

Dear

**Planning Application S/2010/0473/MAO
Development at Banbury Lane, Middleton Cheney - 79 Houses Banbury Lane
Highway scheme: Preliminary Drawing Reference 23765/005 Revision B
(Appendix 1)**

Further to your site visit on Thursday 3rd November, the Parish Council would like to thank you for making the time to look at this scheme in more detail and would be very grateful if you would consider the following points raised by the Parish Councillors, and bring them to the attention of the Planning Officer and the Highways Officer.

As you know we are very concerned that the scheme as shown in the Preliminary Drawing is deficient in several areas.

Safety Issues

1. **Chacombe Road Cross Roads/Roundabout:** The vehicle activated sign, rumble strip and mini-roundabout shown at the Chacombe Road cross roads is insufficient to slow traffic approaching this junction which is a known traffic black spot and the scene of numerous accidents. The Parish Council strongly urge the Planning Officer to reconsider this aspect of the scheme. We would propose as a very minimum that the developer should be required to install a full size roundabout which forces traffic to approach the junction with considerable care. Secondly, the rumble weave strip is an inappropriate traffic calming measure, due to the noise caused to the neighbouring houses. The Parish understands the need for a traffic calming device at this point, but would request that an alternative is considered, such as an artificial chicane.
2. **Blind summit, west of 3B's garage:** To the west of the 3B's garage the road rises to create a blind spot for traffic emerging from the garage. In the interests of safety, the road should be graded/flattened at this point to allow visibility for traffic approaching the garage from the west and for traffic approaching the proposed site access from the east. The new development will also create significant additional local traffic turning into and leaving the proposed site access and we feel this is an essential safety measure to prevent inevitable accidents at the junction of the new access.
3. **Pedestrian footpath along the south of the B4525:** The refuge at the footpath crossing is welcomed. However, the amount of space available on the south side of the road is inadequate for a footpath and would be far too close to the road, which even with a proposed 40mph speed limit, is nevertheless a main trunk road (in effect), carrying heavy traffic of all kinds including large trucks, buses etc. Since a footpath is clearly needed for residents of the new development and workers at the commercial premises proposed, the Parish Council strongly urge the Planning Officer to consider widening the verge on the south side of the road to allow for adequate space for pedestrians. This applies to the full length of the road from the proposed site access to the Chacombe cross roads.

'Environmental' Issues

Although Middleton Cheney is a large village, we are nevertheless keen to retain as much of the local, rural character as possible. There are some aspects shown on the preliminary drawing which will have the effect of urbanising this area of the village.

- 1. Lighting:** The Parish is concerned that the lighting, both along the highway and the proposed commercial premises, is kept to a minimum and that the lighting specification is at least within or an improvement to the guidelines set by the Institute of Lighting Engineers (see Appendix 2). For example, lighting should be angled to minimise light pollution and avoid disturbing local residents, being a nuisance to local residents and affecting the existing character of a rural scene.
- 2. Road side hedges:** The Parish Council considers that these should be retained and/or replaced wherever possible to maintain the rural character of the locality.
- 3. Footpath:** In addition to a widened strip to allow for safe pedestrian access, The Parish Council believes that the scheme will be improved by allowing an additional strip of grass verge between footpath and road. Not only will this make it safer, it will also improve the situation for the residents facing onto the road, by taking the road a little further away from the houses.
- 4. Rumble weave strips:** As mentioned above, the Parish Council believes that the rumble strips will create a significant noise nuisance for local residents and would request that alternative traffic calming measures be considered.

We understand that this scheme, which is shown in the 'Preliminary Drawing' only, and part of an outline planning approval only, remains subject to a Section 278 and we would therefore request that before final approval is granted that the Planning Officer and Highways Officer seeks a revised drawing to incorporate these improvements.

I would also add that Middleton Cheney, with the support of South Northants Council, is currently applying to be a Neighbourhood Planning Vanguard, the CLG frontrunners scheme for Neighbourhood Planning. Whilst awaiting confirmation of this status, we trust that the improvements we are seeking to the scheme will be seen to be within the spirit of the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan, and recently passed Localism Bill.

Thank you once again for your consideration in visiting the site last Thursday. We trust that this covers the main issues we spoke about. Please don't hesitate to contact me, should you need any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Paul Browne
Chairman