

### **Presentation to WODC Lowlands Planning Committee – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – concerning application 17/02568/OUT – Land at The Downs, Standlake**

Good afternoon Members, as a local planning consultant, I appear here today on behalf of the Standlake residents action group known as STAND.

I and almost two hundred local residents oppose this speculative and ill-conceived development proposal on the following eight grounds:

1. Despite the age of the adopted Local Plan and the current housing land supply situation, which engages NPPF paragraphs 14, 76 and 79, this proposal does not represent sustainable development. The overwhelming balance of harmful impacts created by such a major development would substantially and demonstrably outweigh any benefit derived from providing 100 houses;
2. The site is open countryside, well beyond the developed limits of Standlake, which contributes significantly to the village's rural character;
3. The site is remote from virtually all of Standlake's few facilities. Over such long distances, national surveys demonstrate that few people (only between 1-5% of fit individuals) would choose to walk or cycle. Most new occupants would be forced to drive by car for most of their needs, which would not be sustainable. Occasional peak-period bus services between Witney and Abingdon would not offer a realistic alternative means for many people;
4. Development would cause significant ecological harm, particularly through loss of hedgerow habitat. The applicant failed to consider likely harm caused to priority protected species found locally such as polecat, harvest mouse, skylark, house sparrow, dunnoek, yellow hammer and hedgehog;
5. Development would cause heritage harm to buried archaeological remains of medieval settlements;
6. Development would overwhelm the Sewage Treatment Works, which is already operating at full capacity; and foul and surface water drainage infrastructure, which is already regularly failing to cater for existing demands. These extra houses would inevitably result in a significant increase in the number of flood events in the village;
7. Notwithstanding the failure by OCC highways to raise a transport objection, the site is unsustainably located and highway capacity in the vicinity of the application site is invariably and significantly reduced by on-street parking in front of houses opposite. Particularly in the evenings and at weekends, this section of Downs Road operates as only a single lane highway with insufficient capacity to safely cater for such a massive increase in traffic volumes; and, finally
8. Development would sterilise important mineral deposits on the site.

Accordingly, this development proposal would be contrary to NPPF paragraph **14** and **Footnote 9** and also to its paragraphs **17, 56, 58, 60, 61, 64, 100, 103, 109, 118, 132, 134, 135** and **139** as well as the **Wildlife Act**, plus saved Local Plan policies **BE1-BE5, BE8, BE13, NE1, NE3, NE12, NE13, H2, H3, H6, H11** and **TLC7** and draft replacement District Plan policies **OS1, OS2, OS4, OS5, H1-H4, EH1, EH2, EH4, EH7, EW2** and **T3**.

Given such overwhelming likely harm, the planning balance weighs heavily against this development, so we humbly urge you to accept your Officers recommendation and refuse this application for at very least the six reasons now set out on pages 40-41 of your agenda papers, along with those extra policy references to which I have referred you to. Thank you.

Standlake Parish Council

Objection to Application 17/02568/OUT, Land at The Downs, Standlake, Oxfordshire

It is important to note that objections to this proposal have been widespread and not just limited to those Standlake residents who would be directly affected. This emphasises the wide concern throughout the community that this proposed development has the potential to change the face and character of the village. In a village of some 560 dwellings this near 20% increase would represent an unacceptable impact and would create a precedent which could potentially change the character of the village permanently.

The proposed development is on a greenfield site, completely at odds with the existing linear character of Standlake. It is on prime agricultural land located a significant distance from the village centre. The development would have an extremely detrimental visual impact on the area as it would be highly visible from a number of public locations.

It is in contravention of the emerging local plan and the existing local plan, specifically policies H4 and H6, NE7, NE10 and NE11.

The development would far exceed the capacity of the existing sewage system as stated by Thames Water. Tankers have already been removing excess sewage from the system for several weeks, a 24/7 operation causing considerable inconvenience of residents in the vicinity of the High Street. A near 20% increase in the housing stock would place a significant strain on a system that can't cope with the current demand. In addition, the proposed increase in housing would overwhelm the drainage system which already has had frequent instances of localised flooding, even with the current housing levels.

The pedestrian access, along the road to the village facilities, consists of a single sub-standard footpath, a situation that can only lead to increased traffic movements. Much of this additional traffic will go through Church End, a very narrow and winding road past the village school which is already a serious concern with the existing traffic levels.

Given the lack of work opportunities in Standlake, it is inevitable that yet more vehicular traffic will be generated; this cannot be considered sustainable. The local bus services have been severely reduced with the direct link to Oxford being removed altogether. The remaining 'rush hour' timetable does not provide a flexible enough service for commuters and, consequently, the proposed development will increase the need for travel, not reduce it. We cannot perceive how such a development in a small rural community with limited infrastructure and virtually no work opportunities could be considered sustainable under any circumstances.

There are already many concerns over the limited primary health care in the area, and this development would increase the pressure on existing services which are difficult for Standlake residents to access without private transport.

Given all this, the Parish Council would very much wish to see this application refused.

# Reasons for objection

The extension is built onto an existing conversion, a lot of houses on the estate have this which used to contain a garage but people have converted them to rooms .

Our house is recessed back from number 50 by 5ft from the main house building as is number 48 from our house, and the length of the original conversion from our window was 10ft it didn't cause any problem because there were windows which allowed the light through. With this new build of which the old conversion was removed and a completely new brick extension put in its place the total length is now 17 ft from our window which has increased the amount of shade affecting our house dramatically and has therefore made the room darker as a result . Before this new extension was built we had sunlight coming through our window from December as it was rising in the south east through to late Autumn now we will only get sunlight for a few months if we are lucky. It is totally out of keeping with the rest of the estate as there isn't a property that has an extension of this size at the front so we now have a 17x8ft wall that now blocks our view of the rest of the street to our right. The plant in the photograph was planted 28yrs ago as a privacy shield from people going to and fro from the school.

### 17/03250/HHD - PORCH 50 RICHENS DRIVE CARTERTON

#### Introduction

The subject retrospective application has been submitted to the Lowlands Area Sub-Committee for discussion and consideration following the support it received from the Carterton Town Council Planning Committee at its meeting on 07 Nov 17.

#### Planning

The application has been submitted retrospectively as the Building Company (BR Group) CEO (Mr Simon Gibson) was informed by WODC Building Control that planning permission was not required, primarily due to the size of the proposed build. This was checked on several occasions and Building Control visited the property to view the footings that had been dug. This visit was also undertaken as during the build the outer wall that supports the flat roof, on the side of the property adjacent to No. 49, was found to have no foundations (footings) and of single brick (width) construction. I considered this to be unsafe, presenting a possible hazard to my neighbour when moving around his front garden, and so the wall was replaced (adhering to the same dimensions as the original build) and was double skinned with insulation. The property was also visited by the Federation of Master Builders who inspected the Porch when it was nearing completion and at no time during all visits was the requirement for planning permission discussed.

The plans that indicate the size of the porch in relation to the property and those properties adjacent to 50 Richens Drive that are potentially affected by the build have been submitted prior to this meeting. At all times during the construction process my neighbours were kept informed and did not raise any concerns. Some of the information that has been provided to the Planning Officer by my neighbour at No. 49 is factually incorrect and the Planning Officer has been made aware of this both verbally and by email.

Details relating to why the Planning Officer (Kelly Murray), Planning and Sustainable Housing WODC, has not supported the application are contained within Meeting documentation and this also contains my response to each point raised. In addition, a copy of correspondence with the Chair of the Lowlands Area Sub-Committee who has kindly provided guidance regarding my application has been provided to Committee members prior to this meeting. Copies of photos have also been included to help put the points raised into perspective.

While I appreciate that regulations must be adhered to, I have explained to the Planning Officer why permission was not obtained prior to the build taking place. I have also explained in depth why the Porch is required, the impact it will have both directly and indirectly (enabling the provision of a downstairs toilet) and have provided documents from consultants, doctors, DWP and the Veterans Agency to confirm my medical condition, the long-term prognosis and that I am in receipt of PiP and a War Pension.

Had I known that a planning application was required I and the BR Group would have submitted the required application for approval before work commenced. Or the design would have been adjusted to fall within the permitted size where an application is not needed. Ironically the actual inside area of the porch does fall within the limits and had I not elected to have double skinned walls and insulation the Porch would likely not exceed the permitted area over which permission is required.

## **Design factors**

Due to a life changing injury sustained on active service I was invalided out of the Royal Air Force in 2013 after 33 years' service. Despite major spinal surgery (including a microdiscectomy, spinal fusion and the fitting of a Spinal Core Stimulator), numerous invasive procedures and extensive rehabilitation at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headley Court I was discharged from the service and am now registered disabled. The long-term prognosis is not promising, and I am already experiencing significant reduced mobility, increased pain levels and a general reduction in functionality. Currently, due to the risks involved there are no plans for further surgery and I am reliant daily upon opiate based pain killers and Pain Management techniques to cope with my pain levels.

The significant reduction in mobility over the past 12 months has resulted in a notable decrease in the distance I can walk and my ability to move up and down stairs. I am now reliant upon a walking stick and the use of handrails, where provided, to not only support me but to assist me with my balance. The result of this is that I have had to look, not just at the present, but to the future and how I am going to be able to cope with the effect of reduced mobility and the associated problems this creates.

While the ground floor of my property has overtime been adjusted, so that I can function and maintain my independence, it does not have a downstairs toilet. A decision was taken to use the remainder of my disposable gratuity (received on discharge from the RAF) to pay for a downstairs toilet to be installed in the only suitable place, adjacent to the front entrance to the house. Due to the space that this required there has been a need to build a Porch so that when entering the house, I am able to move with ease into the property and there is also space for me to enter the new toilet facility with minimum effort. The design of the Porch also considers potential future needs that may require grab rails, a ramp and other mobility aids to be installed. In addition to this, when designing the Porch great care has been taken to maintain the privacy of neighbouring properties and to ensure the new build is energy efficient.

Neighbours have also been made aware of the build

## **Design**

The Porch has been designed to consider and implement the following factors:

- The use of materials that match (as far as is possible) those already in use, for example bricks, block paving.
- The size of the Porch be limited to an appropriate size to meet current and future perceived needs relating to my disability (external dimensions: 1.73mtr deep x 2.25 mtr wide and internal dimensions 1.66mtr x 1.60mtr).
- The extension of the Porch to the front of the property be an appropriate size to ensure ease of movement when entering or leaving the property.
- The roof of the Porch to be in line with the current flat roof adjacent to it.
- The design of doors and windows are in keeping with those already in use and those at neighbouring properties.

- The privacy of neighbours being paramount in the design with large windows being replaced by a small frosted glass window (located in the toilet) that is used on vent only. A sky light provides light to the Porch area and connecting hallway.
- The recovering of the flat roof already in place and the small area of flat roofing on the Porch (a large area of the Porch roof encompassing the sky light did not require covering) with a seamless hardwearing flat roof waterproofing system which complies with all UK Building Regulations. This also eliminates any risk of leakage through joins in the roof covering.
- The improvement of the energy profile applicable to the property and enhancement to energy efficiency.
- Maintaining the allocated off-street parking for one vehicle associated with the property and in accordance with the original design of the house.
- The need in the future for external grab rails, a possible ramp to improve access of mobility aids (with wheels) and additional lower step to decrease the likelihood of tripping.
- Ensuring that there is no cost to neighbouring properties in relation to any stage of the build, new close board fences being erected at both sides of the property at nil cost to No. 49 and 51.
- Where possible and appropriate the recycling of the materials removed because of the build either within the new Porch or donated to charity (doors and windows).
- No financial assistance be requested to fund the build and associated costs.
- Due to safety reasons the existing wall (single storey) adjacent to No. 49 had to be replaced with a double skinned wall that had foundations. The wall dimensions (height and length) adhered to the wall that had to be removed (that had no foundations and was single skin) and as such does not form part of the addition of the Porch to the front of the property.

## **Impact**

Because I am unable to work, as a direct result of my disability, I spend prolonged periods at home on my own and this improvement has already significantly enhanced my independence and helped reduce anxiety and stress. Following a recent period when I was unable to walk without significant pain the availability of a downstairs toilet and the addition of space provided by the Porch proved to be invaluable.

## **Conclusion**

Factoring in the above and the documents provided, I would be grateful if you could please review the Planning Application in my favour. As a Veteran I do not expect special treatment, nor do I want to create extra work for anyone but with an unpredictable future ahead health wise I now have the additional worry, anxiety and stress caused by the non-approval of the planning application. You will see from the plans that the current build exceeds the permitted size (for which planning permission is not required) by a small amount and had I not designed the porch with double skinned walls (for improved energy efficiency) it is likely that the Porch would have fallen within the permitted size.

Should you consider it advantageous I am more than willing to host a site visit in order that I can address any concerns you may have. It will also provide you with the opportunity to view other properties in Richens Drive that have had additions to the fronts of the respective building to provide additional living area etc.

Windrush Valley Protection Group



## OBJECTION STATEMENT

17/03338/RES LAND NORTH OF BURFORD ROAD, WITNEY

JANUARY 15, 2018

Presented by  
Lewis Owens



## Objection statement

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### 3-minute planning speech

Good afternoon and thank you chairman, councillors and members of the public.

Many of you will be aware that Windrush Valley Protection Group is made up of residents, workers, visitors, concerned citizens and even private businesses from Witney, Oxfordshire and beyond with over 2000 petition signatories and greater than 900 facebook followers.

The significant documented harm and impact of this development has primarily been mitigated through extensive cash incentives via section 106 and the usual planning consent handouts to county, district and town councils.

To date NO direct or reported changes have been made, or even formally planned around the current plethora of local transport issues, lack of services provision (particularly available school places and doctors following the Deer Park surgery closure), our over-whelmed infrastructure and well known environmental / air quality issues along bridge street, in fact they have worsened since approval.

Witney is NOT in a sustainable or even credible position to accommodate or facilitate 700+ new residents from Kingfisher Meadow.

The approval was based on a lovely glossy brochure around an idyllic rural estate with sustainable services and transport links, delivering a unique and specific set of enhancements to the community, whilst easily integrating in to the existing neighbourhood.

Upon appraising the plans submitted by David Wilson Homes alongside the original Gladman Design Guide and the specific stated terms required under Annex A from the Planning Inspector, it was obvious to see that the Plan was in large parts deficient.

Since November significant numbers of objections have come from concerned parties.

It was only late last week, that a series of material plan changes were made by the site owner to appease the numbers of objectors and no doubt primarily to ensure a speedy resolution and proceed with developing this site.

We are pleased that David Wilson Homes have addressed some of the objections and modified their plans accordingly, however, significant issues remain:

1. Mix of housing tenure = the revised plan is still not "pepper potted" as required in Annex A, the vast majority are placed on the eastern part of the site and fall well short of the stated objectives in the Design and Access Statement 2015 specifically Section 3 Evaluation and Design Principle page 36 point 9.

I quote:

“To provide a choice of housing size and tenure in order to help create a mixed community, including provision of affordable housing.

Affordable housing is NOT to be grouped or pushed to the site boundaries but appropriately distributed throughout the development and positioned in close proximity to local services.”

The plan does exactly what the Design statement said it wouldn't, this is unacceptable and in direct contravention of the approved specifications.

2. Surface water drainage and Sustainable Urban Drainage system – Annex A point 18. No development shall take place on site until a DETAILED scheme for the provision and future management and maintenance of surface water drainage, including any necessary attenuation, together with the timetable for its implementation.

To date very limited information has been provided, outside of hypothetical artistic impressions of any remedial or planned measures for dealing with the surface water. Importantly NO DETAIL has been provided on the Sustainable Urban Drainage System for a site that is widely known to flood regularly. The site is a major soakaway currently assisting in preventing downstream flooding of Witney. This DETAIL is absolutely critical to residents and businesses in Bridge street and neighbouring sites.

Windrush Valley Protection group firmly believe a re-design is required to accommodate the agreed and approved standards for this site. Otherwise what is the point of Annex A and the legal framing of the Design and Access statement, if at reserved matters, this can in large parts, be ignored or non-binding.

Councillors - Our town has lost this important site to housing, please do not compound the issues by approving a plan lacking the agreed and specific terms of its appealed planning consent.

The planning inspector attached considerable weight to the binding terms of the Design Statement and Annex A, please ensure that David Wilson Homes delivers upon its known and understood obligations, the current and new residents of Witney deserve that as a minimum.

Thank you.

### Cllr Andrew Coles's remarks to Lowlands Planning sub-committee – 15/1/18

Many of you will remember the overwhelming views of local residents when this proposal was before you a little over three years ago. Many of the concerns remain the same. But residents have accepted the decision of the Secretary of State and are resolved to development on this site going ahead.

However there are still flaws with the proposals and it is essential these are satisfactorily addressed.

One of the Secretary of State's key findings was that Shores Green would mitigate a lot of the accepted environmental damage. You'll all be aware of the growing air pollution problems on one of the key feeder roads to the site. Air pollution here already exceeds UK government targets and EU legal limits. That's before the traffic to this development, or the neighbouring development of 73 new homes currently under construction in Springfield Oval, is taken into account. But we still don't know when the Shores Green slip roads will actually be here. So residents want to know exactly how long they'll have to wait before the mitigation measures are in place to safeguard us from the damage. Not an unreasonable question.

A lot has changed since this proposal was considered by the Secretary of State. Not only has the main local bus service, the S2, been routed away from the area, adding further pressure on our already overburdened roads but importantly we've lost the Deer Park Medical Centre. It would have been one of the nearest surgeries for the site and, as we all know, local GP facilities are under enormous pressure.

Flooding still remains a key problem, this site is a natural soakaway, and the 3 days of snow before Christmas followed by a day of rain inevitably left this site flooded again. I am not convinced that the one pumping house in the plan will be up to the job. As I've said before we have already stolen much of the river's natural floodplains in this area and given the Windrush very little room when waters rise and the river tries to take back what is naturally hers. I fear the proposed ponds aren't going to be up to the job and the fact that the size of the pond keeps altering doesn't convince me that even the developers have confidence in their own plans either.

And no mitigation can properly safeguard residents from the gas plant. You might remember the views of the former Deputy Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire who lives nearby, in his objection letter he stated that it would be irresponsible to introduce risks where they do not need to exist and that it is a generally accepted principal that sites, such as the gas plant, should be in isolated areas well away from buildings and in particular residential developments.

This site is so sensitive, there's so much at stake, both for the existing residents and those moving onto this site, as well as those in the surrounding area. I urge you to go back to the developers and ask them to look again at the proposals, we need to make the very best job we can here or the least worst option.

Committee Address – Luke Webb (Applicant)

Thank you Chair for providing me with the opportunity to speak **for** this application to land North of Burford Road. I am the applicant and Planning Manager at David Wilson Homes.

The scheme before you today is a reserved matters application, pursuant to outline approval granted August 2016. This established the principle for residential development. The outline set a range of parameters, including the maximum number of 260 dwellings, 40% of which are to be affordable. The approved Development Framework Plan and the Design and Access Statement control key aspects of the scheme, including minimum POS requirements and development restrictions within the HSE Consultation Zones.

There is no development and no public access within the Inner Zone, whilst development within the Middle Zone is restricted to 10%. It is worth noting that there is no obligation and/or requirement within the outline appeal decision for the Inner Zone to be subject to extensive tree planting. The approved Development Framework Plan does not illustrate any landscaping to the 'Inner Zone'. Page 60 of the approved DAS refers to proposed tree planting to the north of the site but not within the 'Inner Zone'. The new tree planting to the north is to screen and filter views of the built form from Windrush Valley. The proposals have been revised to provide denser planting in the north. Our submission to discharge condition 15 of the outline consent will incorporate the 'Inner Zone' and make reference to its future management, however a full landscaping scheme is not required at this stage.

Oxfordshire County Council Highways have now removed their objection.

104 affordable units are proposed amounting to 40%. 37 are to be shared ownership and 67 are affordable rent, which accords with the outline decision. The Council's Housing Officer supports the amount, mix and type of units, as well as the level of pepper potting across the development. The RP supports the distribution of the affordable dwellings, as this creates a well-balanced, yet manageable scheme.

The wide range of market dwellings help create a vibrant scheme, tailoring for potential residents and catering for a range of needs. The material palette proposed is reflective and relatable to the wider context, including the core of Witney and immediately adjacent residential buildings. David Wilson Homes are the only national house builder to achieve a five star rating for the eighth year running and we pride ourselves on the developments we create and deliver across the Country.

It is for the aforementioned reasons and the fact that the scheme follows all the design parameters established within the outline consent, that I respectfully request that the planning committee today follow the planning officer's recommendation and approve this reserved matters application.

Thank you for your time this afternoon.

## Appendix H

Mr Jackman advised that the application had been submitted to enable the construction of a new property for his 30 year old son who was currently residing with the family.

The application would enable his son to get on to the property ladder and Mr Jackman advised that the property was not being built for sale but as a way to enable him to keep his family living in the village.

The Council had expressed a wish to help young people to continue to live locally and his son wished to do so. He was unable to drive and the regular bus service through the village was an important consideration, allowing him to travel to and from work.

It was intended to construct the property in an environmentally friendly manner using air source heating and secure an A EPC rating.

The proposed layout made provision for adequate car and cycle parking and bin storage.

In conclusion, Mr Jackman reiterated his wish to provide a home for his son in the village.