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Subject: Development North of Bayswater Brook

Stable House
Elsfield
Oxford OX3

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Dear Committee Chair and Councillors

We are writing to express our grave concerns about the proposal to develop new housing north of the Bayswater Brook.

The Green Belt policy has allowed easy access to the countryside for pedestrians and cyclists and has helped to maintain a pleasant, attractive and healthy environment for the whole population of Oxford. As such we oppose the destruction of any part of it without overwhelmingly strong reasons.

In the particular case proposed we believe that there are very strong reasons not to override the Green Belt policy by unwarranted destruction of the historic and beautiful countryside.

1. Access to the site either through the Elsfield Road or the Bayswater Road would inevitably lead to an increase in an already seriously congested area through Marston and Headington (including access to the hospital). Work still being completed will do little to mitigate this, given the likely increased volume of traffic.
2. Increased traffic will inevitably add to pollution levels in the area with the consequent ill effects on local residents' health especially the young and elderly population.
3. A large increase in population very close to Sites of Special Scientific interest (Sidley Copse and College Pond) will endanger these rare and valuable sites that are especially vulnerable to pollution as noted by the relevant local environmental agencies.
4. Increased traffic on the Elsfield Road will be a danger to cyclist wishing to use this part of the Oxfordshire cycleway for recreation- a narrow and already dangerous road. Several years ago there was a proposal from the County Engineer to close the road on safety grounds.
5. The proposed site is prone to flooding from the Bayswater Brook and further development can only exacerbate this problem.
6. The development will mar the well-known panoramic view of Oxford from Elsfield.
7. We do not believe that substantial numbers of residents in any new development will either walk or cycle into Oxford- distance, weather and dangerous, unsuitable road conditions will all contribute to people continuing to use cars.

8. There are other sites under consideration where no similar problems arise. There is thus an overwhelming case not to proceed with this proposal.
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We urge you to remove the Bayswater site from your proposed list in line with the original decision of SODC last year. There have been no relevant considerations to make this site any more viable or suitable than it was last year.

We hope that you will give these concerns careful consideration.

Yours sincerely

David Charles and Zafra Cooper