

Comments for Planning Application 20/00934/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: 20/00934/FUL

Address: Land To The Rear Of The George Inn 5 Sandford Road Littlemore Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 4PU

Proposal: Erection of 2 x 1 bed, 3 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed dwellings with associated off-street parking, private amenity, secure bicycle parking and recycling and refuse storage provisions.

Case Officer: Clare Gray

Customer Details

Name: Mr Eamonn McNamara

Address: The Manor House Sandford Road Oxford

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbours

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Access
- Amount of development on site
- Effect on adjoining properties
- Effect on character of area
- Effect on existing community facilities
- Effect on privacy
- Effect on traffic
- General dislike or support for proposal
- Local plan policies
- On-street parking
- Parking provision
- Public transport provision/accessibility

Comment: Whilst fully supporting the need generally to build good quality affordable housing in Littlemore and elsewhere in Oxford so that the younger generation, keyworkers, and those on low incomes can afford to live here, -such as the proposed 270 homes development at Littlemore Park, - the current proposal to allow eight family houses or flats and 12 parking spaces makes very little sense for several reasons.

Whilst it is to be expected that a property developer would seek to maximize its profit, it is extremely surprising to see some on OCC apparently happy to sacrifice the George pub as a major community resource in Littlemore for the sake of shoehorning as many houses as possible on the land adjoining. Ultimately, the choice is binary, as the developer clearly knows already,

since any major development at this site will destroy the viability of the George's business model (then allowing the developer to submit a subsequent application in a year or two's time to convert the pub into flats).

The George is a major historical landmark in Littlemore dating from the 18thC, and noted feature in history books of the city, as well as the Littlemore Conservation Area. How anyone can argue that the proposed development fits in with character of a conservation area landmark like the George escapes me.

It is used by thousands of people both in Littlemore and the wider Oxfordshire region each year for various community functions, not just for personal leisure and entertainment. Whilst I am not a regular, OCC is seriously underestimating how much the pub is valued by the wider community. As a neighbour, I know that the landlord has done a wonderful job over recent years in helping people and community groups in the village connect with each other. He runs a popular family pub, and is very considerate of the effect of the behaviour of customers on the neighbouring houses.

Littlemore residents have been broadly tolerant of the need for more housing in the village, but the investment in infrastructure and community planning has simply not kept in step. Sandford Road, as part of the main road in Littlemore, has now become a rat run even outside rush hour. In terms of local public transport, Littlemore is almost certainly the worst served of the city districts, with only the limited, six day a week 3A bus service.

Adding 12 more houses in an inappropriate site with only a narrow one-way access, which must also allow trade access to lorries, and which is a blind exit next to a zebra crossing and a busy primary school, defies any sound planning criteria underpinning NPPF and local planning policies.

In addition, given that most households tend these days to own two or more cars, it means that the allocated parking of 12 spaces is utterly inadequate, and the overspill would seriously affect all the other houses in the vicinity adding significantly to congestion.

We have around 20 or more Oxford United home matches each season, and the impact of supporters parking their cars in every side road in the village on match days is heavy enough on local residents. The large George pub car park plays an important part in allowing a number of cars to be off road on match days rather than clogging up street parking on the main road and side streets opposite, as well as allowing local supporters to socialise in safe surroundings.

In conclusion, I cannot see how a housing scheme at the back to the George pub can be allowed to proceed, given the major adverse consequences for the local community and the area.