



HANBOROUGH ACTION GROUP

Planning Appeal

Local Planning Authority
Ref: 14/1234/P/OP

National Planning Appeal
Ref: APP/D3125/W/15/3129767

RULE 6(6) PARTY

STATEMENT OF CASE

6 October 2015

<i>Table of contents</i>	<i>Page number</i>
1. Introduction	1
2. Hanborough: An overview	2
3. Planning history of application no.14/1234/P/OP	3
4. Analysis of public comments	3
5. Transport infrastructure and traffic issues	6
6. School issues	8
7. Surgery and pharmacy issues	9
8. Site issues	10
9. Affordable housing	11
10. Amelioration in event of the appeal being upheld	12
11. Summary	12

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Hanborough Action Group (HAG) consists of residents of Long Hanborough and Church Hanborough (referred to in this document as Hanborough) who are concerned about the potential impact that large scale and unsustainable developments will have on the Parish of Hanborough, its environs and those who use its services.
- 1.2. HAG was formed in July 2014. Since then it has endeavoured to keep residents informed of proposed housing developments through newsletters, a dedicated web-site, social media and signage. It currently has 495 members registered to use its discussion forum and 160 on its dedicated mailing list. In July 2015, HAG held an AGM that was attended by 75 members of the community. It works closely with, but independently of, Hanborough Parish Council (HPC).
- 1.3. The guidance laid down by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires each and every part of our county to embrace the overarching objectives that the NPPF sets out to meet future housing needs. In this respect, Hanborough is no different to any other rural village community. However, we believe that the development of new housing should be shared fairly and it is our fear that, as things stand, our Parish is being asked to adopt a disproportionately high level of housing that would be both detrimental and irrevocable.
- 1.4. HAG has sought to be objective in all its activities. It has recorded in its documents^{1,2} the full range of views it has received from residents. It should be noted that as a residents' group we can only rely on information made available to the public, and what the public makes available to us. As such we are a wholly community-led group.
- 1.5. This Statement of Case has been prepared and submitted by HAG on behalf of the residents of Hanborough. It refers to the appeal, by Pye Homes Property Developers with Blenheim Palace Estate (the Appellant), to challenge the decision taken by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) Uplands Planning Sub-Committee 2 March 2015, to unanimously refuse their planning application (14/1234/P/OP) to erect up to 169 dwellings³ including new access (onto the A4095), open spaces and associated works on land south of Witney Road, Long Hanborough.
- 1.6. Despite an unequivocal refusal and before determination of this appeal, the developers have submitted a second application (15/02687/OUT) for this location that is very similar to their previous application (14/1234/P/OP). Both applications seek outline approval for the same number of homes, an identical surgery with pharmacy and the same arrangements for vehicular access. Only slight changes have been proposed to boundary areas and screening and a minor update has been included regarding traffic movement.
- 1.7. There has been strong public reaction to both applications and a combined total of over 1000 individual objections have been received by WODC. At the Uplands Planning Sub-

¹ A Response to Outline Planning Application No.14/1234/P/OP Pye Homes Property Developers with Blenheim Palace Estates – pdf supplied

² A Final Representation to WODC Re. Pye Homes Property Developers with Blenheim Palace Estate Outline Planning Application No. 14/1234/P/OP – pdf supplied

³ The original proposal presented by the appellant to the village was a scheme for 362 housing units (on sites on both the north and south sides of the A4095), this was subsequently reduced to 169 units on the south side only, it is claimed as a response to feedback from their community engagement process with local residents. It is possible that if this appeal is upheld a new application for housing on the north of the A4095 will be applied for.

Committee 2 March 2015, 168 members of the public attended with many turned away in disappointment as the room was full.

- 1.8. The outcome of unanimous refusal reflects not just this level of objection but also the local understanding and knowledge of councillors, who recognised this development to be inappropriate, unsustainable and a threat to the integrity of our village and its community.

2. Hanborough: An overview

- 2.1. The Parish of Hanborough lies in what was formerly Wychwood Forest, which William I acquired as a royal hunting forest in 1086. There are few records of the settlement until the Domesday Book of 1086, when it is referred to as the Manor of Hanberge, held by Gilbert of Ghent on behalf of King William I. The name meant Hanna's Hill, which is the ridge or T-shaped high ground on which the settlement was established.
- 2.2. Hanborough is located approximately 10 miles north-west of Oxford, about midway between the market towns of Woodstock and Witney. It contains two villages: Long Hanborough, and the smaller Church Hanborough. The Parish, roughly triangular in shape, is bounded by the river Evenlode on the north and east, except for a short section on the north where the river seems to have been diverted by the construction of Combe Mill. A small tributary of the Evenlode, called Caverswell Brook in the Middle Ages and Eynsham Brook in the 16th and 17th centuries, forms the short southern boundary and part of the western boundary. Those boundaries have been unaltered since medieval times, but the remainder of the western boundary, which follows field boundaries from the point at which it leaves the brook, south-west of Church Hanborough village, was changed in 1932 and again in 1948, reducing the area of the Parish from 2270 acres to 2125 acres (860 hectares).
- 2.3. Hanborough's linear form of settlement still determines and defines the structure of the village today. Its rural character is evidenced by many houses in the village having views directly over the encircling open fields and agricultural land. The major landowners of the agricultural fields around the village are Blenheim Palace Estate and Corpus Christi College. The arrival of the business park in 1986 introduced a number of small businesses that provide some small-scale employment. Wider afield, workplaces are clustered in or around towns and cities such as Witney, Oxford, London, Reading and Birmingham.
- 2.4. The population of the Parish of Hanborough in the last census (2011)⁴ was recorded as 2630.
- 2.5. Long Hanborough has a doctors' surgery with a pharmacy; a dentist; a day nursery for infants; a pre-school; a playgroup; a primary school; a post office; a petrol station with a garage; two garages without petrol stations; a fish and chip shop; a cycle repair and general store; two public houses; a hairdressers; a beauty salon; a small hotel; two churches and a small supermarket. Church Hanborough has one public house and a church. Hanborough has also in recent years been the location for several mobile catering outlets that trade in the village on a weekly rotation. There is also a weekly visit by a mobile library. These facilities are not only used by village residents but also by people living in surrounding villages such as Freeland, Combe, Stonesfield, Bladon and North Leigh. The use of these services and resources inevitably brings increased traffic onto the road network. Though there is some small-scale car parking associated with local shops, the largest car park is at the railway station on the very edge of the village and is not within convenient walking distance of the

⁴ "Area: Hanborough (Parish): Key Figures for 2011 Census: Key Statistics". *Neighbourhood Statistics*. Office for National Statistics.

main village facilities; this station car park is also during weekdays, at, near, or over capacity⁵. A site visit during school term time would confirm this.

- 2.6. The (2011)⁶ census showed that there were 1070 homes in the Parish of Hanborough. Since then, 51 new homes have been granted planning permission. In addition, a further 50 homes have been granted outline planning permission, subject to legal agreements. During this period there have also been three demolitions. This results in a potential net growth of 98 homes. Though exact data is not available from WODC, there have also been a number of house extensions in the village, which will have resulted in an unknown increase in residential capacity.

3. Planning history of application no.14/1234/P/OP

- 3.1. August 2014 - 14/1234/P/OP – Submission of Application
- 3.2. October 2014 – First HAG document submitted to WODC titled: *A Response to Outline Planning Application No.14/1234/P/OP Pye Homes Property Developers with Blenheim Palace Estate*
- 3.3. 30 October 2014 - Site visit
- 3.4. 3 November 2014 - Consideration by Uplands Planning Sub-Committee. Outcome: Decision Deferred
- 3.5. November 2014 - Revised transport assessment submitted by the appellant - This report was presented to address issues raised on examination of the transport assessment accompanying the initial application.
- 3.6. 19 January 2015 - Letter from Hanborough Parish Council (HPC), this accompanied a report from HPC's specialist consultant responding to the initial and revised transport assessments produced by the developers.
- 3.7. 29 January 2015 - Appellant's response to HPC's transport report.
- 3.8. 30 January 2015 – The appellant submitted a number of documents that sought to revise the initial application. The proposed revisions included a new enlarged surgery on the Witney Road site, a new playing field and linking walkway to the school (such that land would become available to build new classrooms), a financial contribution towards extending the school and the suggestion of a potential extension to the station car park. A 'one off' payment of £181,000 was also offered towards public transport improvements.
- 3.9. 17 February 2015 – The appellant submitted a further letter reiterating their position regarding transport issues, the surgery, school and the status of WODC's five year housing land supply.
- 3.10. February 2015 - Second HAG document submitted to WODC titled: *Final Representation to WODC re. Pye Homes Property Developers with Blenheim Palace Estate Outline Planning Application No. 14/1234/P/OP.*
- 3.11. 2 March 2015 - Application for development unanimously refused by Uplands Planning Sub Committee.

4. Analysis of public comments

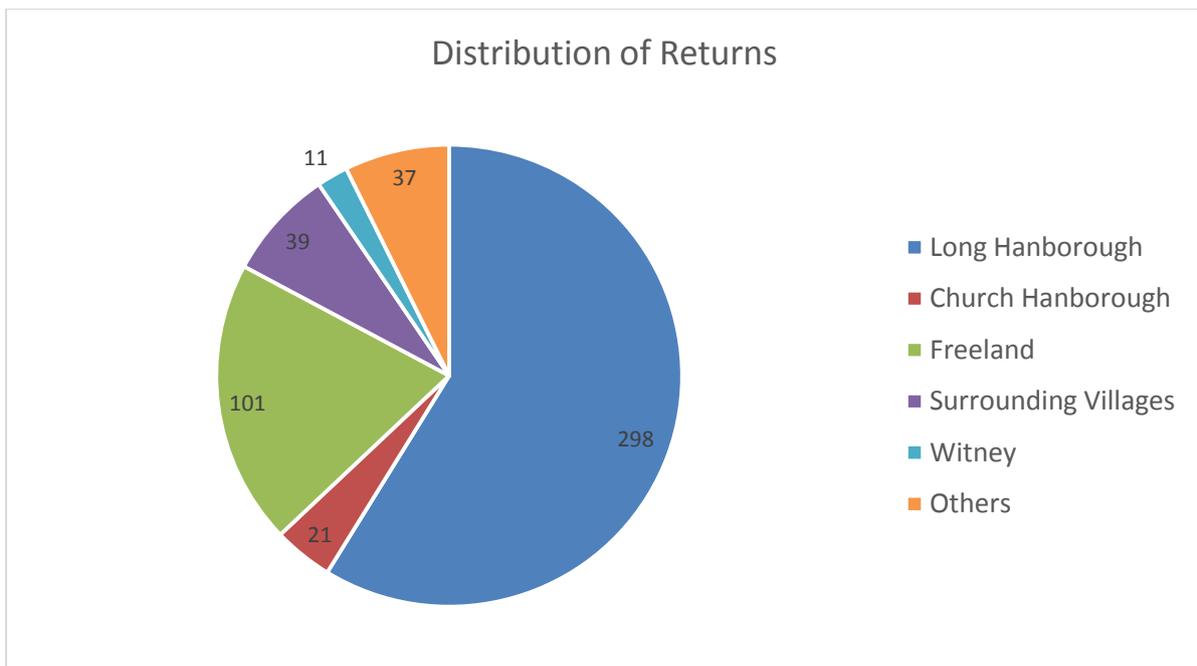
- 4.1. In the Appellant's Statement of Community Engagement (WODC IDOX 3 Sept 2014, reference 14-1234_P_OP—292226.pdf) the results of feedback from a public exhibition held on 15 July 2014 and comments received online at WODC are discussed. At the Pye Homes Property Developer's exhibition, significant concern was expressed by the community about their proposed housing development. These concerns related to a wide range of social and

⁵ Officers Report on Applications for Development, tabled at the Uplands meeting on 2 March, Para 2.12

⁶ "Area: Hanborough (Parish): Key Figures for 2011 Census: Key Statistics". *Neighbourhood Statistics. Office for National Statistics*

environmental issues, but focused principally on the scale of the development, the impact it would have on traffic volumes, travelling times on the road infrastructure, medical services and school capacity.

- 4.2. Following submission of Pye Homes Property Developers planning application (14/1234/P/OP) for outline planning permission in August 2014, WODC has received over 600 individual objections from members of the public concerning this application. Over 99% of these letters objected to the proposal to build up to 169 homes on land south of Witney Road, Long Hanborough. The number of objections has increased to over 1000 following the developer's re-application (15/02687/OUT) for this location.
- 4.3. A detailed analysis was undertaken by HAG Committee members on the 29 December 2014 of the first 507 objections that were received by WODC up to that date⁷. The contents of each response were categorised on a spreadsheet. This analysis was submitted to the Uplands Planning Sub-Committee in February 2015. Full details are contained in that document. The following detail offers a summary of HAG's findings.
- 4.4. The pie chart represents objections by post code, which reveals that concern regarding this development is not solely restricted to the local area:



Note: The "surrounding villages" category represents objections sent from North Leigh, Combe and Bladon. "Others" includes objections received with no identifying post code or from homes outside the immediate area.

- 4.5. The importance of specific issues in the context of the area of origin of the objections is shown in the following table. Here data is expressed as the percentage of objections received from the area that highlighted a specific issue.

⁷ Since determination on the 2 March 2015, the remaining objections have not been made available by WODC.

Area	Roads (% letters)	GP Service (% letters)	Education (% letters)	Spatial Gap (% letters)	Train Parking (% letters)	Infrastructure (% letters)	Noise (% letters)	Pollution (% letters)	Affordable Homes (% letters)	Parking (% letters)	Total Number of Letters
Long Hanborough	94%	86%	84%	35%	24%	37%	18%	24%	13%	18%	298
Freeland	92%	78%	61%	45%	13%	29%	17%	21%	10%	20%	101
Church Hanborough	100%	81%	76%	14%	29%	57%	19%	38%	5%	19%	21
Surrounding villages	97%	67%	49%	23%	18%	46%	21%	23%	5%	3%	39
Witney	100%	73%	64%	55%	45%	64%	27%	36%	9%	0%	11
Others	84%	65%	62%	35%	11%	49%	14%	14%	5%	5%	37
Total											507

- 4.6. Traffic, associated congestion and delay, particularly on the A4095, is the predominant issue raised by residents from all areas.
- 4.7. Coalescence with Freeland and the potential loss of village identity, resulting from the partial removal of the spatial gap between the villages of Hanborough and Freeland is, predictably, of greatest concern to residents of those settlements, although over half the objections originating from Witney also raise this as an issue.
- 4.8. The impact on local healthcare and other related facilities is high on the list of concerns of residents of Hanborough, Freeland and surrounding villages.
- 4.9. The effect on the Hanborough Manor Church of England School (referred to in this document as Hanborough Manor School) was understandably a local issue and a concern expressed mainly by residents of Hanborough. Other areas were less concerned about this aspect, although the percentage mentioning it still remained high at (49%). This was largely underpinned by the potential 'knock on' impact of pupils being displaced from Hanborough Manor School through lack of capacity.
- 4.10. The capacity of the railway station car park was a concern expressed, in the main, by non-residents of Hanborough, particularly in objections originating in Witney (45%), highlighting that this is an important concern for those commuting into Hanborough as part of their journey to their final destinations.
- 4.11. The lack of affordable homes was not considered a major issue by residents. This may be explained by the recent affordable homes schemes at Corn Hide (24 homes) and Kents Bank (18 homes) being considered to have satisfied local need.

- 4.12. Many letters recognised that Hanborough has to grow but that this growth should be gradual, organic and achieved through a number of small-scale developments over a realistic plan period with accompanying infrastructure improvements.

5. Transport infrastructure and traffic issues

- 5.1. The minutes of the WODC Uplands Planning sub-committee meeting on 2 March 2015, record that the reasons for refusal did not include transport related considerations. However, so great is the public concern, HAG considers it appropriate that transport-related issues should be briefly summarised as follows:

5.2. *Bus services*

5.2.1. Hanborough is served by two bus routes, the No. 11, which runs from Oxford to Witney and the No. 233, which connects Woodstock and Burford. At the time of writing, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is reviewing its bus route subsidies and both services may be under threat.

5.2.2. The appellant's travel plan (WODC IDOX reference 14_1234_P_OP—29221) gives details of the present bus services. Currently, there is no bus service out of the village in any direction before 06.23 or after 18.53; no buses operate on a Sunday. It is therefore questionable to state that Hanborough is "well served by buses", as claimed by the appellant.

5.2.3. When considered in relation to modern working practices such as flexitime, shift working or zero hours contracting, it is clear that bus transport is unlikely to be a workable option for those with employment outside the village. In addition, the lack of an evening service makes it impossible for residents to leave the village by bus for entertainment or other purposes. The only alternative is to rely on the train service, which has its limitations in terms of destinations and timings, private cars or a taxi service.

5.3. *Station parking*

5.3.1 Passenger numbers have grown in recent years with commuters driving to the station to continue their journey by train. This practice put the existing car parking facilities under pressure and in 2013 First Great Western added another 191 spaces to the car park.

5.3.2 As stated earlier in this document, even with these additional spaces, the station car park is, during week days, at, near, or over capacity⁸, according to the Costwold Line Promotion Group.

5.4 *Traffic on the A4095*

5.4.1 Hanborough has three roads that converge on the mini roundabout at the Co-op; a fourth entrance and exit point is used by shoppers to the Co-op store. The A4095 carries traffic to Witney in the west, through Bladon to Woodstock and Oxford in the east. At this mini roundabout the exit onto Church Road carries traffic to the A40. Both

⁸ Officers Report on Applications for Development, tabled at the Uplands meeting on 2 March, Para 2.12

the A4095 and Church Road are single carriageways, with several very narrow points on each.

- 5.4.2 At peak times the A4095 is congested with traffic queuing to get onto it from side roads within the village and across the mini roundabout at the Co-op. Concerns regarding this were raised in 93% of the objections received by WODC in the period up to 29 December 2014.
- 5.4.3 Congestion and delay can be increased significantly in the event of an incident such as an accident, road works or an inconsiderately parked vehicle.
- 5.4.4 In their Transport Assessment, dated August 2014 (WODC IDOX 14_1234_P_OP—292220), the appellant stated that the Co-op junction operates below capacity on both the morning and evening peaks. This assertion was based on a “recalibration” of the capacity relationship in the model that was used to predict the future traffic impact of the development on traffic flows (Arcady). Their assertion that the A4095 operates below capacity contradicts the conclusions of a similar study by David Tucker Associates in support of planning application (14/1102/P/OP) to build 68 homes off Church Road.
- 5.4.5 The Officers’ briefing paper to the WODC Uplands Committee meeting 3 November 2014, when this application was first considered, stated that Oxfordshire County Council Highways objected on the basis that:
- “The proposed development would increase traffic through the ‘mini-roundabout’ at the junction of Main Road (A4095), Church Road and store access, resulting in considerable queuing and delay to the detriment of the convenience of highway users and contrary to Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 3 and the NPPF. It is noted that the subsequently submitted transport assessment fails to appraise properly the traffic impact of the development.”*
- 5.4.6 When Geoffrey Arnold, then Senior Engineer and Transport Planner, OCC, sent in his note concerning their above objection (5.4.5) he commented that:
- “The model used to assess the junction has been calibrated to provide greater capacity as the transport assessment contends observations of the junction show steady movement without heavy queuing. This does not concur with my experience of this junction at peak times, reference is made to a video but this has not been made available to me. Therefore I do not agree with the increased capacity assumed at this junction and consider the queues and delay has been further underestimated.”*(Note to WODC Planning dated 24 September 2014).
- 5.4.7 Subsequent to the meeting of WODC’s Uplands Planning Sub-Committee on 3 November 2014, the appellant revised their Transport Assessment, concluding that the A4095 did indeed operate above capacity at peak times (their estimate was a flow of 1068 vehicles per hour in the peak direction across the mini roundabout) but that their development would add less than 4% to traffic flows (WODC IDOX 14_1234_P_OP—Technical Note298843.pdf, dated 11 November 2014).
- 5.4.8 4% is below the threshold of 5% that OCC use as a benchmark to judge significance. Having received further justification from the appellant, OCC accepted the appellant’s revised Transport Assessment and withdrew their objection in a communication to WODC dated 10 December 2014.

5.4.9 This decision was confirmed in an email from Geoffrey Arnold, Principal Engineer, Transport Development Control, OCC, sent to WODC Planning at 09.58 on 2 March 2015.

5.4.10 Notwithstanding this decision, there is significant public disquiet regarding the robustness of the revised study and the experimental error within the 4% figure, particularly as this figure was derived from computer modelling studies, and as such may not be reliable in a 'real world' context.

5.4.11 In the wider context, because the A4095 is the major route between the market towns of Witney, Woodstock, Banbury and Bicester, any additional development will add to the peak journey times of all road users (both by car and bus) travelling between these localities, leading to a potential loss of productive time and subsequent degradation to the economy of the local area.

6. School issues

- 6.1. Hanborough Manor School is part of the Eynsham Partnership Academy. Currently it has a single form entry. Oxfordshire County Council believe that in order to meet the local need arising from the new development in Hanborough, the school would have to move to a 1.5 form entry, thereby raising the yearly admission number from 30 to 45 (WODC IDOX 14_1234_P_OP_LETTER_SETTING_OUT_AMENDMENTS-312559.pdf). It is estimated that three new classrooms would be required to accommodate this expansion. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this document to comment on the educational impact of this proposed change, there are a number of other aspects that HAG wishes to bring to the Inspector's attention.
- 6.2. The original application (14/1234/P/OP) assumed that the expansion of the school could be achieved by extending the area occupied by the school into the adjacent recreation ground. This approach however, has not proved possible.
- 6.3. The appellant now suggests that an area of land in their ownership, approximately 250m from the main school, could be made available as a school playing field, thus releasing sufficient land on the school site to build the extra classrooms. This arrangement is, at the time of writing, still under discussion, however a significant issue would remain if this proposal were to be accepted. The appellant proposes that a pathway be constructed to link the main school to the playing field.
- 6.4. There are however, difficulties in relation to preserving public access to the playing field (WODC IDOX 15_02687_OUT_Hanborough_Playing_Fields_Association-358919.pdf 15_02687_OUT_Hanborough_Playing_Fields_Association-361739.pdf).
- 6.5. In the appellant's recent re-application (15/02687/OUT) regarding this site, it is suggested that pupils could reach the playing field using public roads and access through the adjacent housing estates. This is not a satisfactory solution as the distance between the school and the proposed new playing field site is considerable and potentially hazardous for groups of small children.
- 6.6. A playing field that is remote from the school raises not only issues of child safety, but also concerns regarding the pupil and teacher experience, where time would be required to organise and conduct the transfer of a significant number of small children between sites. Also, given that the new playing field is at some distance from the school, appropriate

facilities such as the toilets, equipment storage and so on would need to be in place and maintained securely at that location.

- 6.7. Even if these issues could be resolved, planning approval would be required for this development as the location is currently open countryside.
- 6.8. A larger school will also place increased pressure on parking in the immediate area around the school, particularly in Riely Close. The present school car park has space for 9 vehicles and is used only by staff. With the necessary increase in employees required by a larger school, some would have no alternative but to park in Riely Close. In addition, at the start and end of the school day there will be an increased demand for parking in nearby roads by parents/guardians seeking to either deliver or collect their children. A larger congregation of people around the school gates at these peak times could also exacerbate existing road safety issues. The appellant has, to date, failed to address any of these concerns.

7. Surgery and pharmacy issues

- 7.1. The Eynsham Medical Group (EMG) initially objected to this scheme, and at the time of writing they have yet to withdraw their objection.
- 7.2. EMG's surgery in Hanborough is used by many residents of Hanborough and the surrounding villages and is very highly regarded in the locality. Of the first 507 objections that refer to the developments proposed by Pye Homes Property Developers, 81% of respondents noted surgery capacity as one of their reasons for their objection to the planning application. Surgery capacity is already at a premium, without any further housing development in the village.
- 7.3. The surgery is located in the central part of the village and is within easy walking distance for most elderly and disabled residents; some of whom live in dedicated accommodation close to the surgery. The surgery is also conveniently located in relation to other key facilities such as the Co-op shop, post office, school and churches. Moving the surgery to a point beyond the last house in Hanborough on its western boundary, will inevitably and significantly increase car usage. As it will no longer be a viable walk for many, particularly for older and more vulnerable residents. The proposed new surgery entrance is over half a kilometre to the west of the current surgery.
- 7.4. The surgery incorporates a pharmacy that currently dispenses many thousands of prescriptions a month. Patients living at the eastern end of the village would have to travel a considerable distance for appointments or to collect medicines.
- 7.5. The appellant has proposed that the new surgery would need only 27 car parking spaces (it is not evident if any of these have been allocated as dedicated ambulance space(s)), and that this number would also be sufficient to allow room for further expansion. This is a highly unrealistic assertion given that the current car park has nine spaces for patients, three for medical staff and two for disabled drivers and is nearly always full at peak times. There are no dedicated spaces allocated to non medical surgery staff or pharmacists. It should also be noted that patients use a considerable portion of the adjoining side road (Churchill Way) as an 'overflow car park'. A site visit would confirm this.
- 7.6. There will be an impact on the A4095 of increased car journeys to the new, non-central location. In addition, the surgery requires regular deliveries of supplies, along with twice-daily van pick-ups of patient blood, urine and other samples. As with any public facility,

cleaning and maintenance visits to the building would place further pressure on parking spaces.

7.7. When these factors are considered, it is evident that a relocated surgery and pharmacy in Hanborough is unacceptable.

8. Site issues

8.1. HAG fully endorses the comments made in sections 5.19 to 5.23 of the Officer's report to the 2 March meeting of the Uplands Planning Sub-Committee (Applications for Development briefing paper). Discussing landscape and coalescence issues relevant to this application the erosion of the spatial gap between Freeland and Long Hanborough, the urbanisation of the A4095 and the encroachment into open countryside is "considered to result in a loss of an area of open space that contributes to the character of the area and would result in inappropriate ribbon development contrary to policy H2 of the Emerging Local Plan".

8.2. This site was not adopted in the current WODC (2011) plan and has not been included in the new WODC (2031) local plan currently undergoing the adoption procedure. The site on the south side of the A4095, which is the location for this proposed development by Pye Homes Property Developers and Blenheim Palace Estate, is noted in the draft Local Plan under the reference 168. Both this site and 167 are included in the updated SHLAA, dated June 2014. Within the SHLAA it states that whilst both sites have been offered for development, the overall assessment of each site is as follows:

Site	Overall assessment	Comment
<p>167</p> <p>West of Long Hanborough</p>	<p>Not suitable</p>	<p>Harm to landscape setting and separate identities of village and Freeland. Relatively distant from village facilities.</p>
<p>168</p> <p>Land adjacent Hurdeswell</p> <p>The focus of Application No.14/1234/P/OP</p>	<p>Not suitable</p>	<p>Not well integrated with existing development and limited development potential. Also awkward to develop because of shape of land, relationship to A4095 and need to provide continuation of adjacent green wedge.</p>

8.3. The lack of adoption of these sites in WODC's plans (past or present) is substantiated by three very sound reasons:

8.3.1. The land is located on the edge of the village, on a green field site. Any development in this location would therefore be highly intrusive and damaging to the rural environment, both visually and in terms of environmental conservation.

8.3.2. The site is located in the rural buffer between the villages of Hanborough and Freeland, and as such acts to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of these two rural communities.

8.3.3. The local infrastructure including schools, health service provision and in particular the road capacity is insufficient to support this development.

- 8.4. In the appellant's "Hanborough Update Newsletter" – September 2014, it is stated that the reduced scope of the proposed development, 169 housing units (on the south side of the A4095) rather than the originally proposed 362 housing units (on sites on both the north and south sides of the A4095), came about as a response to feedback from their community engagement process with local residents. It is possible that if this appeal is upheld a new application for housing on the north of the A4095 would be made at some point in the future.
- 8.5. Another significant concern for residents is the partial removal of the spatial gap between the villages of Long Hanborough and Freeland that would result if the south side development is approved as this would significantly undermine the integrity of the boundary between Hanborough and Freeland. The indicative site plan also shows that the proposed layout provides potential options to extend the development towards Freeland, further eroding the spatial gap. This prospect is, predictably, of greatest concern to residents of those settlements, although several letters originating from Witney also raise this as an issue. It is therefore a reasonable assumption that the integrity of village boundaries and loss of rural character are important issues not just for Hanborough and Freeland, but also for the wider community of West Oxfordshire.
- 8.6. Urbanisation and the coalescence of Long Hanborough and Freeland were major reasons for the refusal of the application at the March 2 2015 meeting of WODC's Uplands Planning Sub-Committee. It is worth restating the wording of this refusal in the context of site issues:

"By reason of the scale of development both in its own right and in combination with other planned and approved schemes, [the failure to address the education and healthcare implications for the village, the failure to take the opportunity to create a locally distinctive development,] the coalescence of the settlements of Long Hanborough and Freeland and the precedent for further encroachment into the open countryside around the village the proposed development represents a disproportionate addition that will damage the social and environmental character and sustainability of the village and urbanise the road between the settlements of Long Hanborough and Freeland with inappropriate ribbon development. As such the proposals are contrary to policies BE2, BE4 (a) and H7 of the adopted plan, H2 and OS1 of the emerging plan and paragraphs 14, 56, 64 and 66 of the NPPF. These are considered to represent significant and demonstrable harms that substantially outweigh the benefits of the scheme".

- 8.7. There is a well used footpath to the north of this site. Should the appeal be allowed the current countryside views to the south will be significantly obscured at *all* times of the year.

9. Affordable housing

- 9.1. In the last 5 years, 42 affordable homes have been built and are now occupied in Hanborough: Corn Hide (24 homes) and Kents Bank (18 homes). Subject to legal agreements, another 18 affordable homes are due to be built as part of a 50 home development on Church Road, consequent on the granting of outline permission for planning application 14/1102/P/OP. Taken together, this is a total of 60 affordable homes already built or soon to be constructed. In addition, there is already some existing social housing located in the village.

- 9.2. Ffyona MacEwan, Housing Enabling Manager at WODC⁹, has indicated that as of 18 September 2015, the number of applicants on the WODC waiting list with a 'local connection' to Hanborough totals 41, of these 20 currently reside in the village.
- 9.2.1. 11 require 1 bedroom accommodation (7 of these are resident in Hanborough).
 - 9.2.2. 14 require 2 bedroom accommodation (5 of these are resident in Hanborough).
 - 9.2.3. 10 require 3 bedroom accommodation (4 of these are resident in Hanborough).
 - 9.2.4. 6 (4 are already resident in Hanborough) require ground floor accommodation due to age or disability.
- 9.3. WODC are unable to confirm how many of those on the waiting list have sufficient need to meet the criteria to qualify for an affordable home, or if any from the list have, in the period since placing their names on the waiting list, found suitable accommodation but have not yet informed WODC that they wish to be removed from the list. In addition, it should be noted that 20% of applicants offered a suitable affordable home, refused such an offer.
- 9.4. Once built, it can be reasonably anticipated that the Church Road development of 18 affordable homes, will accommodate the needs of village residents who might meet the criteria and have not yet found suitable accommodation, assuming that at least two do not qualify and/or their application is outdated or they refuse the offered accommodation. Further affordable home development is therefore not required as Hanborough is already well served for this resource.

10. Amelioration in event of the appeal being upheld

We do not believe there are any effective and/or deliverable forms of amelioration available for the proposed development. The development is not sustainable and if granted would damage the prospects for future generations of residents on environmental, economic and social grounds.

11. Summary

- 11.1. The statement of case we are presenting for this appeal is based on the information and evidence we have been able to research ourselves and the feedback we have received from residents and relevant others with knowledge of the village's social and environmental context. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (2014) make reference to the imperative to engage with the community and this and our cited documentation is our attempt to fulfil that aim. The document we have presented here represents the views and perspective of the residents of the community that live in Hanborough and its environs.
- 11.2. It is clear that the overwhelming majority of residents are opposed to this development, as is evidenced by the level of objections received by WODC. This document highlights that key among those are:
- 11.2.1. The impact of increased vehicle movements on an already heavily congested A4095, particularly at peak times. Not only will that increased traffic lengthen the interval of peak times, it will also increase road safety issues and pollution for residents. At peak times the volume of traffic to all intents and purposes the village into two halves.

⁹ Emails from (SW) Sarah Whitcombe and (FM) Ffyona MacEwan of WODC Housing to John Evans dated 21 and 22 September 2015 – pdf supplied

- 11.2.2. The location of this development at the village's furthest edge is highly undesirable as it moves key facilities that are currently in the heart of the village, to a location that many will find a struggle to reach, particularly our older and disabled residents.
- 11.2.3. The development will undoubtedly have a severe impact on the social and economic infrastructure within Hanborough's community and undermine permanently its ancient rural character and integrity.
- 11.3. Residents are not opposed to new housing and have always supported appropriate and organic growth. It is the position and scale of this development that is untenable and we hope our document offers sufficient evidence for you to dismiss this appeal.