

This is the response of Eynsham Parish Council to:

**15/00761/FUL Eynsham Nursery and Plant Centre, Old Witney Road, Eynsham – Erection of 77 dwellings (comprising a mix of 1 bedroom flats and 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses), open space, car parking and all associated and ancillary works. Formation of new vehicular access.**



Eynsham Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, June 2014 (SHLAA) refers to this Site (187 and 187a) as 'suitable but only as part of a larger, comprehensive development'. As such, the Site should form part of a comprehensive master plan for the longer term growth of Eynsham with other landowners of sites for sustainable development, which identifies key infrastructure provision for transport, schools, healthcare, utilities and social amenities.
2. This proposal is for a short term, opportunistic development which would create a significant obstacle to future comprehensive development of Eynsham. It would not only unacceptably urbanize the western fringe of the village (BE2) but be isolated from the village by a single, narrow bottleneck access for all pedestrians and cycles, all motor vehicles and emergency and essential services. This is contrary to WODC's Draft Local Plan 2031, CO2, CO3 and OS5.
3. The Applicant concedes that access to the Site from the current A40 is unacceptable. It instead seeks to link up to Old Witney Road, which its Transport Assessment says (at 7.1.6 and 7.1.9) will double the current peak time traffic. A historical road from Eynsham to the west, Old Witney Road was blocked off as part of previous A40 development works specifically to decrease the amount of traffic on this residential road. This excess vehicular traffic would then add to the near capacity traffic already using Witney Road and the junction with the A40. As there is no right turn at this junction, the excess traffic eastbound would be obliged to use Spareacre Lane as a rat run or go right on Witney Road to the village centre, Acre End Street, High Street and Oxford Road via the B4449 bypass or Swinford Toll Bridge. OCC have already identified Witney Road, Acre End Street/High Street and the Toll Bridge as among the worst congestion areas in West Oxfordshire.
4. The application ignores the proposals in OCC's draft Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 (LTP4). The site is adjacent to a section of the A40 identified as having serious and continuous congestion and which will be part of LTP4's emerging A40 strategy. LTP4 also identifies this section as a site for an Eynsham park and ride in its proposals for a Bus Rapid Transit system as part of its Science Transport Network. The building of this development now, with the designated access, would be an obstacle to provision of improved, integrated transport access for the future development of Eynsham as part of improvements to the A40 to accommodate the LTP4 proposals.

5. The application also ignores DLP 2031 which (Policy T2) supports the LTP4 proposals. Approving this application now would be contrary to CO10 (Ensure land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured) and CO13 (Improve access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire). The NPPF (at para 32) says developments should be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
6. The application fails to address significant other infrastructure issues, in addition to transport.

(a) On education, the Planning Statement erroneously states that Bartholomew School has capacity. Consent has recently been granted for four new classrooms and two science labs to accommodate a 95 pupil increase in autumn 2015. This expansion does not include the present application. The Statement says 'it is likely that additional primary school provision will be required by the development'. The primary school has already undergone expansion to accommodate increased demand. The application does not address the fact that neither school has the capacity to continually expand on a piecemeal basis funded by individual s106 contributions. (IDP Feb 2015, 4.15.)

(b) The application makes no assessment of the capacity of local healthcare facilities. Eynsham Medical Centre (and its branch at Long Hanborough, which is also subject to significant development proposals) is already rationing patient appointments. The practice states it now has 13,617 patients, and is under strength, with a majority of doctors only working part-time.

(c) The application's provision for drainage is inadequate. The Site is on the far west side of the village. Foul sewage from the Site will have to be pumped across the entire village to the Thames Water sewage pumping station east of the B4449 bypass. Thames Water has concerns (letter 15 January 2015) that the public sewer network may have insufficient capacity to accommodate the Site and has requested an impact study, which has not been provided with this application.

Surface water drainage is to rely on a SUDS system but the permeability testing indicates significant amounts of clay, resulting in poor to modest infiltration. Notwithstanding the proposed remedial measures, the developed Site 'will result in a significant increase in impermeable area' (Flood Risk Assessment, 11.3) and therefore generate substantial run-off. The surface water drainage strategy (FRA, Appendix E) shows run-off discharging from the south-west of the Site, towards the Chil Brook to the south. In addition, a drainage ditch runs parallel to the east boundary of the site. This also discharges into the Chil Brook, which flows through the southern edge of the village (significantly not shown in FRA, Appendix C) historically causing flood damage to properties in the vicinity of Station Road. No assessment has been provided to show the adverse impact and increased risk of

flooding, water quality (NE11) or pollution (BE18) that would be caused by the development.

7. Despite the wide mix of housing types, the development has a lack of bungalows in an area where there is a significant lack of, and demand for, them. The proposed development does not cater for the needs of the area, which has a higher than average population of elderly residents. The housing mix also does not deal with the related requirements for dwellings suitable for the disabled (DLP 2031, H4). In addition, the application pays no attention to the DLP 2031 guide (at 5.63) for the mix of market housing. For example the DLP guide recommends 3 bed houses at 43.4% (as opposed to 31.8% in the development) and 23.9% 4+ bed houses (as opposed to 60.5%).
8. Despite the wide mix of housing types, the plans/elevations indicate a predominate ridge height of around 9m. This substantial development on the western fringe of the village would adversely affect and harm the visual amenity of the locality and local landscape (OS2, BE2, BE4 and NE3).
9. This development is not needed now for West Oxfordshire to achieve its housing targets in the Draft Local Plan 2031. Eynsham, as part of the Eynsham-Woodstock Sub-Area, has had a number of small, suitable, infill sites either approved or proposed since April 2014, notwithstanding no housing requirement (SHLAA, Table 1) until 2019. No substantial development (250) is planned until the period 2019 to 2024. This would allow any future substantial development to become part of a more comprehensive sustainable development plan for longer term growth in the village with adequate provision for the necessary supporting infrastructure (OS2).

This application should not be approved as its adverse impact on future growth of development and infrastructure would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (NPPF, para 14, OS1 and BE1).

*If this application is approved:*

- A developer contribution should be required expressly for improvements, including pavement, lighting, shelters and RTI installation to the Evenlode bus stops on the A40.
- The Parish Council requests a developer contribution in the amount of £238,700, index linked, towards street furniture, play and recreation areas and facilities or other appropriate village amenities to reflect the additional strain on existing community infrastructure the development will represent.

DS for Eynsham Parish Council, 22/04/15