

PLANNING APPLICATION: 17/01962/F

GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE FOR 6 FAMILIES ON WIDNELL LANE, PIDDINGTON

PLANNING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

The planning officer's report has just been published. On this occasion his recommendation is to **APPROVE** the application. This is hugely disappointing but it is not a foregone conclusion by any means. This is just his recommendation as it is the planning committee who make the ultimate decision. In fact, the planning officer agrees that the site is NOT ideal!!

The full report can be found on the Parish Council Noticeboard section of the village website <http://www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk/parish-council-noticeboard.html>

Ultimately, he concluded that on balance the perceived need for sites in Cherwell outweighed the site's many disadvantages.

The planning committee will be meeting on THURSDAY 15TH FEBRUARY at 4pm at Bodicote House, Banbury. The parish council will address the committee. PPC are investigating transport options as parking is limited. If you would like to attend and would be interested in a seat on a coach, please advise Francesca by Monday evening latest (francesca.darby@piddingtonpc.com or telephone 01844 238294). We will do our best to organise one if there are sufficient numbers.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

The parish council would urge as many villagers as possible to write to our district councillors and planning department with your concerns. Our councillors will be attending the meeting and will speak on our behalf. DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE THE PLANNING REFERENCE 17/01962/F. The planning office are obliged to continue to publish comments.

David Hughes: david@bicestercaravanandleisure.co.uk and cllr.david.hughes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
(also Chair of the Planning Committee)

Tim Hallchurch: tim@paddockcottage.net

Simon Holland: thesimonholland@gmail.com and cllr.simon.holland@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Barry Wood: barry.wood@cherwell-dc.gov.uk (Leader of Cherwell DC)

Stuart Howden (Planning Officer for the application):
stuart.howden@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Planning Office: planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

We would also encourage you to write directly to the planning committee members. These are the people who ultimately make the decision when they vote on Thursday. A link to their email addresses can also be found on the Parish Council Noticeboard section of the village website where

you can easily cut and paste the addresses <http://www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk/parish-council-noticeboard.html>. It is hugely important that the planning committee understand the strength of local sentiment. **THIS IS A NEW CHAPTER.** Any previous submissions have been included in the body of the report. Remember we get only one chance at putting forward our case. The principal issues remain unchanged.

1a/. NEED: The planning officer has ignored the most recent independent study which concludes that need is LESS than previously thought. The planning committee at the last application were unanimous that need DID NOT outweigh the unsuitability of the site.

1b/. NEED: The applicant is not local and does not intend to live at the site. The application is speculative and commercial. We therefore have no idea who it will be sold to and whether they comply with the current definition of being a Gypsy/Traveller OR if they are part of Cherwell's need survey -- i.e. They could be from outside the district or county!!

2/. PLANNING HISTORY: Cherwell has refused developments in the area over the last 16 years.

3/. SUITABILITY: Isolated and vulnerable location. Closeness of military and prison. Local road is narrow with no pavements or lighting.

4/. SUSTAINABILITY: A remote site with a limited/non-existent bus service. Access to doctor/schools/shops/other key services by car only.

5/. DELIVERABILITY: There are five pages of conditions and planning notes related to the site. Who will enforce and monitor these? There is no mains water (PPC have a letter confirming this from Thames Water), electricity or mains drainage. The costs for putting these services in place are not financially viable and planning law states that they must be provided.

Finally, the planning committee agreed that Cherwell needed to be more proactive in finding suitable sites. This has not happened. Part 2 of the Local Plan was supposed to address this, but its publication has been delayed. This recommendation feels like a knee jerk reaction.

COMPLACENCY IS NOT AN OPTION.

Your parish council will be working over the next week to lobby councillors and will continue to work with the Military who maintain their own concerns for the site. We have engaged our QC for his comments as well. However, we need your help and backing.

Please take time over the weekend to write an email. For those of you without access to email you still have time to write to the Planning Department, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury OX15 4AA. Don't forget to include the planning reference 17/01962/F. The parish council believe that common sense will prevail and that the application will ultimately be refused but we need your support to make this happen.

PIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

To receive village email updates on this and other issues, please contact Francesca (francesca.darby@btinternet.com).