

Land Adjacent To Oakhurst Rise Cheltenham Gloucestershire

Appeal Ref. No: 20/00021/PP1 43 houses

Dear Mrs Searson

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I live in one of the bungalows at the top of Oakhurst Rise, with the "ransom strip" by our front garden. Along with my neighbours, we will be particularly affected by this development, should it go ahead.

The residents in our small, quiet cul-de-sac community are ground down by the relentless attempts to develop this land. Should it be approved, many of the reasons for choosing to live here will be lost. I believe that this significant "loss of amenity" will affect all of the residents of Oakhurst Rise due to the significant increase in passing cars, delivery vans, bin lorries, etc. The traffic on the "rat run" from Hales Road to London Road via the Ewens Farm estate will also be far worse.

My immediate neighbour suffers from MS and attends a day centre on Prestbury Road. She is picked up three times a week by a large community bus with a wheelchair tail lift. Her access to this vital service would be threatened by this proposed development and she has received a letter from the centre citing health and safety concerns. Her husband wanted to speak at this appeal but he has now asked me to speak on their behalf. Please see attached 2 documents related to this issue.

The development documents say that the new residents will use bicycles or walk to the local amenities. This will not be the case, unless they are very fit, due to the distance to local amenities, and the steepness of the roads. Winter conditions often make this narrow, steep road impassable and it is not gritted by the council.

The focus for this latest appeal seems to have moved towards the "heritage" aspects on the other side of the field. However, I would urge you to visit and experience a walk up our road when you do your site visits, to see how unsuitable this access road is.

I have written my wide-ranging objections to all of the applications since 2016 and spoke at the last appeal, on behalf of the local residents. I confirm that all of those reasons for objection hold true for the latest iteration. My ecology concerns are exacerbated by the latest suggestion for the re-location of the extensive badger sett, which, *should* the plan to move them succeed, will reduce their foraging area significantly and put the badgers in direct conflict with the nearby Battledown residents.

A petition on Change.org was set up by my ten-year-old daughter, who spoke passionately to the Carmelite land owners about the potential loss of wildlife habitat. It attracted over 1100 signatures.

This is not a suitable site for affordable housing. This is a piece of prime development land in the most expensive part of Cheltenham, with poor access, over-subscribed doctors and schools and very few local jobs.

Please see attached an analysis of the public comments which mention affordable housing. It clearly shows that the objections to the development support affordable housing in principle, but point out the obvious **unsuitability of this location**. Most objections to the development are from local people who know the area well. The supporting comments citing the supposed benefits of affordable housing tend to be from outside Cheltenham.

I speak for all of the Oakhurst Rise residents. We are unanimous in our opposition to this totally inappropriate proposed development on our doorstep.

Perhaps one day, it will be protected as a nature reserve for local people to visit and enjoy - **it has already been designated as a Key Wildlife Site, one of only six in Cheltenham.** The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how important these local breathing spaces really are.

Chris Lythgoe

29 Oakhurst Rise

23rd March 2021

Attachments:

1. Statement from my neighbour, 27 Oakhurst Rise
2. Letter from Prestbury Road day-care centre
3. Analysis of comments re affordable housing

Dear Mrs Searson

I live at the top of Oakhurst Rise, next to the proposed entrance to the site.

My wife has MS and is confined to a wheelchair. She attends the local day centre 3 days a week which provides much needed physiotherapy, social interaction and a chance of maintaining a degree of independent living.

If the proposed building application is allowed to go ahead my wife will no longer be able to attend the day centre. The management of the centre have advised that construction traffic along our steep/narrow road would cause a significant health and safety risk and prevent safe access to collect my wife.

I include a photograph showing the day centre's minibus collecting my wife in her wheelchair:



I have attached a copy of a letter received from the day centre (dated 3rd June 2019) which lists their concerns of safe access.

The possibility of losing access to the centre is the cause of much distress for my wife. We cannot afford to move house but we are still hopeful that sense will prevail and that any development on this greenfield site will be refused.

Kind regards,

Andy Thurlow
27 Oakhurst Rise

The Prestbury Centre
Isbourne Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 5QG

Tel: 01242 584470

Date: 3rd June 2019

Ref: Andy Thurlow – Purposed Building development off Oakhurst Rise

Dear Andy,

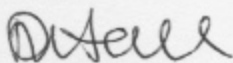
Following our discussion about the proposed building development. I understand your road will be the sole access to and from the proposed site. Therefore I anticipate a significant amount of heavy plant and construction traffic throughout the duration of the development and significantly increased traffic following completion. I thought it was important to raise some key points that you can raise as a resident.

- Reversing a large mini bus up a steep gradient along a narrow road. Minibus has to have front facing downwards due to protocols in operating tail-lift.
- Operating tail-lift on narrow road, traffic allowing safe distance to pass.
- Could be parked for 10 mins, allowing for assisting Carolyn out of her home and safely clamping before transportation.
- Unable to push Carolyn in her wheelchair up/down pavement due to steep gradient and manual handling implications.
- Amount of parked and accessing traffic using the road.

With taking into account the points raised above this could cause a significant health and safety risk and prevent safe access for the minibus to collect Carolyn. Without a safe access route to your home we may be unable to continue providing Carolyn with transport to attend the centre.

I hope you find this helpful and any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Debbie Hall
Assistant Manager

Appeal Reference: APP/B1605/W/20/3261154

Appeal Submission Date - 12th November 2020

Outline application for 43 dwellings - Land adjacent to Oakhurst Rise

Analysis of Supporting and Objecting Public Comments as at 19th December 2020

OBJECT COMMENTS

- as at 19th December 2020, there are **142 'Objects'** public comments listed on the CBC web-portal.
- **well over 100** of these (i.e. the great majority) object in detail, demonstrating which NPPF sections and policies are in conflict with this proposed development and providing precise information as to why planning permission should be refused.
- **120** of these 'Objects' are **from within the parish of Charlton Kings** and thus are from those who would be most detrimentally affected by any housing development on this land.

SUPPORT COMMENTS

- there are 106 '**Supports**' public comments listed, mostly submitted during the months of June and July 2020.
- Of these 106 'supporters' it is worth noting that **only 11** are from within Charlton Kings and only a further 53 are from within Cheltenham
- the remaining 42 are from **outside Cheltenham** and from as far afield as London and Surrey !
- one of the 'supports' comes from a Cheltenham address where **no-one is resident**, as it is a building-site for a very expensive new house -- for which the architect is the same as that for the 43-dwelling application now under appeal review
- another one comes from the same address as that of one of the Directors of Wm Morrison
- 6 'supports' are repeat submissions from the same house address
- the overwhelming majority of 'supporters' give just one single reason for their support - namely the provision of Affordable Housing, a perfectly reasonable aim in itself, **but**
- only about fifteen of these 'supporters' submitted supportive comments for the previous Application (18/02171/OUT) in October 2018, when the amount of Affordable Housing was far higher and
- **none of them** submitted any supporting comments for the original application (17/00710/OUT) in April 2017 when the amount of Affordable Housing was **double** that which has been included in the current application
- a number of the 'Supporters' label the Objectors as 'nimbys', and yet completely fail to address the issues of heritage, ecology, flooding, road safety, amenity, AONB outlook and environment raised by the many Objectors

QUERIES which should probably be raised by this apparent surge in SUPPORT comments

1. Why have NONE of these supporters, that's right NOT A SINGLE ONE (almost all of whom state their wish either to move to Cheltenham or to see more Affordable Housing in Cheltenham), supported other larger Cheltenham housing schemes containing far more Affordable Housing ?

- There are **currently three other significant schemes** under active consideration in Cheltenham, all of which are for FULL detailed planning permission (the Oakhurst Rise application is only for OUTLINE permission). These three other FULL schemes are -
 - 1) 20/00780/FUL **49** houses on a brown-field site off Bouncer's Lane (approx 18 affordable homes).
 - 2) 20/00759/FUL **260 new homes** at Swindon Farm, off the Tewkesbury Road, (**91 Affordable Homes**, including **63 socially rented** homes - **more than ten times the number** allegedly planned for the Oakhurst Rise site).
 - 3) 20/01788/FUL **350 new homes** on land at Shurdington Road, (**140 Affordable Homes** including **104 affordable rented** homes - vastly more than the number allegedly planned for the Oakhurst Rise site).
- the potential for these three schemes to produce Affordable Housing in the near future is significantly higher than it is for Oakhurst Rise, which is only an 'outline' application
- the Oakhurst Rise site, if Outline Permission were to be granted, may well not see any Affordable Housing being built for many years

2. Should HM Inspector consider only the quantum of recent 'supporting' comments for Oakhurst Rise or should she also be examining the content of these recently submitted comments ?

- by any numerical assessment, the Objectors significantly exceed the Supporters and, in the main, their objections are detailed, addressing topics raised at the time of previous submissions for this site and in line with the previous Independent Inspector's Review of September 2019
- unlike the Supporters, **the Objectors are overwhelmingly from within Charlton Kings** and would therefore be **directly affected** by any actual housing development which may be permitted on this site
- the Objectors want to preserve heritage, ecology, the environment and secure the safety of residents throughout the Ewen's Farm Estate
- the Supporters' interest in Affordable Housing appears to exist **only** for Planning Application 20/00683/ at Oakhurst Rise and **NOT** for the far greater amount of Affordable Housing located elsewhere in Cheltenham, including on one site - Bouncers Lane (20/00780/FUL) - which is also in eastern Cheltenham, only about one mile north of the land off Oakhurst Rise.