

24/00097/F

**Land South Side Of
Widnell Lane
Piddington**

**RETROSPECTIVE - Material Change of Use of land to use as a
residential caravan site for 12 gypsy/traveller families, each
with two caravans, including improvement of access, laying of
and installation of package sewage treatment plant**

Piddington Parish Council response

Piddington Parish Council objects to the above application in the strongest possible terms on the following basis:-

1. The Parish Council understood that the original planning consent for 6 pitches granted on appeal (APP/C3105/W118/3209349 28/10/2019) was void due to the applicants commencing ground works without complying with the pre-commencement conditions. No caravan pitches have been installed and the site is vacant so the Parish Council submits that it is not appropriate to consider this application as a retrospective planning consent for 12 pitches when no permission currently exists on the site.
2. 6 units were granted permission on appeal after initial refusal by CDC planning, but none have been built. Indeed, some inappropriate groundworks were commenced in contravention to the strict pre-commencement conditions imposed by the planning inspector and CDC planning department. The consequence of the breach resulted in the CDC Planning Enforcement team closing the site, preventing further works proceeding. The breach of the pre-commencement conditions amounts to a forfeiting on the consent.
3. From 2017 to present there have been numerous applications for the site ranging from 6 to 18 caravan pitches, all of which were refused permission by CDC planning committee. Three appeals were lodged, the first for 6 pitches was successful with the second and third being refused by the planning inspectors on the grounds that the needs did not override the environmental damage (see inspectors rulings APP/C3105/W/21/3272481 and APP/C3105/W/20/3262394).
4. The Parish Council sees no material change to the environmental significance of the site, all parties agree the site is a habitat for the protected species, the great crested newt. The planning inspectors at appeal APP/C3105/W/21/3272481 and APP/C3105/W/20/3262394 considered that any need for gypsy/traveller accommodation did not override the environmental damage the development would cause. We ask the planning committee to follow the precedent set at these appeals and protect this site from any further environmental damage and refuse this wholly inappropriate application.
5. The question of need has been raised by the applicant, but CDC's own figures in the Annual Monitoring Report for 2023, par 4.5 demonstrate there is a surplus of three units over the next 5 years, not a deficit and therefore no need for further pitches.

Since these figures were published a further 3 pitches have been approved in the district which takes the surplus to six pitches, so the argument for need is invalid.

6. Since previous applications for the development of this site there has been a substantial change in the nature of the surrounding area, with the grant of planning permission in 2022 by CDC at Cowpastures farm for a concrete batching plant (22/00912/F and 22/00483/F). This has increased the amount of heavy traffic along the B4011, increased substantially the noise in the area, which will have a major effect on potential residents on the site, and reduce air quality. The proximity of this noisy and dusty industrial facility (directly bordering the site in question) would render living conditions intolerable for caravans dwelling on the site. The Parish Council also understands that a significant number of hazardous chemicals will now be stored on the cement batching site which could be life-threatening to any residents on the neighbouring site.
7. In the Cherwell District Draft Local Plan Review 2040 the requirement in Core Policy 42 is for sites to be within 3km by road of a Town or Larger Village – in Core Policy 35 of the emerging Local Plan Arncott is not defined as a Larger Village but as a Smaller Village, which makes it clear that in future this site will not be considered to be in a suitable location. The Draft Local Plan has now been through public consultation and although this plan does not yet have full status of a Development Plan, it does have considerable weight as an emerging local Plan and its provisions should be considered material planning considerations.

To summarise, the Parish Council believes that this application fails to address the significant environmental damage the development would cause, is not justified on need and fails to meet the new CDC definition of exemptions as detailed in the CDC Plan 2040. For these and the other reasons outlined in our objection to this and previous applications for this site we ask the Planning Committee to refuse this application.

21st February 2024.