

Sharone Parnes, Woodstock
Public Participation
Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee
6th February 2017
16/01364/OUT
Not necessarily verbatim

Thank you Chairman.

[In relation to the concerns submitted in advance of the meeting, specifically regarding the Planning Authority's unannounced change of the Application Description in the published Report (ie, the site now being called 'Land East of Oxford Road', instead of 'Land East of Woodstock'...). [...Confusing/Unrecognizable to some members of the public?]

The Committee is of course focused on the contents of the Planning Officer's Report. But to begin to understand how the *harms* of this Application outweigh the benefits, you really need to consider what the Report does *not* say - or how it does not say it.

For example, it mentions the Planning Inspector's previous remarks about the particular site, and specifically about unacceptable intrusion into the countryside - but it does *not* mention:

- that the Inspector's recommendation for *deletion* was at the time when the proposal was for just 180 dwellings;
- And in fact on this Application, the Applicants' pre-Application consultation leaflet, that residents received, referred to 'up to 280 houses';
- Now we see the Application refer to 'up to 300';
- And the Oxford Mail today quotes the Applicant's Chief Operating Officer as stating that it is 'part of plans for 1,600.

And I think when you say that it shouldn't be a precedent, at the same you can't isolate it from the associated other sites that have been specifically associated with this!

In fact, in regard to the Planning Officer's remarks about the 1,200 homes site that had been refused by two District Councils: on that application the Cherwell District Council – based in part on an Internal Memorandum from

the same Planning Officer – referred to this particular site and said “without that land [meaning the land we are talking about today] the Cherwell part of the site could not be developed as a sustainable extension to Woodstock because of the lack of connectivity and poor access to services.” And it went on to say “...should the development of the land within West Oxfordshire to the ‘east of Woodstock’ [meaning this site] take place as envisaged by West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan, connectivity and integration could potentially be achieved.”

So the linkage is *not* in any way possible to disregard – unless you intentionally try to disregard it. People who live in Woodstock cannot disregard it, because we see the linkage every day. In fact the slides shown a few moments ago did not show built-up areas developed by the same Applicants.

The Applicants are suggesting that Woodstock residents fear change – and that that’s one reason, perhaps, that only approximately two letters of support have been received for this Application.

Woodstock residents *embrace* change - *when it’s good*. But they will not accept over-the-top change and harmful effect.

In any event that’s not a planning argument, but if it was something that you accepted then probably this Application would have been taken before the elections; but obviously you know that we don’t fear change and will respond as and when necessary.

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Appendix B

This site has been considered for housing development previously, and been rejected;

It was first rejected during the course of the last Local Plan due to the Inspector describing it as “disproportionate and excessive”, and because it would cause significant harm to the World Heritage site;

Nothing has changed since that time in those terms, so the decision now shouldn't be any different;

Then last year this same Committee refused permission for housing on this site, as part of the larger scheme on the adjoining land that ran into Cherwell DC;

So it has been refused twice already;

Then, in any event, the proposal for up to 300 dwellings is an effective doubling of the current indicative allocation in the emerging Local Plan for the site, which is at 150 dwellings. This represents a clear overdevelopment of the site;

Even then, this site hasn't yet been tested at all by way of public scrutiny through the upcoming Examination in Public as part of the emerging Local Plan, so a decision on the site would be premature now;

The World Heritage Committee oppose this proposal and consider it would harm the setting of the World Heritage site, and that accordingly the site should remain open and undeveloped;

The need for housing in the District, doesn't outweigh the harm to the setting of the World Heritage site;

For all these reasons, the Town Council consider the application should be clearly refused.

Chair, members, I will briefly cover planning matters and Dominic Hare, Blenheim's Chief Executive Officer will cover community and restoration.

Your officer report is full and comprehensive, we would highlight the lack of statutory objections and draw your attention to the following:

1. How well the site is served by public transport including 6 buses an hour to Oxford, 2 train stations within a 15 minute bus journey and the commitment to secure further transport improvements
2. How well the site is connected to, and responds to the character of, Woodstock
3. The commitment to exceptional design, using award winning traditional architects
4. How the under fives relocation will secure modern, fit for purpose, premises
5. That density has never been an issue with your officers or statutory consultees, because the proposals are not high density or over development
6. Historic England has identified the harm to heritage assets as 'low' to 'moderate'. Collectively this does not represent significant harm and easily overcomes the planning balance at NPPF 134, taking into consideration all of the public benefits, including housing, employment and world heritage site funding
7. Enabling development has not been pursued because, as your officers rightly say, this would mean that the development is unacceptable in principle. It isn't. But, the fact that a planning consent would secure funds through a legal agreement to help upkeep heritage assets is a significant public benefit.
8. This site is preferred through the local plan process, and can be quick to deliver. It must be better to release this site than see a continued release of sites not preferred by this Council

This application is unique. It is not just about more houses, but a chance to achieve 3 crucial things:

1. An outstandingly high quality development, from a landowner with a permanent stake in the success of Woodstock, who will stay involved in its management. If we let you down, we will be the biggest financial and reputational losers. This will not happen
2. The biggest boost ever to the hopes of Woodstock's young people to be able to buy or rent in their community.
3. A massive step towards securing the future of the world heritage site, the jewel of West Oxfordshire and one of the most important contributors to the local economy. Ignore those who wrongly say that we do not need this investment; remember instead how that investment multiplies as it flows on into the pockets of local businesses, local people and the wider community each year

In the last 14 years we have more than QUADRUPLED our RESTORATION spend. It is not enough. The unmet need is c£40m. This will not vanish and cannot be met by our businesses.

We are the only UK world heritage site not significantly funded from the public purse. We have explored all options. To give you back the pristine Palace and Park that once graced Woodstock, we need a game changer. This application is just that, and this is why we will commit the relevant profits of this outstanding development into a locked fund to secure Blenheim's restoration in perpetuity.

This is not a finely balanced decision but a clear one.

We thank you for your time and urge your support.

DAVID CORLEY

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**Court Farm, Mawles Lane
Proposal for New Family House & Car Ports
Planning Ref: 16/0329/FUL**

Statement to Committee: 6th February 2017

1. The principle of development for a single family house on this site was first established by a pre application planning enquiry.
2. The detailed designs before you have evolved through discussions with your officers. The siting of the house is determined by the need to ensure protection for the existing boundary trees on the High Street and Mawles Lane frontages.
3. The design is of two storeys – not three – beneath a reconstituted stone slate roof, with natural stone walls, stone lintels and timber windows. As typical of many older buildings, the roof does contain bedrooms, but these are lit simply with conservation roof windows flush with the rear roof face.
4. In discussion with planning officers the footprint of the house has been significantly reduced and the car ports moved to the south eastern boundary to maximise the openness of the site. The footprint of the house itself now represents only 11% of the site area, with large garden areas to the south, east and west.
5. The house is set back from the High Street, following the prevailing building line. It is set down into the existing site levels, which fall from the High Street towards the rear boundary. This lessens the impact of the view through the boundary trees from the High Street, and aligns the ridge of the new roof with that of Linden House to the North.
6. Your officers are satisfied that the proposal does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of Linden House, or on the secondary windows in its south wall.
7. Comparison with neighbouring properties shows the site to be larger than those of its neighbours on both sides of the High Street, in most cases significantly so.

8. In terms of impact on nearby listed buildings, the house is more than 70m. from Court Farm and Court Farm Barns. Coldstream House is separated from the site by the main road and screened by the tall boundary trees on the site. In respect of Shipton Court, the new house is simply not visible from its grounds and buildings, separated by a 5m. high stone wall set on a bank above Mawles Lane, in front of which has been permitted, relatively recently, the construction of a new dwelling, 'The Gate House'.
9. In conclusion, in all respects the proposal does therefore preserve the character of the Conservation Area and should be welcomed.

6 February 2016

Application No. 16/03302/OUT
Land North of A44
Worcester Road
Chipping Norton
Oxfordshire

Chairman & Members Good Afternoon

History of the site

The applicants Mr & Mrs Edwyn Stobart purchased this productive arable farmland land in 1995 and after erecting a fence and left unattended for 21 years the applicants land is still farm land in AONB.

Planning History

2 Toy Lane - Planning Ref. W88/1737 (appendix 1)

The WODC committee meeting dated 16 Nov 1988 refused planning at land to the south of Toy Lane, Worcester Road for the following reasons:-

The proposal does not constitute either infilling or rounding off.

Would be detrimental to the character of this part of Chipping Norton which lies outside of the town proper and which consist of a very loose knit form of development centred on narrow lanes running off the Worcester Road.

This proposal would set a precedent for further development which would be difficult to resist (appeal was lodged in 1989 and agreed with WODC refusal).

Future Developments in AONB

Also Mr & Mrs Edwyn Stobarts proposal will set a precedent for further development on the North side of the Worcester Road.

This farmland forms part of a very attractive countryside to the west of Chipping Norton, a major gateway into our Market Town of Chipping Norton and this development would destroy the character of our Town for future generations.

Please support your Officer recommendations for refusal.

Colin Keyzor

APPENDIX 1



- 1.4 W88/1737: Erection of house and garage and construction of vehicular access at land to the south of 2 Toy Lane, Worcester Road, Chipping Norton. Planning permission refused 16th November 1988 for the following reasons:-
1. *The proposed development is contrary to Policy H7 of the approved Rural Area Review Local Plan which accords with the approved Structure Plan for Oxfordshire in that the proposal does not constitute either infilling or rounding off within the existing built up area;*
 2. *That this proposal would be detrimental to the character of this part of Chipping Norton which lies outside of the town proper and which consists of a very loose knit form of development centred on narrow lanes running off the Worcester Road; and*
 3. *The proposed development is contrary to Policy H7(D) of the approved Rural Area Review Local Plan, which accords with the approved Structure Plan for Oxfordshire in that the proposal would set a precedent for further development which, in equity, would be difficult to resist, and which cumulatively would lead to a level of housing which would be contrary to the general objectives of restraint of growth.*
- 1.5 An appeal was lodged in respect of this decision by West Oxfordshire District Council, however, was dismissed on 9th August 1989.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: 6th February 2017

The DMD Group Speech in support of;

16/03302/OUT | Outline permission for ten self build dwellings and associated works | Land North Of A44 Worcester Road Chipping Norton Oxfordshire.

The main point we would like to get across today is that we feel West Oxon have not clearly demonstrated their reasons for recommending refusal for this unique scheme.

Our proposals are solely for self-build.

The government appreciates the unique opportunities of Self Builds, so much so, that Local Authorities must keep a Self-Build register.

No fewer than 204 individual signatures are recorded on West Oxon's official Self Build register, however, there is a distinct lack of supply to meet this clear demand.

The up to date Chipping Norton Neighbourhood plan, which isn't referenced in the committee report, advocates support for Self-Builds with the Town Council themselves fully supportive of our proposals in this specific location.

Our proposals would give local families the opportunity to incorporate sustainable features such as passive solar design, rainwater harvesting systems and wood pellet boilers into their homes.

These features are simply not available in the majority of newbuild open market housing.

We would also like to draw member's attention to the emerging Local Plan which clearly recognises self-build as a form of affordable housing*.

Technically we have proven that this site can be serviced - with both highways and the drainage department now agreeing with our proposal.

In terms of the sites location;

One of the towns major employment centres is less than a 5-minute walk away, in addition the bus stop located beside the site, is in fact functional, providing an hourly service.

As highlighted in our planning statement - new build housing has also recently been approved in the immediate area.

In relation to the AONB, the key point here in terms of planning policy** is that permission should be granted unless it has a significant and demonstrably negative effect on the AONB.

The submitted landscape appraisal clearly demonstrates that our proposals do not have a negative effect on the AONB and we feel that West Oxon have failed to recognise this.

Comments about the form of development are also inconsistent. An application bearing close resemblance to ours in terms of building on the opposite side of the road, in a built-up area, was recently approved in the nearby village of Kingham.

We would agree with the officer's comments on that application whereby he states "*change does not have to mean harm*".

The changes we are proposing are not harmful they are truly positive.

This would be the first solely, self-build scheme in the district. It offers an opportunity for West Oxon to lead the way in creating an 'exemplar' 'gateway' development which responds to the needs of its community.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the conclusion of the committee report which states;

"permission should be refused for major developments in the AONB, unless in exceptional circumstances where it is in the public interest"

This same reason for refusal has been contested in a successful appeal decision in nearby Charlbury. Here the Inspector recognised that the lack of housing land supply in the district is deemed to be the exceptional circumstance which justifies approval, since meeting housing need fundamentally is in the public interest.

Not only would this apply in our case, but we have 204 additional reasons on this register which clearly demonstrates that this unique self build proposal is indeed in the public's interest.

*Paragraph 5.54

**NPPF, Para 14

Uplands Council meeting - February 6th 2017

Reference 16/03601/FUL

I am speaking on behalf of myself and my wife to oppose planning consent for this application.

The proposed development site entrance is adjacent to our property with the main development behind us. This is clearly shown on the site map.

We have lived here for over 25 years and during this time have enjoyed a reasonable harmonious relationship with the Cornbury Estate and our close contact with the AONB around us.

Amenity

Our objections are based on a gross impact to our Amenity, together with road safety considerations and other matters that are in your possession and/or on the planning website, with the exception of 2 letters which have not been included in today's meeting papers or, as yet, placed on the website. They are relevant and need to be considered. Letter 29-12-16 in response to Mr House letter and letter 20-01-17 regarding the Highways report)

We believe that our concerns on Visual intrusion, Noise and Light Disturbance, Home/property Security and Road Safety have not been adequately addressed. Some improvements to the visual situation have been voiced but none have been formally acknowledged.

In particular, no meaningful measures have been put forward with regard to the enforcement of visitors staying within the site boundary of this unfenced and unsupervised development. A thousand strangers will have unfettered access to our boundary. *EACH YEAR.* This is a major factor with respect to both visual intrusion and very worryingly, security intrusion.

We ask that further consideration be given to **all** these matters.

AONB Intrusion

This proposed development is much more than the erection of rental accommodation, it is the establishment of a BUSINESS, a business venture that is not 'progress', it is yet another intrusion into an AONB.

Once the site is developed it will be difficult and expensive to restore to AONB status should the business venture be closed or fail, so it is essential that this Council satisfies itself about the viability of the Business Plan, the financial resources supporting it and contingency plans and guarantees for restoration before the development is allowed.

To date little or no information on these aspects has been made available in the public domain, possibly because of confidentiality considerations. However the public should at least have confirmation from the council that they have considered all these aspects, with professional advice where necessary, and are content with them, prior to granting permission for this venture to proceed.

Three minutes does not allow time to expand on any of these and other outstanding issues, other than to list some as follows.

- * What is the planned timescale to build the site, will it be all at once or phased. Will the work exclusion periods recommended in eco reports be fully respected.
- * Will all site assets belong to Quality Unearthed Limited (QUL) and will operation of the business be by QUL. Would a sale of the business be permitted or not.
- * Should the business be closed or fail, what contingency plans will exist for restoration of the site to AONB status. Will site restoration be underwritten by the Cornbury Estate.

- * The 'tree houses' are prefabricated using wood clad metal tubes and raised platforms. What safety certificates are required for such installations. Do they require lightning conductors. Will they affect local TV reception, mobile signals etc.
- * Will QUL be responsible for normal industry business rates the same as similar local businesses. Will rates be assessed on the built up site area and designated paths only or also for the wooded area viewed by visitors.
- * When will the planned local staff to be recruited. Will they have full time, part time, casual or zero hour contracts. Will they be paid at least the 'living wage' which I believe is a requirement for any OCC/WODC approval. Where on the site plans are the staff facilities.
- * Does anything on the site, e.g.steps, railings, hot BBQ ashes etc represent a potential hazard for deer and other animals. Would an 'off lead' dog be a threat to wildlife.
- * What provisions are to be provided for the collection and disposal of dog excrement. Could uncollected dog excrement be a disease risk to other dogs and wildlife.
- * Bush craft have used the proposed waste storage area during their 2016 season although it does not appear to be included within their planning consent area. Will this continue. (It has been a source of noise and, at times, smell at times)

We submit that Issues such as those listed above, together with enforcement measures for this unsupervised site, loss of amenity issues and road safety all warrant further detailed consideration by this committee before making any decision on this planning application.

Mr & Mrs Turner.

PRESENTATION TO WEST OXON COUNCIL UPLANDS AREA SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING ON 06/02/17

Good afternoon chairman and committee members,

For those of you who I did not meet on site on Thursday, I'm Nick House representing Quality Unearthed. I'm the project manager for the proposed development. I'd like to spend the next 2.5 minutes setting out our position which is that an ecological impact assessment should not be made a requirement or condition. Our case is supported by the following considerations;

1. First and foremost, the time delay it will incur;

- According to the statutory limit, a decision on our application was actually due by 20th December. Through no fault on our part, the Council have already overrun this by **6 weeks**. The Council's ecologist has recommended that new surveys be carried in which would cause a further delay of 16 weeks for a decision, taking the potential overrun to a mammoth 22 weeks.
- For your information Quality Unearthed endured an equally lengthy delay of **7 weeks** with its first application the develop the same site with the same number of buildings for which an ecological survey was submitted in April last year.

2. The second point we wish to raise is that a week before submitting the current application, the Council confirmed to us in writing that a new ecological survey was not required.

- By doing so the Council led us to believe that it had already carried out a full internal consultation of the ecological issues when it studied our first application. On declining this application the Council issued recommendations as to how we could reduce the ecological impact. We took all of these on board in preparing our second application and the enhancements we have planned

would, we believe, make a considerable difference on reducing the disturbance to the natural environment.

3. Third, we question the benefit of carrying out an ecological impact assessment

- The Council's ecologist is proposing that we conduct detailed new surveys on a site she has not visited. The estimated cost of these is likely to **£3,000**. This would represent a significant financial burden on a small, family run business. We have already spent £1,000 on an independent ecological survey. This survey did comment on the impact and concluded that it would not be at a harmful level. The ecologist also confirmed that it was highly unlikely that any rare fauna or flora was living on the land.
- The site is primarily a **Scots pine plantation** which was created by the Estate for commercial harvesting. Unlike other woodland on the Estate, this patch holds no special scientific interest. We could understand the Council's concerns had the site been located in a protected ancient woodland populated by mature oaks and containing exceptional levels of biodiversity. This is not the case. The site occupies less than 1% of the total area of the forest so any displacement of wildlife should not be a serious concern.
- We have doubts as to what value and use the additional information gathered by a new survey would have? Whilst it is acknowledged that some wildlife habitats will, inevitably, be effected by the development, it would be impossible for a new survey to measure the actual loss of wildlife as it can migrate to an identical environment on land bordering the site. Following the survey results we are curious to know what other action we would be expected to take.

We urge the Committee not to impose further costs on and delays to on our application. We have made every effort to comply with the Council's policies and recommendations and through no responsibility on our part, we are where we are. Quality Unearthed has so far decided not to make an appeal to the Secretary of State for the overrun but will reserve the right to do so should the need arise.

Nick House
Quality Unearthed Ltd
6th February 2017

Statement to the Planning Sub-Committee.

Thank you to the committee for allowing us time to speak, and further thanks to all in attendance.

I am Tim Rees, founder of Quality Unearthed and the drive behind this Treehouse project.

We are a family business who have been involved in holiday lets since the 60's. My father started Quality Cottages, my mother Quality Villas, and myself Quality Unearthed, my sister is also involved as Marketing Manager.

We have taken a slow approach to growth, favouring quality of product and honest, sincere provision of service.

In this time we have learned what works well, for the individual structure, guests, and environment. It is with this knowledge and experience that led us to ultimately favour a small number of stunning tree houses here at Finstock.

For 5 years now I have been working on this project. It is of great personal significance to me. My dream. Blood, sweat and tears have brought me to this point. Success or failure today will in all seriousness shape the next 5-10 years of my life and beyond, our destiny is in your hands. As indeed, those employed by us currently and the opportunities this project will create.

We believe truly this is a project the local community will become proud of, and even the county and country.

Tim Rees

COMMENTS TO BE MADE TO UPLANDS PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON CUCKOO WOOD FARM APPLICATION
6TH FEBRUARY 2017.

1. I would just like to add to Mr Shaw's introduction by confirming that the application has been submitted following a long consultation process with the Council's planning officers based on the emerging accommodation needs for travelling showpeople as highlighted in the various drafts of the new local plan.
2. The pre-submission draft had indicated a likely need for some 21 plots for the plan period which, following a review of across the board housing needs, has reduced the future requirement for showpersons' ~~plots~~ pitches to up to 6 plots. However, the latest plan has also become more focussed in terms of allocating land for this purpose as an extension to the established site at Cuckoo Wood Farm.
3. In terms of the suitability of such provision I would like to refer to the part the present site has played in successfully accommodating the needs of local showpeople giving them a high level of residential amenity in a sustainable location without undue impact on the surrounding landscape. Not only has the site provided a suitable base within their area of operations, which has reduced the extent of travelling making their businesses more viable, it has also provided a settled existence for family life and a firm base for their business activities. An illustration of this can be expressed in the fact that Blenheim Estates were able to have the confidence to award the contract for helping to create the recent Christmas Festival at the Palace to a local family business based at Cuckoo Wood Farm.
4. Due to the popularity of the site the applicant has been approached by a large number of showpersons families, details of which have been supplied with the application, who would like to relocate to this area. Many of these families originated from West Oxfordshire, but had to find accommodation elsewhere as emerging family units outgrew their parental sites and some sites were redeveloped. Nevertheless, they still operate in Oxfordshire and the Cuckoo Wood Farm location would be central to their fairground circuit of activity. Moreover, they also have relatives who are already located at Cuckoo Wood Farm.
5. Following the recent discussions referred to in the report, the applicant has every confidence that the site now put forward would be able to comply with current and future planning requirements for the accommodation of showpeople who resort to this part of Oxfordshire for their livelihood.

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