

Malcolm Carter

From: Jan Corry <jancorry5@gmail.com>
Sent: 03 November 2015 11:29
To: coordinator@ashtonkeynesneighbourhood.com
Subject: Proposed residential development B4696 / School / North of Gosditch

To the Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan - Coordinator

Dear Sir / Madam 3/11/15

Re: Proposed residential development of pasture-land off B4696 and behind Gosditch

I agree with the present Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan, which has been well thought through and presented to the Village several times by the Village Planning Committee, who have strived to develop and provide a balanced Plan having seen the devastation by West Swindon encroachment, Cricklade and Cirencester.

In both letter and spirit it preserves and vitally protects the best of the old rural village while welcoming the new. I, like many others, assumed that the Plans re-presented end of September/early October for comments were the final draft. I do not now wish to see these amended to incorporate a development which is not in keeping with the original planning aims or Wiltshire County Council's aims and guidelines.

Existing greenfields and old meadows should now be sacrosanct as when they are gone 'they are gone' and sadly can never be reversed!

New building should only be on brownfield sites like Carters in Happyland and the old Cotswold Community sites (both already identified in the Village Plan) with less adverse impact on the environment and social acceptance. The Village school is virtually full to capacity with existing villagers unable to get their children in at the present time.

Town and Country Planning Acts allowed a balancing of interests but as the village is surrounded by gravel lakes (and not fields) retaining what few greenfields remain within the village is even more important than ever.

The recently presented (and rushed) proposal for the inclusion of building development of greenfield land north of Gosditch, between the B4696 and School, should not be included for these special reasons:

1. It means the permanent loss of an important ecological site classed as 'valuable open space' presently. It is flood plain meadows and an area of outstanding natural beauty.
2. We are surrounded by lakes and have already lost some footpath areas fenced off as 'no-go areas' such as the Thames Water land. Additionally over the years Cullimore Gravels have cut off a many of the previous spaces to villagers.
- 3, It would be too much to lose yet another beautiful open space and public footpaths within the village - popular with children, dog walkers, tourists and Thames Path walkers, keep fit joggers and runners. This is the very thing which draws many people to the Village.
4. Allowing this development will set a precedent and will be a catalyst for the loss of other open green spaces around the village and create 'village sprawl'.
5. The school has been full for many years with a long waiting list. Every class has its maximum number of children and residents close to the school have had applications for their children turned down.
6. Physically this site is at risk of river and groundwater flooding and the west end is often flooded in winter.
7. Thames Water put up high security fences all round its site boundary due to a Health & Safety Issue years ago because of the risk of Escaping Toxic Gas being a possibility if a major incident occurred due to a malfunction of the water treatment works. This is still a risk.
8. Site access will see even more traffic on Gosditch and the B4696 which has seen many accidents over the last 35 years despite the speed limit reduction from 60mph to 40mph. Heavy lorries are unable to pass safely due to their wide axles and the narrow road. Last year a young driver overtaking on a blind bend at

Gosditch exit had a head-on collision with a south bound car on the B4696 ending on a 6 foot wood pile! Previous(*) attempts to have access to the B4696 were turned down by Wiltshire CC on safety fears. There are blind bends in both directions at the point where any new development would exit onto the B4696. Why, when traffic has increased ten-fold over the years would anyone assume that it would now be safe to allow traffic for the new housing and a school car park to exit onto this road?

9. There is no pavement all along the dangerous B4696 especially at the proposed exit to connect with the rest of the village safely. Gosditch is already overloaded with traffic at school times and I suspect many parents would still drive into Gosditch to drop off and collect rather than drive round to a car park. As a resident I've seen many cars still parking in the yellow hazard areas, when collecting.

10. (*)The area immediately south of the proposed B4696 exit would also be expected to be included in the plan and was always turned down on Road Safety reasons which still exist today.

Please do not allow any further reduction of the valuable open spaces in the village under any circumstances as it is a permanent loss.

I agree wholeheartedly with preserving what is left of our green fields, our legacy to future generations as when its gone its gone. It is too precious to waste.

We can move forward while ensuring the Village complies with current requirements to provide housing for the future. As I understand this our current plan has more than fulfilled this requirement for a number of years to come. We do not now need to destroy the very environment which attracted us all in the first place.

Mrs Janet Corry
2 Dairy Farm
Gosditch
Ashton Keynes
SN6 6NZ
Tel 01285 861060

P.S. Apologies for any repetition due to the extremely short notice given to us all.