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AEC

Sandra Hutchings

From: Elliott Cartwright, Lee
Sent: 19 March 2014 17:30
To: DPD
Subject: Housing Consultation Site - Oakford



FAO Mr Peter Williams

Dear Mr Williams

We are writing to record our very strong objections to the proposal that the land adjacent to the MDDC property in Oakford for which we are tenants is adopted for housing development.

We believe the land to be totally unsuitable for development of affordable homes for several reasons:

- There are no amenities in the village except the Red Lion pub and there is no public transport except a very limited community bus service two mornings a week. There is no shop, no Post Office, no school and no medical services. The experience of living in Oakford in affordable housing is – as we can attest – a very isolating and at times frankly depressing one.
- There is no demonstrable need. At two recent Parish Meetings no-one can remember who asked for affordable housing at the time of the housing needs survey some years ago – and the papers have been lost. No-one at these very well attended meetings felt that there was a need – and a vote at the second meeting showed 33 against the development of the land, 0 in favour and 5 abstentions (most of whom said they had abstained because they did not live within the village itself). There is simply no need for extra housing in Oakford.
- There is no infrastructure available to this land. The lane through the village is inadequate to take traffic from a development (even a small one) and the long and steep nature of the lane (despite there being a 30mph speed limit) means that traffic often travels through the village at speed, down a wet and dangerous lane. There is no safe way for regular traffic to enter onto the lane. Also, there is no drainage and we are led to believe that septic tanks are not an option due to the proximity of water courses within and adjacent to the proposed site.
- As mentioned, for us and our children, the 'Oakford experience' is often one of remoteness and isolation. The only compensation is the quality of life benefit accruing from living in a quiet village with character in a conservation area. If this field is developed – with the inevitable extra noise, loss of amenity, light pollution, loss of wildlife habitat and extra traffic – all that will be lost. And this loss won't just affect we who currently live in the village, but future generations too. As custodians of the village amenity, we feel that we MUST strongly object to this proposed development site.

We are very surprised that – given that Oakford is in a conservation area – the request to develop this land is even being considered. The effect of this development would, we believe, so fundamentally affect the character of the village as to make it no longer worthy of being a conservation village. Should development go ahead on this land, we feel that MDDC Planning should remove the conservation area status of the village and accordingly MDDC should reduce the Rent and Council Tax payable to reflect the huge loss of amenity. Oakford would no longer be the characterful example of a moorland-edge village it currently is and would merely be a clone of many similarly ruined villages across the country.

We hope and trust that you will take our strong objections – alongside those of seemingly the vast majority of the village residents – into account and remove this land from the development plan as a potential housing site.

Many thanks and kind regards.

Lee and Louise Elliott Cartwright

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Oakford

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