

Change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 16 gypsy/traveller families, each with two caravans, including improvement of access and laying of hardstanding

OS Parcel 9635 Land lying to the south of Widnell Lane, Piddington, Bicester

Planning Application Ref. No: 17/00145/F

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Piddington Parish Council wishes to object in the strongest possible terms to the above numbered planning application. The objection is made on the following grounds:

Location, Site, Access, Design, Amenity, Historic and Natural Environment, Need and Sustainability, Flood Risk and Alternative Site Options

References to the Local Plan refer to the Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031

Piddington Parish Council has sought the advice of Leading Counsel John Hobson QC of Landmark Chambers, 180 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HG, on this objection; his advice and suggestions have been incorporated into this document.

1 Introduction

Piddington Parish Council represents the parish of Piddington, a Category C rural community of 296 electors (current register of electors) on the borders of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, in the ward of Launton and Otmoor, Cherwell District Council. The village is located 9 km South-East of Bicester and 16 km North of Thame.

The proposed development is within the boundaries of Piddington parish and the village of Piddington is the closest settled community.

Appendix 1 at the end of this document contains photographs illustrating points made throughout.

2 Summary

Cherwell District Council has adopted the Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031 (Part 1) which comprises the Development Plan for the purposes of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The application site is not allocated for development in the Local Plan, which states that allocations, including locations for new traveller sites are to be made in the Local Plan Part 2 which is still in course of preparation. As an unallocated site, any application for its development is to be considered in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy BSC6 in the Local Plan Part 1. It is also to be considered in accordance with paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but which also establishes that where the adverse effects of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefit, permission should be refused. In this case, for the detailed reasons set out in succeeding sections, it is clear that the development of this site would be manifestly contrary to the principle of sustainability, and there are real and compelling reasons why this application should be refused.

- It proposes the development on a greenfield site, in agricultural use in open countryside.
- The site is close to, and in the catchment area of, the River Ray, which is of significant ecological sensitivity and is designated as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.
- It is remote from any settled community. The nearest settlement is Piddington, which is a Category C village without any facilities.
- Although the site is within 3 km of Arncott, a Category A village, the only shop in the village is more than 3 km away.
- The site is not accessible by public transport and the nearest bus stop at Bullingdon Prison (700 m away across a busy road) has an infrequent service.
- It will increase the traffic on Widnell Lane which has no footway or street lighting. The maintenance of adequate sight lines will depend on cutting back vegetation which is not on the Applicants' land.
- The site is susceptible to flooding.
- The proximity of the proposed development will harm the amenity of the nearby Widnell Park, Jubilee Reserve and sports field.

In the light of these compelling objections which are elaborated in further detail below it is clear that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy BSC6 and in accordance therefore with the provisions of section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, permission should be refused. Refusal would also be consistent with paragraph 14 of the NPPF and also with the recent decision of Aylesbury Vale DC to refuse permission for a site at Oakview Park, Boarstall which is about 3 km as the crow flies from the proposed site at Widnell Lane.

Note that in July 2002 Cherwell District Council (CDC) itself made similar objections to the proposed Asylum Seekers Accommodation Centre, Piddington, in a letter to the Home Office dated 16 July (Planning Ref RD/SM/02/01044/GD and 02/01045/GD). The site of the proposed Asylum Seekers Accommodation Centre is approximately 60 metres from the current proposed gypsy/traveller site, and therefore many of the objections raised by CDC at that time are equally applicable to the current application. (See Appendix 2.)

3 Location

The Parish Council has noted the provisions in the **Local Plan of Policy BSC 6 Travelling Communities**, and in particular the provisions of paragraph **B139** to

“secure sites that will provide suitable living environments in locations that are as sustainable as reasonably possible. It will be important to identify sites that will enable access to services, facilities and potential sources of employment, which will promote inclusive communities but which will not be out of scale with or dominate nearby settled communities”

and will therefore expect sites to be (Policy BSC 6):

“within 3km road distance of the built-up limits of Banbury, Bicester or a Category A village ...

The following criteria will also be considered in assessing the suitability of sites: a) access to GP and other health services b) access to schools c) avoiding areas at risk of flooding d) access to the highway network e) the potential for noise and other disturbance f) the potential for harm to the historic and natural environment g) the ability to provide a satisfactory living environment h) the need to make efficient and effective use of land i) deliverability, including whether utilities can be provided j) the existing level of local provision k) the availability of alternatives to applicants.”

Piddington Parish Council accepts that the proposed location is within 3 km of the built-up limit of Arncott (defined in the **Local Plan Policy Villages 1** as Category A Service Village) but would point out that the services available in Arncott are limited to a small village shop (which is more than 3 km from the proposed site), a public house and a bus service. The services available in Ambrosden (also a Category A Service Village beyond the 3 km limit) are similarly limited and under pressure from several new housing developments and the likely return of the garrison.

The current proposal makes no mention of the fact that proposed development is within the parish of Piddington and Piddington village is the nearest settled community (1.2 kilometres from the proposed site to the centre of the village). This is a small, quiet rural community falling within the definition of a **Category C Village (Policy C265-267)** where development is limited to ***“only infilling and conversions”*** (Section 5.80). (See photographs of Piddington in Appendix 1.)

The Parish Council would also point out that ‘rural exception sites’ are defined in the Council’s defined policy (**Policy Villages 3**) as ***“small scale affordable housing schemes within or immediately adjacent to villages to meet specific, identified local housing needs that cannot be met through the development of sites allocated for housing development.”***

Furthermore, the Parish Council contends that the location on Widnell Lane is in fact very isolated from any local communities and it is the Council’s belief that this is in contravention of **paragraph 25** of the **“Planning Policy for Traveller Sites”** (Department for Communities and Local Government August 2015).

“Local planning authorities should very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. Local planning authorities should ensure that sites in rural areas respect the scale of, and do not dominate, the nearest settled community, and avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure.”

The Parish Council does not believe that the proposals are acceptable for development either in a Category C Village, or as a rural housing exception site, and that the shortage of necessary services in the adjacent Category A Villages and the isolated nature of the site makes the proposed development completely inappropriate at this location.

4 Site

The charity ‘Friends, Families and Travellers’ (FFT) has been working on behalf of Gypsies and Travellers since 1994. Their advice on the purchase of land for possible development advocates that ***“The land should be in an area where you have a local connection. For example, you have lived there for a long time, you have close family there, your children attend the local school or you are registered with local doctors.”***

The title deeds show that the land was purchased in August 2016 and that neither of the owners appears to have an affiliation with Piddington or the surrounding villages. A site of this size for 16 families can only be construed as a commercial development.

The fact that the application includes provision for 16 commercial vehicles makes it clear that it is envisaged that potentially up to 16 private/self-employed businesses will be operating from the site.

The proposed site is located off Widnell Lane adjacent to Cowpasture Farm, Arncott Road, Piddington. The Parish Council has noted that an application to construct a new dwelling to support a beef cattle enterprise on this land was refused by Cherwell District Council in 2014 on the basis that ***“planning permission for new dwellings in the countryside would only be granted where it is essential for agriculture or other existing operations”,*** and that ***“if an essential need was proven, a new dwelling would be expected to be of traditional design and be closely related to existing buildings in the interest of protecting the appearance of an open character of the countryside.”***

The Parish Council notes the provisions of **Paragraph B252** in the Local Plan which recognises that both ***“the open and agricultural setting and identity of the outlying villages surrounding Banbury and Bicester, many with locally distinctive historic cores”*** and the River Ray floodplains as having landscape value, thus supporting the response above.

Paragraph B254 of The Local Plan also indicates that ***“In order that development conserves and enhances the character of the countryside, the Council will carefully control the type, scale and design of development, including the materials used.”***

The Parish Council does not see in the current application any attempt to comply with this policy and on that basis alone believes that the application should be refused.

The site of the application is considered greenfield comprising Grade 3 agricultural land (see photograph of proposed development site in Appendix 1). The **Local Plan Policy EN16** specifically excludes development on greenfield agricultural land Grades 1–3 unless there is an ***“overriding need for the development and that opportunities have been assessed to accommodate the development on previously developed sites and land within the built-up limits of settlements”*** (Cherwell Interactive Local Plan). It is the Parish Council’s view that the options for this type of development on a brownfield site, in accordance with **Policy BSC2**, should be explored before an area of existing agricultural land, in a rural location, is considered for development. There is no evidence that an investigation of alternative sites has been undertaken.

Furthermore, the Parish Council takes issue with Paragraph 4.01 of the Access Appraisal’s conclusions. It does not accept that diversification of valuable Grade 3 agricultural land to the change of use proposed in this planning application is a *“key focus of government policy and an important route for farmers and landowners to consider”*. **Cherwell District Council’s Interactive Local Plan (Policy EMP7)** has the following directives on farm diversification:

“Development proposals for farm diversification will be permitted provided that they:

- (i) are of a type, size or scale appropriate to their rural location;***
- (ii) will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside in terms of its landscape, ecological, historic or amenity value;***
- (iii) will not involve the permanent loss of best and most versatile land;***
- (iv) will not lead to a conflict between established agricultural interests and other land uses;***
- (v) re-use existing rural buildings where available (provided such use complies with the conversion policies in the plan) in preference to the erection of new buildings;***
- (vi) will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car.”***

Finally, the Parish Council would highlight that the site is less than 300 metres from a Ministry of Defence (MOD) training facility where the use of ordnance and pyrotechnics, including illumination, is a regular and noisy occurrence. It should also be noted that, because of the design and construction of caravans and mobile homes, people who live in them are much more vulnerable to the impact of noise than are people living in bricks and mortar homes. There are no proposals to mitigate the effects of this on the proposed development and to ensure the well-being of residents. There will presumably be MOD concerns about security and safety. The Parish Council also notes that on the same plot of land (owned by the applicant but not included in this planning application) is an electricity pylon carrying high-voltage cables that run parallel to the proposed development about 60 m away.

5 Access

The application includes a document entitled 'Access Appraisal'. The first statement made in paragraph 2.1 of the appraisal states *"the change of use will replace farm traffic associated with the field with an alternative use, as recommended by the planning authority"*. The Parish Council takes issue with this statement – partly because, so far as the Parish Council is aware, no recommendations have been made by the planning authority in connection with the proposed access to this site. Furthermore, as the field is presently laid to grass, traffic accessing the field has been minimal.

The proposed change of use would generate increased traffic on Widnell Lane. It is not unreasonable to assume vehicle movements from each of the 16 proposed pitches every day – if only one vehicle from each pitch leaves the site in the morning and returns to the site in the evening the minimum is 32 movements a day, and it is not unreasonable to multiply these by 2 or 3 for normal family use. This means that traffic movements of around 100 a day would not be exceptional and certainly would greatly exceed the number experienced at present such that the impact on the current low level traffic use of Widnell Lane will be enormous.

The Parish Council maintains that the road is not wide enough to accommodate two passing vehicles should one be an HGV, a large van, a vehicle towing a caravan or an agricultural vehicle, resulting in serious damage to the verges and the edges of the road, which include the drainage ditches either side. Moreover, the Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow for the B4011 is in the region of 5000 fast-moving vehicles and the junction between Widnell Lane and the B4011 represents a significant hazard, particularly when considering long vehicles exiting this limited visibility junction. The Access Appraisal makes no provision for junction improvements to mitigate this danger.

Widnell Lane has no pedestrian footpaths or lighting. Verges become overgrown in summer and waterlogged in winter, making it necessary to walk in the road. Also, hedges become overgrown, reducing visibility. The Parish Council believes that visibility is poor and that the safety of the increased number of pedestrians who would be using the road for access to services would be put at significant risk.

The Parish Council has also noted that there is no reference to access to the site being achieved through the village of Piddington itself. Access from the A41 is unsuitable for large vehicles being single track with weak railway bridges (there is a weight limit of 7.5 tonne on all the roads within and surrounding the village), and an increase in traffic of any kind through the village is undesirable. Piddington is a small village with few street lights, narrow roads, parked cars and no more than 50 metres of pavements.

Additional traffic, including commercial vehicles, sometimes towing trailers, using Widnell Lane and roads through Piddington will cause damage to the roads and pose a substantial hazard to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders from the equestrian businesses within the parish, and thus a loss of amenity to all residents. (See photographs in Appendix 1.)

6 Design

The Parish Council has considered the contents of the 'Design and Access' statement lodged with the planning authority on 20th January 2017. It notes that *"the proposed development is located in a suitable area for a proposed gypsy site in principle"* and would oppose this as the Local Plan acknowledges that with regard to the landscape around Bicester, **paragraphs B 252 and 254** apply. Therefore, the Council would be looking for a development proposal that ***"conserves and enhances the character of the countryside"***.

The Parish Council has also noted the following inaccurate statements in this document:

1. *"Please find enclosed ... a separate Highways Report in support of the ... proposal";*
2. *"The submitted Highways Report demonstrates that the increase in traffic associated with the proposed development would not have any impact on highway safety, or the free flow of traffic along the A4095";*
3. *"screened ... by woodland to the west along the eastern side of the A401"; and*
4. *"It has access from the A401".*

The road numbers A4095 and A401 do not relate to any roads in the vicinity. There is no "Highways Report" in the documents associated with the application, only a purely numerical "ATC Survey" and an "Access Appraisal" by consultants employed to *"examine the existing access and its potential to serve the site for an alternative use"*, neither of which specifically addresses highway safety. There is also a sentence that reads *"the site is not subject to excessive, and would provide a satisfactory residential environment"*. Words appear to have been cut after "excessive".

The document is factually inaccurate and would appear to be made up of extracts "cut and pasted" from other reports, and therefore much of it does not relate in any way to the site under consideration. This all leads the Parish Council to question validity of the document.

With regard to the site design for the proposed 16 pitches, the Parish Council is concerned that the pitches are crowded, showing no accommodation for vehicles to be parked and manoeuvred on site, no provision for areas to store, recycle and aid the collection of waste and ensure that surface water does not drain out of the site onto the road. No account has been made for visiting cars, vans and caravans for family or community events. It would be unacceptable on safety and environmental grounds, for any surplus vehicles, of residents or visitors to the site, to be parked along Widnell Lane, itself a narrow winding country road.

The Parish council does not believe that the following guidance points have been addressed in the application (**paragraph 26** of **"Planning Policy for Travellers Sites"** – Department for Communities and Local Government, August 2015):

1. ***effective use of previously developed (brownfield), untidy or derelict land;***
2. ***sites being well planned or soft landscaped in such a way as to positively enhance the environment and increase its openness;***
3. ***promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles, such as ensuring adequate landscaping and play areas for children;***
4. ***not enclosing a site with so much hard landscaping, high walls or fences, that the impression may be given that the site and its occupants are deliberately isolated from the rest of the community.***

7 Amenity

The Parish Council also notes that the 'Design and Access Statement' concludes by saying "*there are no ... amenity issues which weigh against the proposal*", and would respectfully point out both to the Applicant and to the Local Planning Authority that the Parish Council is the owner of the land shown edged orange and yellow on the attached plan. This land is approximately 400 metres from the entrance to the proposed site and is known to residents of the Parish as the Jubilee Reserve, Widnell Park and Sports Field. (See photographs in Appendix 1.)

This site is an amenity that is highly valued by the village as evidenced in their Community-Led Plan (CLP) consultation. Over the course of 2015/16 and 2016/17 the Parish Council has spent more than £5000 carrying out improvements to the park and is liaising with BBOWT regarding the regeneration of a meadow at the Jubilee Reserve. It is currently in the process of raising funds to install a green gym for adults and play equipment for children. The CLP questionnaire of October 2016 showed a majority of residents valued the Park and Sports Field and would be willing to help raise funds for additional facilities there. The Parish Council believes, from discussions at a meeting held with villagers, that the attractiveness of the Park would diminish should the application site be developed as the increase in traffic using Widnell Lane will deter residents from walking or cycling to the site, particularly children. The proposals therefore will have a detrimental effect on these amenities.

Also, a large stretch of Widnell Lane and Thame Road forms part of the Piddington Circular Walk, which is an amenity advertised by Cherwell District Council and regularly used by ramblers as well as villagers (see Appendix 3). Anyone arriving by public transport for the walk would be passing the proposed site on foot and everyone on the walk would be adversely affected by the increased traffic on these roads.

Finally, there are several equestrian businesses in the parish who exercise horses within and around the village and would suffer loss of amenity from the proposed development.

8 Historic and Natural Environment

Widnell Lane is only about a kilometre from Meadow Farm, which is part of the Upper Ray Meadows Nature Reserve (more details <http://www.bbowt.org.uk/reserves/upper-ray-meadows>), managed by the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). The value of the site is clearly described in their literature. ***"The River Ray is one of the best areas in central England for locally scarce wading birds. The first curlew usually return to the Upper Ray Meadows in late February, and by early spring lapwing and curlew can be seen displaying across the reserve."***

The BBOWT web site lists the area as having the following characteristics in habitat and species:

Habitat: Grassland, Wetland

Species: Bulbous buttercup, Cuckooflower, Meadowsweet, Pepper Saxifrage, Ragged-Robin, Yellow-rattle, Common Blue, Marbled White, Curlew, Golden Plover, Lapwing, Meadow Pipit, Reed Bunting, Skylark, Snipe, Teal, Tree Sparrow, Widgeon, Yellowhammer, Yellow Wagtail.

The site is close to, and in the catchment area of, the River Ray, which is designated as a Nitrate Vulnerable Site pursuant to the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015. Although there has been some improvement since designation, the River Ray continues to suffer from pollution, and

nitrates in particular, and remains susceptible to further continuing pollution. The River Ray's designation reflects its ecological sensitivity which will be exacerbated by and put at risk by the proximity of the proposed travellers' site.

The Environment Agency's (2016) 'Catchment Data Explorer' website says of the River Ray catchment area **"The area has been targeted for ecological protection and restoration, with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) having reserves within the catchment"**.

Piddington Parish Council, as observed earlier, is the owner of the Jubilee Reserve, whose entrance is off Widnell Lane some 400 metres from the proposed site. In June 2014, the Parish Council had a survey of species in the reserve carried out (see Appendix 4). It is also working closely with BBOWT on the development of an indigenous wildflower meadow at the Jubilee Reserve.

Furthermore, the Parish Council notes that the following reports have not been submitted with the application:

1. A Great Crested Newt Survey: this should be provided as there are at least two ponds within 250 m of the site and the pond in Widnell Park is around 500 m from the site.
2. A phase 1 ecological report: this should be provided since the site is a virgin agricultural field as set out in Council policy.
3. An archaeological survey: this should be provided as significant finds of interest, including Roman artefacts, have been discovered at a development site in Ambrosden adjacent to Blackthorn Hill Farm, which is a similar distance from the B4011 as the application site.

The proximity of the application site to both the Blackthorn Hill landscape features and Upper Ray Meadows Nature Reserve (highlighted at page 111 of the Local Plan) and Piddington's Jubilee Reserve underline the ecological importance of the flat meadows around Bicester.

The Parish Council believes that the proposed development will seriously damage the biodiversity of the River Ray Flood plains – an area situated within a kilometre of the proposed site. It also notes the provisions of **Policy ESD 13** Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement:

"Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- ***Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside;***
- ***Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography;***
- ***Be inconsistent with local character;***
- ***Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity."***

It is the Parish Council's view that the current proposal does not take into account the special features of the landscape as set out in the Local Plan, and would, in fact have a detrimental effect on these important landscape features.

9 Need and Sustainability

Piddington Parish Council has noted the contents of **paragraph B136** of the Local Plan which indicates that Cherwell District Council has a need for a further 15 pitches for travelling communities from 2012 to 2027. However, the Parish Council understands that there is currently a five-pitch site being built near Upper Heyford, and it also noted correspondence on the planning portal relating to application No 16/01780/F (land west of M40 Kirtlington Road, Chesterton) for a site for pitches for 9 families, which indicates that the officer's recommendation is likely to be to approve a 3-year temporary planning permission, thus reducing the shortfall to 1 pitch in the area.

The Parish Council contends that speculation about the closure of the site at Bloxham should not be taken into account as it does not believe that a site some 20 miles away would present as a suitable substitute to those with family, school and health connections in the Bloxham/Banbury area, particularly where the existing amenities in Arncott and Ambrosden are under unusual pressure from large-scale housing development and the Local Plan acknowledges a serious shortage of GPs in Bicester. The Parish Council would go so far as to suggest that if the caravan site at Bloxham was of such importance then measures could have been put in place to compulsory purchase the site.

This case raises the doubt that the private sector is the right partner in which to be sure of a reliable development of future sites.

The Parish Council has noted that a fundamental tenet of the current Local Plan is to provide policies that will help build sustainable communities. Piddington is a parish of some 296 electors, with a strong community drive. There are no services within the Parish (other than the Parish Church and village hall) but the residents (with the support of both the Parish Council and Cherwell District Council) are about to publish their Community Led Plan, which achieved a response rate of approximately 75% of households of the village. The addition of at least another 60 or so adults would dominate the existing population of the village and radically change its dynamics in contravention to **paragraph 25** of the Department for Communities and Local Government "Planning Policy for Traveller Sites" as quoted earlier.

The Parish Council is also aware of an application to Aylesbury Vale District Council to make permanent a current site of 19 pitches (possibly another 80 or so adults) on the Arncott Road, Boarstall (3 km as the crow flies from the application site and only 1.0 km from the edge of Arncott Village). Although this application has just been refused, the site is still there, and the Parish Council believes that these developments together are likely to dominate the established communities of the nearby small villages.

10 Flood Risk

The Parish Council has noted that the application dismisses any risk of flooding on the Application site, but does not believe this statement to be correct. The land is within 1 kilometre of the River Ray and adjacent to the River Ray floodplain. Standing water is a regular occurrence at Meadow Farm (under 1 kilometre away).

Access to Piddington from the A41 is regularly cut off by flooding so that any additional flooding on Widnell Lane, caused by runoff, will risk isolating parts of the village in periods of heavy rainfall.

The Parish Council is very concerned to see that the proposals to develop this currently open field involve the construction of pitches and circulation areas, all of which will interfere with the natural drainage of standing water, and cause water run off which could exacerbate the probability of local flooding. Furthermore, the drainage proposals are for 16 septic tanks, rather than mains drainage, which are likely to be rendered ineffective in situations where the water table is high or the fields along the B4011 (including the application site) are themselves flooded. Therefore, the proposal for 16 septic tanks on the site represents an unacceptable health and environmental hazard. The possibility of diesel run-off from any of the 16 commercial vehicles into a drainage system ultimately feeding into the environmentally important River Ray is another consideration.

11 Alternative Options

The Parish Council has noted that the thrust of the Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is that development should be sustainable and that brownfield sites should be developed as a priority before greenfield/rural sites. With this in mind, the Parish Council has reviewed the Bicester Master Plan, as accessed from the CDC website, which identifies nearly 470 hectares of land for housing and a further 130 hectares for green spaces up to 2031, without making any provision for gypsies or travellers. Within this plan there are over 30 hectares of 'reserved sites' on the listing where land use has not been determined.

The Parish Council has also noted that Cherwell District Council owns a major development site at Graven Hill whose masterplan 'Today, Tomorrow and the Future' states ***"The new Village will accommodate a choice of housing to cater for a wide variety of residents' aspirations and needs"***. This includes providing 1900 homes and 1 million square feet of commercial space plus community amenities, but at present makes no provision for gypsy/traveller sites. The failure of Cherwell District Council to make provisions in their development plans for Graven Hill, Bicester is a serious failing which should be addressed before any greenfield rural developments are considered.

Page 46 of the Cherwell Local Plan part two consultation document states in Question 33 Travelling Communities: ***"Do you wish to suggest any appropriate sites for allocation to meet the accommodation needs set out in Policy BSC 6 of the Local Plan Part 1? If you are formally promoting a site please use the 'Call for Sites' site submission form available at www.cherwell.gov.uk/policypublicconsultation Do you have any comments on the issues to be considered in a detailed policy relating to Travelling Communities in the Local Plan Part 2."***

The Parish Council has been unable to trace any response to this, leading it to believe that Traveller/Gypsy sites are wrongly being treated as if they are outside of the Local Plan process.

12 Conclusion

The proposals on planning application 17/00145/F constitute development within the open countryside, and will be an intrusive feature detracting from, and to the detriment of, the character and appearance of the area, contrary to sustainable development criteria.

The site is remote from many day-to-day facilities and services, with no bus service from the site and an infrequent service from Bullingdon Prison. The benefits that would accrue to the travellers of having a settled lifestyle, and the contribution the site would make towards reducing a potential deficiency in the supply of deliverable pitches, would be better secured from a site in or near a settlement with immediate access to a wide range of local facilities.

Piddington is classified as a Category C village in Cherwell's Local Plan, which means permitted development is limited to infilling and conversion. This clearly set out development mandate means the village will not receive any of the financial upsides or community benefits that follow from larger scale housing development. We have been resilient in dealing with the loss of key services and have even become the stronger for it (as is evidenced by the responses from our Community-Led Plan). Conversely, the Parish Council does expect that those same planning policies protect the village from speculative commercial developments such as the proposal for Widnell Lane. Granting permission for this planning application will set a precedent, and damage the nature and identity of the locality.

Unfortunately, it appears that policies intended to give individual gypsy/traveller families with ties to specific areas positive opportunities to find suitable sustainable places to live are instead being subverted by speculators, who are seizing the opportunity to acquire agricultural land at a low price simply in the hope of making a profit, regardless of whether the land is the best or most sustainable place for people to live. If such developments are approved, it will surely encourage more planning applications on isolated pockets of land, which puts pressure on struggling rural areas and small communities without benefiting anyone other than the owners of the land.

The Parish Council is disappointed that Cherwell District Council has so far missed the opportunity to create an inclusive community on land purchased at Graven Hill, where it could have put in place a development that is truly representative of the Local Plan – working alongside the gypsy/traveller community to design a twenty-first century site that respects their way of life yet is integrated with the wider community and close to essential services, and at the same time addressing any potential future shortfalls in pitch supply.

However, Cherwell District Council is still able to address this issue by investigating the 30 hectares of “reserved land with land use not determined”, as highlighted in the Bicester Masterplan, alongside brownfield sites and land owned by the County Council.

The Parish Council has examined the contents of **Policy PSD 1** concerning presumption in favour of sustainable development and it is clear that (a) the proposed development would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area, (b) the application does not accord with the policies in this Local Plan, (c) the adverse impact of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits of doing so.

Piddington Parish Council believes that Cherwell District Council has a duty not to react impulsively to the implied shortfall of pitches but to consider the terms as set out in the Local Plan and to refuse this application.

13 Documents referred to

BBOWT 'Upper Ray Meadows', <http://www.bbowt.org.uk/reserves/upper-ray-meadows> (accessed February 2017).

Cherwell District Council (2015) 'The Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031: Part 1 (incorporating Policy Bicester 13 re-adopted on 19 December 2016)', adopted 20 July 2015.

Cherwell District Council (2016) 'The Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031: Part 2 Development Management Policies and Sites: Issues Paper'.

Cherwell District Council, 'Interactive Local Plan', Policy EN16, <http://npa.cherwell.gov.uk/LocalPlan/written/cpt9a.htm> (accessed February 2017).

Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Department for Communities and Local Government (August 2015) *Planning Policy for Travellers Sites*.

Environment Agency (2016) 'Catchment Data Explorer', <http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3350/Summary> (accessed February 2017).

Friends, Families and Travellers website (2014) <http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/where-you-live-2/buying-land/> (accessed February 2017).

'Graven Hill Today Tomorrow & the Future', http://www.gravenhill.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Today_Tomorrow_and_the_Future.pdf (accessed February 2017).

Appendix 1 Photographs

Section 1 Introduction



Piddington (in the centre of the picture) showing that the village is set in an overwhelmingly rural agricultural landscape (from Google Earth),



Piddington from Muswell Hill (proposed site is off to the left)

Section 3 Location



Thame Rd, Piddington



Pocket Park, Lower End, Piddington



Corner of Arncott Rd (Widnell Lane), Thame Rd and Lower End



Corner of Arncott Rd (Widnell Lane), Thame Rd and Lower End

Section 4 Site



Proposed development site on greenfield agricultural land

Section 5 Access



Sign on B4011 showing accident statistics



B4011 at the junction with Widnell Lane (Widnell Lane on the right)



B4011 approaching the junction with Widnell Lane (Widnell Lane on the left)



Widnell Lane close to the site entrance showing narrowness of lane and lack of pedestrian refuge (in summer, verges are filled with tall cow parsley and hedges spread closer to the road)



Widnell Lane close to the site entrance showing narrowness of lane and lack of pedestrian refuge



Widnell Lane in Winter



Thame Rd, Piddington



Lower End, approaching the junction with Arcott Rd (Widnell Lane), Piddington

Section 7 Amenity



Widnell Park, Piddington, close to proposed site



Widnell Park, Piddington, close to proposed site



Wedding Reception on Widnell Park playing fields



Rounders match on Widnell Park playing fields



Tree planting as part of the creation of the Jubilee Reserve, Widnell Park, 2012



Oxford Conservation Volunteers taking a break from clearing Widnell Park, 2013

Section 10 Flood Risk



Upper Ray Meadows



Standing water near entrance of proposed site



Standing water near entrance of proposed site



Lower End, near junction with Arncott Rd (Widnell Lane)



Lower End, near junction with Arncott Rd (Widnell Lane)

Appendix 2 Cherwell District Council objections to proposed Asylum Seekers Accommodation Centre, Piddington, 2002

Planning and Development Services

Alan Jones MA (Cantab) DipTP MRTPI
Head of Planning and Development Services

FAO Mr J Brooks
The Home Office
C/o CGMS Consultants
Newspaper House
8-16 Great New Street
LONDON
EC4A 3BN



DISTRICT COUNCIL
North Oxfordshire

Bodicote House • Bodicote
Banbury • Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

Telephone 01295 252535
Textphone 01295 221572
DX 24224 (Banbury)

www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Please ask for **Bob Duxbry/Alan Jones** Our ref **RD/SM/02/01044/GD** Your ref **JB/LM/3119**
and **02/01045/GD**

Direct Dial **01295 221821** Fax **01295 221856** Email **planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk**

16 July 2002

Dear Sir

Proposed Asylum Seekers Accommodation Centre, Piddington

I write with reference to the duplicate Circular 18/84 notifications which you sent to this Council on 14 May 2002

As you are aware these consultations were considered by the Council's South Area Planning Committee on 11 July 2002

The Committee resolved to object to the proposals on the grounds that:

- (1) The proposal is contrary to Policies G1, G5, E3 and H1 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011 and Policy H18 and Policy EMP4 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and Policy OA7 of the deposit draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011 in that the proposal represents significant development in the open countryside where it has not been demonstrated using a sequential approach that other more appropriate sites which do not breach national planning guidelines do not exist. In the opinion of the local planning authority the urgent national need ascribed to this development does not outweigh the requirement to adopt the sequential approach to site finding required by PPG3.
- (2) The proposed development by reason of its size and location is contrary to policies G2 and EN1 of the Structure Plan for Oxfordshire 2011 and Policy C7 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan in that it would cause harm to the character of the countryside and it has not been demonstrated that other forms of development in other locations could not adequately meet the stated urgent national need.

Cont'd. .



- (3) The proposed site is an unsuitable location in terms of sustainability in that it is remote from an urban area on a site poorly served by public transport and the proposed green travel initiatives are considered insufficient to overcome the inherent failings of the site in this regard. As such the proposal is contrary to the advice contained in PPG13 and to Policy G1, G2 and G3 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011 and Policy TR1, TR2 and TR4 of the deposit draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011.
- (4) On the basis of the limited evidence submitted, the Council is not convinced that the development will not have an adverse impact upon services provided for the local community by public agencies and as such the proposal would be contrary to Policy G3 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011, and furthermore the Council considers that the community has genuine concerns and fear of increased crime and problems of public order which have not been satisfactorily addressed and could not be controlled within current resources.
- (5) On the basis of the evidence submitted, the Council has concerns about site contamination/foul surface water drainage matters and the ecological impact of the proposals, and the proposal is therefore contrary to Policies ENV9 and C2 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan respectively.

It was further resolved that the Council request that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister be asked to ensure that any subsequent appeal against this objection be dealt with at a Public Inquiry, in order to give all interested parties the opportunity to present their concerns in full to an independent inspector.


Under a separate cover I will be providing you with copies of all representations received. You will appreciate that this is a large copying task, but I will endeavour to provide this documentation as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Alan Jones
Head of Planning &
Development Services

cc Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1 5DU

Appendix 3 Piddington Circular Walk



Additional Information

The text of this leaflet can be made available in other languages, large print, braille, audio or electronic format on request. Please contact 01295 227001.

જોડાણથી પાલોલો સુધારક માહિતી નીચેના જગ્યા પર અથવા ઇલેક્ટ્રોનિક્સ માટે અપીલ કરી શકાય છે. 01295 227001

જો આ માહિતી તમારું ભાષા અથવા અન્ય ભાષામાં હોય તો કૃપા કરીને અમારું કાર્યાલય સંપર્ક કરો. 01295 227001

如蒙貴報以另一語言印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。01295 227001


اگر آپ کو مطلوب کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں شائع کرنے کا خواہش ہے تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔ 01295 227001

All of Cherwell District Council's circular walks and rides are published on the council website and can be downloaded free. Leaflets can be purchased from Banbury Tourist Information Centre 01295 259855. For further information about circular walks and rides, please contact:

Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Environment and Community Directorate
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House, Bodicote
Banbury, Oxon, OX15 4AA
Telephone: 01295 221803
Email: rural@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Web: www.cherwell.gov.uk

January 2013
Printed on recycled paper



PIDDINGTON
CIRCULAR WALK AND VILLAGE TRAIL

Circular walk 4.5 miles / 7 km Time 3 hours

Piddington Circular Walk and Village Trail

The **Piddington Circular Walk** is an attractive rural route taking in Muswell Hill, the highest viewpoint in the southern half of Cherwell District. It starts from the village hall where there is usually ample parking (please see "By Car" instructions below). With the co-operation of the landowners, all of the stiles on the route were replaced by gates in 2011, except for at point 7.

The **Piddington Village Trail** can be followed on its own as a linear route or as part of the circular walk. It takes you through the picturesque village noting points of historical interest. The route offers an easy level walk which is suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

The circular walk is clearly described and waymarked but it helps to follow the information in this leaflet as you go. Please note changes can occur so before setting out on your walk, check on Cherwell District Council's walks pages for updates in the leaflet text or along the route - www.cherwell.gov.uk/circularwalks. The walk is explained and signed in a clockwise direction but once you have familiarised yourself with the route, you can walk it either way.

Getting there

The Piddington Circular Walk starts at the village hall on the Ludgershall Road.

To find it on a mapping website or using satellite navigation, the grid reference is 'SP641174' and the post code is OX25 1PU.

By Train: Bicester North station is between Banbury and London (National Rail timetable 115). Bicester Town station is linked to Oxford (National Rail timetable 116).

By Bus: Charlton on Otmoor Service 94 stops in Piddington and links to both Oxford and Bicester but this is an irregular service. Call 01865 331249 for details.

By Car: Park in the village hall car park. Occasionally this may be full when the hall is being used. If this is the case, please park responsibly on village streets. Large groups planning to walk the route should contact the village hall number ahead of time - 07926 620422.

Preparation

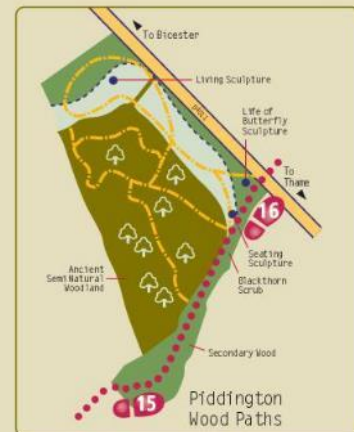
- Wear appropriate clothing and strong, comfortable footwear. Trousers, strong boots or wellingtons are recommended as parts of the route are very steep and are very often wet and muddy.
- Carry water.
- Take a mobile phone if you have one but bear in mind that coverage can be patchy in rural areas.
- If you are walking alone it's sensible, as a simple precaution, to let someone know where you are and when you expect to return.

Things to remember

- Much of the route is across grazing land so if you bring your dog with you, keep it under close control and on a lead through stocked fields. However, current advice recommends you should not walk between a cow and her calf and, if you are threatened by cattle, you should let the dog off the lead.
- You may come across temporary fencing not mentioned in the leaflet as farmers will use this in different places to manage their livestock throughout the year. Provision for walkers to get through this fencing safely should always be made - please let us know if this is not the case.
- Ground nesting birds can be disturbed by dogs, particularly in the Spring, so please keep them under close control.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
- Remember that the countryside is a working place - leave crops, buildings, machinery and livestock well alone. Leave gates and property as you find them and please keep to the line of the path.
- Take great care when crossing the busy roads.
- Many of the buildings described are private dwellings. Please respect the privacy of residents by viewing from a polite distance.
- Park your car responsibly. Do not obstruct gateways, narrow lanes and village facilities. Consider leaving valuables at home.

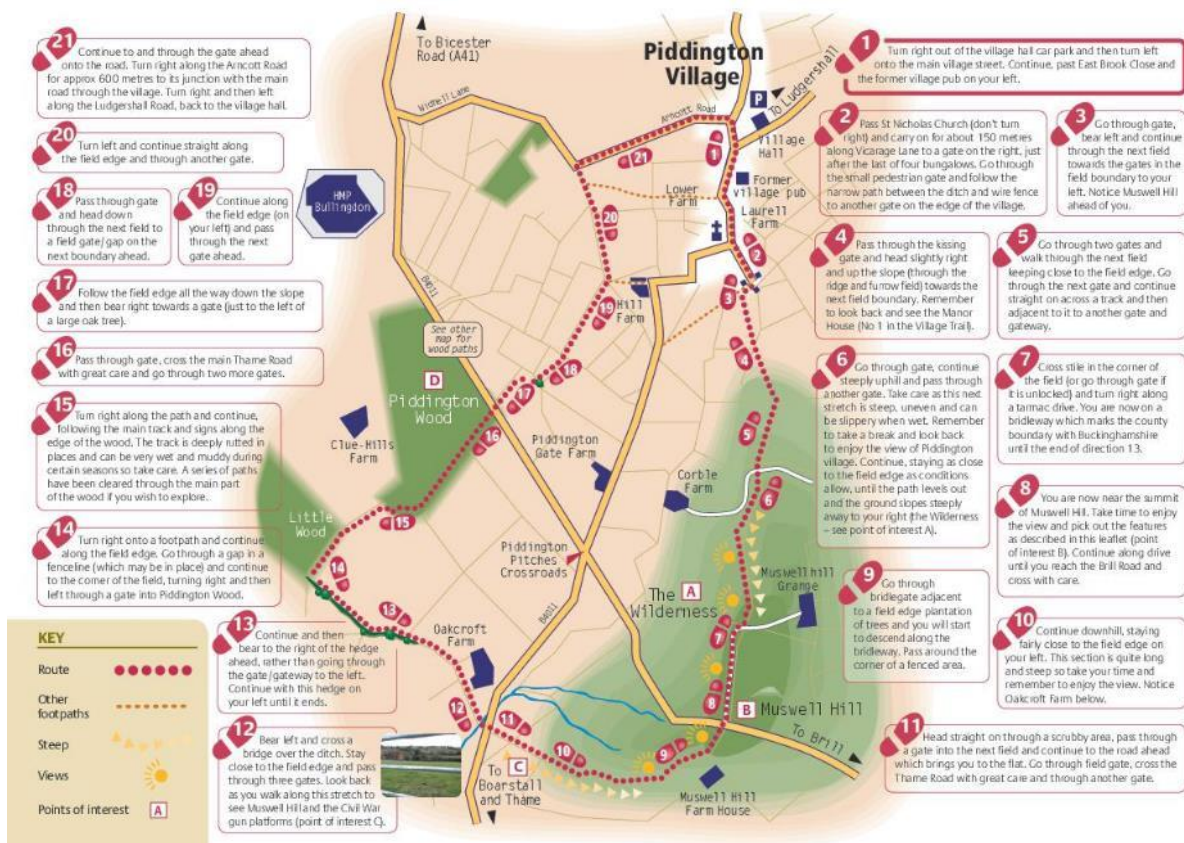
Points of interest

- A** The **WILDERNESS**, a strange dark area of uneven ground adjacent to point 6, is said to have been a Roman signal station for Alchester (as Bicester was known then). In the dark ages the area was left to become overgrown, as the Anglo-Saxons believed all Roman sites to be haunted. So beware.
- B** On a clear day you can see for miles from the summit of **MUSWELL HILL**, sometimes as far as the Cotswolds. See if you can spot Bullington Prison in the distance and the crossroads known as the Piddington Pitches down below, where the Parliamentary army pitched during the civil war. In 1152 a chapel was built on Muswell Hill by Ralph the hermit and the parishioners of Piddington used to hold a procession to it on the feast days of the Holy Cross. In 1488 the lord of Muswell granted them a right of way to the chapel across his land for six shillings and eightpence. The last ruins disappeared in about 1800.
- C** A large part of **MUSWELL HILL** is a Local Wildlife Site which has been selected due to the presence of lowland meadow which is an important natural habitat. Although not visible from the circular route, **BOARSTALL** was important in the Civil War as a royalist stronghold. What can be seen (looking back from point 12) are the gun platforms which the Parliamentary army cut into the side of Muswell Hill. They were trained on Boarstall's fortified manor house. All that remain today are the tower, moat, church and landscaped gardens. Boarstall Tower and surrounds are now owned by the National Trust and the gardens are open to visitors.
- D** **PIDDINGTON WOOD** (and Little Wood which you will have already passed) is an isolated block of ancient woodland which is a remnant of the Bemwood hunting forest. Ancient woodland is land that has been continually wooded since at least 1600AD and so is rich in wildlife.



In medieval times Bemwood covered 200 square miles and 50 parishes including Amcott and Piddington. The Woodland Trust purchased 9.7 hectares in 1989 with the help of a grant from Cherwell District Council (CDC). Prior to this there was no public access due to the impenetrable nature of the wood and private ownership. The system of 'rides' or paths which once existed through the wood has been recreated, allowing walkers to leave the main circular walk for a while and enjoy the wood even more. The woodland was expanded in 2002 (again with the help of CDC) to include 5.9 hectares of neighbouring farmland. A number of sculptures produced by Sue Benenson were added in 2003 expressing several stages in the lifecycle of the Black Hairstreak butterfly and its relationship to the woodland habitat.

Take time to explore the wood if you can, particularly in the Spring when the display of flowers is a sight not to be missed. You can find out more about the Woodland Trust by looking at www.woodland-trust.org.uk or telephoning (01476) 581111.



Piddington Village Trail

The picturesque village of Piddington can be enjoyed as part of the overall route as well as by those who only want a short stroll.

Turn right out of the village hall car park. Then turn right onto the main village street (Thame Road) and continue to the junction with the Amcott Road. Turn around here and you will be ready to stroll back through Piddington, noting its historical features.

1 The Brook - Note the brook running along the right hand side of the street. It was the primary source of drinking water for the village prior to 1886.

2 Gwith Cottage - On the right just after the junction with Amcott Road, this cottage used to be the wheelwrights. The census of 1851 showed 13 craftsmen and tradesmen in the village, including a baker, blacksmith, shoemakers, bricklayers and cariers.

3 The Old School - On the left at the junction with the Ludgershall Road. Now a private house. Built in the 1860s, it was attended by up to 44 children from the village and surrounding farms.

4 Old Inn Cottage - Next to the church is the Old Inn cottage, a small thatched house, which is said to have been the inn for the masons who built the church.



5 The Church of St Nicholas - The church with its sturdy squat tower has parts dating back to 1300 and is worth a visit. A fact sheet can be found on the wall to the left of the door as you enter. Under a tree opposite the church porch is the grave of John Drinkwater, the poet, who spent his youthful summers here with relatives at Manor Farm.

6 Toll House - The small brick cottage just over to the right from the church gates used to be the toll house at the Piddington Pitches crossroads until it was removed and rebuilt here.

7 The Old Forge - The parking area at the junction of the Thame Road and Vicarage Lane is the site of the village smithy, which closed in the early 1900s.

8 The Old Vicarage - Bear left along Vicarage Lane and pass what used to be the vicarage on your left. In 1823, after the previous one had become too dilapidated to repair, this was the new vicarage, formed by knocking two cottages together. Before 1923 vicars of Piddington were appointed by election, with all adult inhabitants entitled to vote. To ensure that such occasions ran smoothly, refreshments would be provided for the electors. After the 1821 election the church received a bill for 14 gallons of ale!

9 Manor House - The Manor can only be seen from the circular walk. So for those interested and able, go through the first two gates of the circular route and a view of the Manor will be revealed if you look back. The side you can see is the oldest part of the building, dating from the seventeenth century.



If you do not plan to continue on the circular walk, turn around and make your way back through the village to the village hall.

Appendix 4 Widnell Park and Jubilee Reserve Wildlife Site Survey Card

WILDLIFE SITE SURVEY CARD (full version)

SITE NAME Piddington meadow/ Widnell Park playing field	SITE CODE n/a	CENTRAL GRID REFERENCE SP635174																						
SURVEY TITLE Other TVERC Surveys	DATE SITE SURVEYED 16 th June 2014	SITE AREA (ha) 2.8 ha																						
DISTRICT / UNITARY Cherwell	PARISH / WARD Piddington	SURVEYOR(S) Julie Kerans																						
ASSESSMENT OF SURVEY (inc time taken, weather conditions and any limitations) Approximately 2.5 hours were spent on site in fine weather conditions. The south part of the field had been cut at the time of the survey so the abundance of the species found here is harder to determine and it is more likely that some species may not have been recorded if they are limited to this end of the site.																								
LANDOWNER NAME AND ADDRESS Access permission from: the owner																								
SITE STATUS At time of survey																								
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>NNR</td> <td>SSSI</td> <td>pSSSI</td> <td>CWS/WHs</td> <td>LWS</td> <td>RIGS</td> <td>LNR</td> <td>BBOWT Res</td> <td>Other Res</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Common Land</td> <td></td> <td>Private land</td> <td>AONB</td> <td>ESA</td> <td>SPA</td> <td>SAC</td> <td>Other</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>			NNR	SSSI	pSSSI	CWS/WHs	LWS	RIGS	LNR	BBOWT Res	Other Res	Common Land		Private land	AONB	ESA	SPA	SAC	Other					
NNR	SSSI	pSSSI	CWS/WHs	LWS	RIGS	LNR	BBOWT Res	Other Res																
Common Land		Private land	AONB	ESA	SPA	SAC	Other																	
MANAGEMENT BODY Piddington Parish Council																								
OTHER DETAILS																								
MAJOR ASPECT Flat ground	MAJOR SLOPE None	ALTITUDE (m) 70m																						
GEOLOGY (solid / drift from Geology maps) Mudstone (Stewartby Member, Oxford Clay Formation)																								
SOILS <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Neut</td> <td>Calc</td> <td>Acid</td> <td>Clay</td> <td>Loam</td> <td>Sand</td> <td>Peat</td> <td>Alluv</td> <td>Rock</td> <td>Scree</td> <td>Spoil</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water logged</td> <td>Poorly drained</td> <td>Freely drained</td> <td colspan="8">Other:</td> </tr> </table>			Neut	Calc	Acid	Clay	Loam	Sand	Peat	Alluv	Rock	Scree	Spoil	Water logged	Poorly drained	Freely drained	Other:							
Neut	Calc	Acid	Clay	Loam	Sand	Peat	Alluv	Rock	Scree	Spoil														
Water logged	Poorly drained	Freely drained	Other:																					
SPECIAL INTEREST OF SITE Grassland managed for conservation as a hay meadow. It includes small amounts of several species typical of lowland meadow such as black knapweed, meadow vetchling, yellow rattle, common vetch and common bird's-foot-trefoil. Open pockets of grassland in wooded areas to the west also include ragged-robin, glaucous sedge, oxeye daisy, cowslip and common spotted-orchid.																								
PRESENT USE AND MANAGEMENT OF SITE Cut for hay																								
HABITATS ON SITE (Use BBOWT classifications)	ADJACENT LAND USE/ HABITAT (BBOWT classification)	BOUNDARIES TO SITE (river, ditch, fence, hedgerow etc.)																						
Neutral grassland	Woodland	Hedgerow																						
Hedgerows	Improved grassland	Fence																						
Pond		Ditch																						
Woodland		Road																						

SITE DESCRIPTION (including setting, major features, habitat and species interest, NVC affinities, detail of photographs taken – see guidelines)

Site location



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Brief overview

The site is a grassland field on the north side of Widnell Lane, to the west of Piddington village in Oxfordshire. It was previously used as a playing field and is bounded by hedgerows. The south west corner of the site includes a small area of woodland, car park with areas of hard-standing, mown grassland and small patches of rough grassland where the canopy is more open. There is also a small pond.

Habitats



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Detailed description

The woodland has a canopy dominated by ash with locally dominant grey willow around the pond. It also includes horse chestnut, silver birch, beech and oak. The shrub layer has dogwood, hawthorn, crab apple, goat willow and English elm. There are small amounts of field maple, spindle, elder and guelder-rose. There are the climbers traveller's Joy, ivy, dog rose and black bryony. The field layer has bramble, dewberry, nettle and the grasses false-brome, tufted hair-grass, Yorkshire fog and rough meadow-grass. Broadleaved species also include bugle and ground ivy with some hedge woundwort, wood dock, cleavers and herb Robert. There is also a small amount of wood sedge, primrose, remote sedge and hairy brome.

Open areas of grassland to the south west include areas of frequently mown grassland and rough grassland pockets amongst the trees and scrub to the south end of the site. The frequently mown grassland includes rough meadow-grass, perennial rye-grass with daisy, Yorkshire fog, yarrow and creeping buttercup. The pockets of rougher grassland have Yorkshire fog, false-brome, tufted hair-grass, bramble and ground ivy with locally frequent common spotted-orchids, selfheal, glaucous sedge, ribwort plantain, yarrow and dewberry. There is also oxeye daisy, ragged-robin, cowslip and black knapweed. There are small amounts of spiked-sedge and false fox-sedge.

The pond has locally abundant aquatic common duckweed and emergent flag iris. There is a small amount of common figwort and common fleabane.

The grassland field covering most of the site is dominated by meadow barley, Yorkshire fog and red fescue with creeping bent, sweet vernal-grass, cock's-foot, meadow fescue, perennial rye-grass and rough meadow-grass. There are small amounts of meadow foxtail, crested dog's-tail, small-leaved Timothy and yellow oat-grass. There is abundant creeping buttercup with ground

ivy, meadow vetchling, common bird's-foot-trefoil, creeping cinquefoil, common vetch, red clover and white clover. There are also small amounts of yarrow, black knapweed, common mouse-ear, creeping thistle, ribwort plantain, meadow buttercup, yellow rattle, common sorrel and goat's-beard.

Hedgerows include hawthorn, blackthorn and English elm with some horse chestnut and ash trees. There is also field rose and field maple. The field layer at the base of the hedge includes false oat-grass, nettle, cleavers, creeping thistle, hogweed, bramble and bittersweet. The hedge to the east side of the site includes an ash tree with a large split in the trunk and rot holes.

A number of butterfly species were recorded during the survey including meadow brown, gatekeeper, ringlet and green-veined white.

SURVEYORS SITE EVALUATION (context including diversity and notability of species, habitats and features and recommendations for further survey and status change or confirmation)

The main botanical interest of the site is the grassland that includes a few typical species for unimproved grassland such as meadow vetchling and common bird's-foot-trefoil. In the meadow area, the sward is quite open meaning that additional species of wildflower seeded/planted into limited areas of the site should have a good chance of spreading more widely over time with sympathetic management.

The patches of grassland in the wooded area to the south west also have value as they include species not found elsewhere on the site, including common spotted-orchids, ragged-robin and cowslip. If possible, management should control encroachment of scrub in these areas.

The small area of woodland includes the typical woodland species primrose, wood sedge, remote sedge and hairy brome. It adds to the habitat diversity of the site.

Denser areas of scrub and hedgerows have some value for nesting birds. Fruit-bearing shrubs such as hawthorn, wild cherry, bramble, blackthorn, elder and crab apple also provide a potential food source.

There are abundant flowers in the meadow providing a potential nectar source for invertebrates. Open pockets of grassland in the woodland to the south west provide sheltered nectar-rich areas that are also valuable habitat for invertebrates.

The pond is quite shaded and has a limited range of plant species but provides additional habitat diversity and is a potential breeding site for amphibians and aquatic invertebrates.

The grassland and pond habitat have moderate potential for reptiles including grass snake and slow worm.

One tree with a splint trunk and rot holes was noted. This has some potential as a possible bat roost. The hedgerows on the site provide possible commuting habitat and the grassland possible foraging habitat for bats.

Wildlife interest identified for the local area from the search of TVERC data

There are several records for black hairstreak from the surrounding area. Hedgerows on the site include the larval food plant of this species - blackthorn and if possible hedgerow management should incorporate consideration for this species' habitat requirements.

Target note locations



Target notes and photographs

Target note 1. Broadleaved semi-natural woodland. The canopy is dominated by ash with horse chestnut, silver birch, beech and oak. The shrub layer has dogwood, hawthorn, crab apple, goat willow and English elm. There is locally frequent ivy and other climbers include traveller's-Joy, ivy, dog rose and black bryony. The field layer has bramble, dewberry, nettle and the grasses false brome, tufted hair-grass, Yorkshire fog and rough meadow-grass. There is abundant bugle and ground ivy with some hedge woundwort, wood dock, cleavers, herb Robert, wood sedge, primrose, and hairy brome.



Target note 2. Pond. A small pond with locally abundant aquatic common duck weed and emergent flag iris. It is shaded by the surrounding grey and goat willow trees.



Target note 3. Scrub with patches of rough grassland. Scrub includes blackthorn, hawthorn and bramble with some dogwood, crab apple, goat willow and English elm. Open areas have Yorkshire fog, false brome, tufted hair-grass, bramble and ground ivy with locally frequent common spotted-orchids, selfheal, glaucous sedge, ribwort plantain, yarrow and dewberry. There is also oxeye daisy, ragged-robin, cowslip and black knapweed. There are small amounts of spiked-sedge and false fox sedge.



Target note 4. Car park and areas of hard-standing.

Target note 5. Semi-improved neutral grassland. The sward is dominated by meadow barley, Yorkshire fog and red fescue with creeping bent, sweet vernal grass, cock's-foot, meadow fescue, perennial rye-grass and rough meadow-grass. There are small amounts of meadow foxtail, crested dog's-tail, small-leaved Timothy and yellow oat-grass. There is abundant creeping buttercup with ground ivy, meadow vetchling, common bird's-foot-trefoil, creeping cinquefoil, common vetch, red clover and white clover. There are also small amounts of yarrow,

black knapweed, common mouse-ear, creeping thistle, ribwort plantain, meadow buttercup, yellow rattle, common sorrel and goat's-beard.



Target note 6. Semi-improved neutral grassland with planted trees. This area has grassland as for that described in *Target note 5* with young planted trees.



Target note 7. Semi-improved neutral grassland. This area includes similar species to grassland in other areas of the field but had been cut shortly before the survey so could not be fully assessed.



Target note 8. Hedgerow with trees. The hedgerow includes a mixture of hawthorn and blackthorn with oak and horse chestnut. It includes an ash tree with a split trunk and rot holes.



Target note 9. Hedgerow and ditch. The hedgerow includes hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple and ash trees. At the base of the hedge and along the ditch there is locally abundant nettle with great willowherb, creeping thistle and garlic mustard.



Target note 10. Hedgerow with line of trees. The hedge-line to the north west has hawthorn and blackthorn with dog rose, spindle, snowberry, English elm, cherry plum and common lime. There is a line of conifers towards the middle section of the hedge.

Species Records

Table 1. The following species were recorded from the grassland areas of the site (including the hedgerow species) on 16th June 2014

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance
Perennial Rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	LF
Meadow Fescue	<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	LF
Red Fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	LD
Crested Dog's-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	O
Rough Meadow-grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	LF
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	LF
False Oat-grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	O
Yellow Oat-grass	<i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	R
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	LA
Sweet Vernal-grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	F
Creeping Bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	F
Meadow Foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	O
Smaller Cat's-tail	<i>Phleum bertolonii</i>	O
Lesser Soft-Brome	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	R
Meadow Barley	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>	LD
Traveller's-joy	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	R
Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	O
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	A
Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	LF
Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	F
Meadow Vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	LF
Lesser Trefoil	<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	O
Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	F
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	LF
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	R
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	LD
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	LD
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	LA
Creeping Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	LF
Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	R
Field-rose	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	R
English Elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>	LF
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	R
Lombardy-Poplar	<i>Populus nigra 'Italica'</i>	R
Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	R
Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium molle</i>	R
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	R
Great Willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	R
Hoary Willowherb	<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	R
Horse-chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	R
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	O
Wavy Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	R
Common Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	O
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	R
Wood Dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	R
Common Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	O
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	R
Field Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	R
Hedge Bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	R
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	R
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	O
Ground-ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	LF
Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	R

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance
Yellow-rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	R
Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	O
Spear Thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	R
Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	R
Goat's-beard	<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	R
Prickly Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	R
Smooth Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	R
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>	R
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	O
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	R
Common Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	R
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	O
Rough Chervil	<i>Chaerophyllum temulum</i>	R
Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	R
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	R
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	R
Common Comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	R
Field Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	R
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	P

Table 2. The following species were recorded from wooded areas of the site and the pond on 16th June 2014

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance
Lords-and-Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	O
Common Duckweed	<i>Lemna minor</i>	LA
Black Bryony	<i>Dioscorea communis</i>	R
Common Spotted-orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	LF
Yellow Iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	LA
Glaucous Sedge	<i>Carex flacca</i>	O
False Fox-sedge	<i>Carex otrubae</i>	R
Remote Sedge	<i>Carex remota</i>	R
Spiked Sedge	<i>Carex spicata</i>	R
Wood-sedge	<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	R
Perennial Rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	O
Meadow Fescue	<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	R
Rough Meadow-grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	LA
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	R
False Oat-grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	O
Tufted Hair-Grass	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	LF
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	LA
Creeping Bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	O
Hairy-brome	<i>Bromopsis ramosa</i>	R
False-brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	LF
Common Couch	<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	R
Traveller's-joy	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	R
Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	O
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	F
Reflexed Stonecrop	<i>Sedum rupestre</i>	R
Tare species	<i>Vicia</i>	R
Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	O
Black Medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	O
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	R
Cherry Plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	O
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	LF
Crab Apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	LF
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	LF
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	LA

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance
Dewberry	<i>Rubus caesius</i>	LF
Creeping Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	O
Wood Aven	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	O
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i> agg.	R
Field-rose	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	R
English Elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>	LF
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	LF
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	R
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	O
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	R
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	R
Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	LF
Common Sallow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>	LD
Violet species	<i>Viola</i>	R
Hairy St John's-wort	<i>Hypericum hirsutum</i>	R
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	LF
Great Willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	O
Hoary Willowherb	<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	R
Horse-chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	R
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	R
Garlic Mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	O
Clustered Dock	<i>Rumex conglomeratus</i>	R
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	R
Wood Dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	LF
Common Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	O
Ragged-Robin	<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>	R
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	LF
Mock-Orange	<i>Philadelphus</i>	R
Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>	R
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	O
Scarlet Pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	R
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	LF
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	R
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	LD
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	LF
Greater Plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	R
Common Figwort	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>	R
Hedge Woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	LF
White Dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	R
Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	LA
Ground-ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	LA
Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	F
Lesser Burdock	<i>Arctium minus</i>	R
Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	O
Spear Thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	R
Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	R
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	R
Bristly Oxtongue	<i>Picris echioides</i>	R
Prickly Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	R
Smooth Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	R
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	R
Common Fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	R
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	O
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	LF
Oxeye Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	R
Common Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	R
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	R
Guelder-rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	R

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	R
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	R
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	LF
Rough Chervil	<i>Chaerophyllum temulum</i>	R
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	O
Field Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	O
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	P
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	P
Hedge Brown	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	P
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>	P