

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr David Oliver
The Chief Executive
East Northamptonshire Council
Cedar Drive
Thrapston
NORTHANTS, NN14 4LZ

OPEN LETTER

24th February 2020

RE: PLANNING APPLICATION – COTTERSTOCK ROAD/ST. PETER'S ROAD, 19/01327/OUT.

As you know, I have been contacted by a significant number of local residents in respect of their concerns relating to the above planning application, which I understand is coming before the Development Control Committee on Wednesday evening.

As such, I am writing to formally associate myself with the strong local objections eloquently set-out in the enclosed submission from Oundle Town Council, and on those grounds believe this application should be rejected.

I would also argue that approving this application at this stage would be premature, given the outstanding development site related concerns locally, which I raised in my letter to you of the 10th February 2020 - to which I have not as yet received a response - and which I believe should be amicably resolved before any irreversible decision is taken relating to any specific application affecting the town.

I would therefore be most grateful if you could ensure the Development Control Committee is made aware of these objections and I urge that local wishes are respected and this application refused.

Yours sincerely,

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



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OUNDLE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS FOR OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION

COTTERSTOCK ROAD/ST. PETER'S ROAD 19/01327/OUT

Neither this site nor the site at St Christopher's Drive, 19/01355/OUT are allocated for residential development during the plan period (to 2021) of the current local plan, the Rural North Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP) although the site off Cotterstock Road/St. Peter's Road is identified in that plan as a possible site for future residential development beyond the plan period.

If there is a five year land supply within the ENC district then it is submitted it would be inappropriate to develop either site at the present time. If there is not a five year land supply within the ENC district at the present time then whether either site should be granted outline planning permission for residential development must be looked at on a site specific basis.

The RNOTP was adopted some years ago and is overdue for review. The intention of ENC as the planning authority is to replace it with a new local plan covering the whole district not just the area covered by the existing plan. A draft plan has been prepared and both sites were allocated for residential development together with a third site in Oundle. The plan was subject to considerable criticism in Oundle and new consultants were engaged to look specifically at the housing allocation for Oundle. Following this review and despite the recommendations of their planning department's officers district councillors did not approve the draft plan's allocation of sites for residential development in Oundle.

Oundle Town Council has been developing its own neighbourhood plan for some time and it has reached the regulation 16 consultation stage and will shortly be submitted to the examiner. This neighbourhood plan does not allocate either site for residential development in the plan period (to 2031) and on this basis neither site should be granted outline planning permission at this stage.

Oundle Town Council objects to both applications on the basis set out above.

In considering each site individually there are reasons over and above the foregoing why neither is felt to be appropriate for residential development.

COTTERSTOCK ROAD/ST.PETER'S ROAD 19/01327/OUT

The location of the site and its topography meant that the site should not be granted outline planning permission and Oundle Town Council objects to the application.

The site was identified for possible residential development at least as far back as the draft Oundle local plan of 1986. At that time Anglian Water objected to the development of the site as a result of the drainage issues posed by it and the fact that it is affected by unusual ground water flows. The site is affected by springs and has surface water drainage issues. It may be of note that some of the existing properties in St. Peter's Road bordering the site have suffered from subsidence. The impact of any significant residential development of the site in terms of displaced surface water on the adjoining land and on the river itself as well as on existing properties in St. Peter's Road is a concern.

Further concerns that lead Oundle Town Council to object to the application include -

Government guidance – there is a requirement for new estates to be connected to a sustainable transport network, including public transport. The cancellation of the local Call Connect removes this option from the 19/01327/OUT site; it is over a mile away from the town centre and services therein; and there are no nearby bus stops of services that residents could use, with the nearest full time X4 stop some 650 metres walk away. By disconnecting the estate from the local transport network, residents would feel isolated from the town centre, and it would encourage car ownership and usage (see Highways objection below).

Furthermore, notices of the development have only been delivered to a few houses directly neighbouring the proposed development, and only 2 “poster” notices are evident on lampposts – one at an underused location on Cotterstock Road (off any nearby footpath, beyond the zebra crossing to the school and by a derelict house) and at the top end of St Peters Road, the one least likely to be materially affected by traffic, effectively disenfranchising other residents. There is also an inconsistency in terms of when consultation ends – the ENC website says Sept 10th, the posters say September

18th – this demands an extension to the consultation process for local residents to be made aware of the proposed changes since Gladman showed their original plans in Oundle early in 2019.

Planning Policies – RNOTP identifies the site, but only as a “*possible*” location after 2021, referring to it as ““*possible long term*” site, which “*could* come forward *following* reviews of the Core Strategy and this Plan”. So to adopt as a site now would be to go against the stated intention of the RNOTP from 2011, and would pre-empt RNOTP.

Furthermore, there have been several important structural changes to Oundle since RNOTP was adopted, meaning that the premise RNOTP is based on must be called into question –

- the location of the enlarged Primary School to Cotterstock Road in 2016 has changed access to A605 situation dramatically and was not considered in the RNOTP plan - it has shifted an axis within the town and created highway issues unforeseen and unconsidered in RNOTP. It makes any access onto Cotterstock Road considerably more dangerous than ever imagined by RNOTP.
- with the closure of the 24 bus route, the site is no longer sustainable, at well over 1.3 miles walking distance from the town centre and with no public transport connectivity. See note about Call Collect bus above.
- there are now access constraints which are in contravention of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service guidelines for emergency vehicle access.
- RNOTP failed to recognise the issues of “prolific and incessant [groundwater] spring flow” on the Cotterstock Road site, to the extent of c.200,000 gallons per day from the interface of the Greater Oolite Limestone aquifer and clay bed on the site, which ENC and OTC were informed of in July 2004. Concern was raised about the effect of any mitigation on the properties on St Peters Road, and on the nature reserve at Snipe Meadows, the latter itself protected in RNOTP; and problems with the construction and performance of the then Middle School – and none of these real concerns were fully considered in RNOTP in Para 8.18, which undermines it to a great extent.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the Cotterstock Road/St. Peter's Road site identified is located partly in the parish of Oundle but partly in the parish of Glapthorn. Glapthorn's already "made" neighbourhood plan does not allocate that part of the site located in that parish for residential development. Any development of that part of the site would be contrary to the Glapthorn "made" neighbourhood plan. The Glapthorn part would be wholly isolated from the existing built environment of Glapthorn village and would lead to unacceptable coalescence with Oundle.

Furthermore, allowing Outline Planning Permission on the site would be in direct contravention of National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 49-50) in terms of clashing with the emergent Oundle Neighbourhood Plan.

Highway Safety – Access to the site would be from both Cotterstock Road and from St. Peter's Road. There is an existing access in Cotterstock Road which is used in connection with the present agricultural use of the Site. The access to and from the site from Cotterstock Road is likely to have road safety implications due to the existing road layout on the approach from Cotterstock and in particular the proximity of the school. The movement of Oundle Primary School to the Cotterstock Road site in 2016 has changed the traffic flow around that entrance markedly, and there is heavy parking in the area, resulting in congested and therefore dangerous visibility splay lines at existing and planned junctions.

When St. Peter's Road was developed provision was made for vehicular access to the site now proposed for residential development. This was at a time when car ownership and use was very much less than it is now. St. Peter's Road itself is developed residentially along both sides of the road with a significant number of the properties having no on-site parking giving rise to considerable parking on the highway. This level of parking impacts on the flow of traffic along the road in either direction and is exacerbated during the rugby season when the use of the sports pitches in Occupation Road leads to considerable additional on street parking. Observation at 10.45am on Sunday 1st September noted 11 cars parked in New Road and 55 cars parked in St. Peter's Road. The on street parking prevents two way traffic. The junction of St. Peter's Road with New Road and the New Road junction with Station Road will be seriously affected by the considerable additional traffic that would be generated by a development of the size envisaged for this site. Gladman's own studies suggest LGV

traffic doubling on St Peters Road into 2021 and beyond after 2025. Parking and driveways around the existing “hammerhead” entrance would also create congested and therefore dangerous visibility splay lines at existing and planned junctions

Smells – The site is located close to the water treatment plant which serves Oundle (although it is located in the parish of Glapthorn). This plant is the source of smells which from time to time constitute a nuisance affecting many existing properties in Cotterstock Road and St. Peter's Road and over a wider area. Although not a constant nuisance the existence of this problem would have to be satisfactorily addressed before outline planning permission is granted as the proposed new housing will be closer to the source of the nuisance and, therefore, more likely to be adversely affected by it. A recent DLP report to ENC on this site further noted that Anglia Water felt it was unable to mitigate against visual and odour issues. Most treatment works have a “cordon sanitaire” around them of 400 metres, and the suggestion to build within that, specifically counter to the Oundle Town Councils own Planning Guidance, demands that we object to the proposal.

Design and Appearance of the proposals – the proposed double access would create a “rat run” from Cotterstock Road towards the A605 and Wharf/Waitrose area, thus generating traffic in a residential area. Furthermore, the very sloping nature of the site down to the meadow bordering the river means that the visual impact of any development on this site would be considerable both looking into and across the site from Cotterstock Road and from St. Peter's Road and also from the river itself looking into Oundle. Whilst the site’s possible consideration in RNOTP’s successor was predicated on small scale, vernacular eco housing, the existing plan would clash with the surrounding riverside and rural views.

The site is traversed by a footpath the character of which would be completely altered if the land around it was to be developed residentially. The visual impact of residential development on the site would also be considerable from the existing footpath from Oundle to Cotterstock. In addition residents of properties in St. Peter's Road bordering the site have acquired rights by prescription to access the right of way from Oundle to Cotterstock by way of a strip of land on the edge of the field bordering those existing

properties while for many years some have cultivated land behind their properties as a garden extension and have entrances into the field through the existing boundary features.

Although in single ownership the deliverability of the site may be questioned as it is known that some properties in Cotterstock Road have the benefit of restrictive covenants preventing any building on a significant part of the proposed site.

9/9/19