SPAR shop.
5. View of Site flooding.
6. View of Site flooding
7. View of more flooding.
8. Report to Richard Clayton on flooding at Repeater House by Valley Pumps Ltd.

15 Jan 2024

Chairperson: Chris Howe, 23 Wenrisc Drive, Minster Lovell, OX29 0SP

Secretary: Jane Johnson, 5 Ripley Avenue, Minster Lovell, OX29 0RP

Treasurer: Tric McAleer, Whitehall, Old Burford Road, Minster Lovell OX29 0RU