

Response to Application 20/02654/OUT Land South East of Oxford Hill

Witney Town Council is broadly supportive of this application and welcomes dialogue with the developer on several matters.

Firstly, the Town Council would like to ask if the application could be amended to include an entrance road and access to Windrush Cemetery to the south of the site. As the owner of this facility, the Town Council would also welcome further connectivity to the site by way of a footpath/cycleway at the Southern boundary and further ones to the north and west, allowing journeys to and from it to be safer and more attractive for active travel.

In terms of the access, the delivery of a two-way road off the community hub spur road into the Cemetery, with associated parking for 10-12 spaces inside would be the Council's preferred option through this application. The Council is disappointed that this request was not previously discussed following a previous District Council consultation on the site but believes there is still time for this inclusion if the developer is favourable.

The Town Council welcomes the idea of a community hub that incorporates a shop and a community space. The centre needs to be a versatile space that can be used for dance classes, the scouting movement, birthday parties etc. It could also include a quiet reflection place/chapel for the cemetery and a café/bar facility. The Town Council would have an interest in taking this hub on and facilitating local ownership of it.

However, the Town Council questions the location of the community building because of accessibility because people would have to drive round the residential area to reach it, increasing the danger to pedestrians and residents from traffic that would not otherwise be on the estate. If it was to be sited on lower ground, then the Council would welcome a play area or village green on the higher ground.

Witney Town Council welcomes the Stagecoach comments and agrees with all the points made about cycle lanes and how well appointed the bus stops need to be as this residential area is quite far away from these important bus stops. The Town Council envisages that the Community bus may wish to take in this new development so would ask that adequate provision for turning and stopping is considered at this stage.

The Town Council welcomes the thought that has gone into the continuation of the green corridor up Oxlease and the continuation of paths from other areas of town that will connect onto this estate.

The Town Council would like to see, where space allows, cycle lanes moved away from the roads. In order to allow access to secondary schools and primary schools in the town centre it's important that the Farm Mill Lane path is connected from the new development and that a crossing is put in place on Witan Way, a dangerously busy road. It is also important for access to the Town's supermarkets and The Leys via Church Green. The Town Council suggests that no houses are occupied until both these items are complete. A footpath connecting to South Leigh would also be welcomed and will be supportive as possible for paths on land in its ownership.

The Town Council would also like to see appropriate lighting for the area - low level solar lighting would be preferred.

The Town Council would like to see 3 phase electricity in homes to support fast electric car charging in every house with further charging points available at the community space.

The Town Council regards the phasing of infrastructure as crucial and therefore the new Shores Green junction should be ready to take the construction traffic before the start of the development in order to avoid further air pollution in Bridge Street - this also applies to the residents of the new development. If this is not possible then Shores Green should be constructed in phase 1 of the development. The air quality management scenarios assume that the West End Link road will be in place from 2024 which is not realistic.

The Town Council is pleased to note that Thames Water recognises that there is a problem with its capacity in relation to further residential developments and would like to hear how what future steps will be taken to address this.

The Town Council would also like to see the development following the Milton Keynes model of giving one of the units over to community development via the CVA- one of the early units is utilised by the CVA to build a feeling of community in the area. They then move into the community centre when this is ready. The unit is then sold, and the money is spent on community projects. The Council would be happy to have a community connector role.

Section 106 Requests

In addition to the cemetery access above (or associated funding) the Town Council would like to request the following to support the infrastructure in and immediately adjacent to the development.

Sport & Recreation

Witney Town Council recognises the inclusion of a proposed play area/LEAP but would request an off-site contribution of £20,000 to upgrade the nearest play park facility in Eton Close to serve the anticipated increase in children from the development.

The Town Council also welcomes the inclusion of village green areas and would ask if one of these could be used as a wheeled sports track, with £15,000 allocated to the Town Council to facilitate this project.

The Town Council is committed to encouraging grassroots sports and considers that a development of this size will increase the number of people wanting to use sports facilities. The Council does however recognise that due to the typography of the site, the inclusion of a sports pitch would be difficult (unless the developer feels that land in their ownership south of the cemetery is suitable, or another piece of land outside of this site). Therefore, it would request a contribution of £50,000 towards upgrading other sports pitches and changing rooms across the town to absorb the anticipated usage.

Infrastructure & Street Scene

The Town Council would like to request that the developers install at least two grit bins on the estate due to its sloping typography along with benches in the village green areas, Sheffield cycle racks near the bus stops, community hub and recreation areas (village greens), bus shelters and bins. The Council would like to see the majority of these installed before all dwellings are occupied.

Lake & Country Park

The Town Council would like to request £10,000 towards the inclusion of an educational space at Witney Lake & Country Park as part of its long-term plan to manage this area. The site sits south west of the development and is connected via the paths mentioned above.