

APPLICATION NO: 21/02148/FUL	OFFICER: Mr Ben Warren
DATE REGISTERED: 28th September 2021	DATE OF EXPIRY : 23rd November 2021
WARD: Leckhampton	PARISH: LECKH
APPLICANT:	The Applicant
LOCATION:	Land East Of Leckhampton Reservoir Leckhampton Hill Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	The erection of 2 dwellings

REPRESENTATIONS

Number of contributors	13
Number of objections	9
Number of representations	1
Number of supporting	3

18 Foxglove Grove
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 0FL

Comments: 5th November 2021

Having lived in Leckhampton for the last decade and moved house in the last twelve months, many of our viewings were by potential buyers from London, a trend which is placing unprecedented demand on housing for Cheltenham - Leckhampton and Charlton Kings in particular - at a time when the council cannot meet its supply targets. The only viable option for us to live in a modern energy efficient home was a Redrow new build on what was previously a much contested green field site.

In comparison, this infill site within the urban area is exactly the sort of development that will help mitigate otherwise inevitable future encroachment upon the green belt.

Wensley
Undercliff Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AA

Comments: 25th October 2021

We object to this planning application.

On the following grounds:

Highway safety - lack of visibility for debouching of vehicles onto B4070 at the bottom of the busy Leckhampton Hill/ Old Bath Road junction.

We live on Undercliff Avenue - which is already a difficult, risky junction to exit - this will be made worse by traffic exiting this proposed site.

Traffic generation

As above this area is already busy and dangerous for exiting onto the B4070 - during the build this will increase the traffic onto this area.

Visual Amenity of this area

Already there has been considerable overdevelopment to the left hand side of Leckhampton Road near the scout hut/ reservoir area.

The Brambles
Leckhampton Hill
Cheltenham
GL53 9QJ

Comments: 6th November 2021

I support this proposal for what appears to be a well-designed scheme which follows the contours of the landscape, seems to fit within its setting, and helps provide housing during a shortage from an otherwise useless piece of land.

I drive (walk and cycle) up and down the hill past this site at least once a day and do not share others concerns on road safety. CrashMap data found online: four 'slight' accidents in 22 years.

Given neither of the County Council's Highways or PROW teams objected there is no reason to withhold permission for two houses when there is already permission in principle for three, (and I find it odd the parish council objects to two houses when it chose not to object to three).

If safety is a genuine concern then I would like to see the cut-through moved to go via the existing reservoir access, as others have suggested, and better maintenance of the old tramway (fallen trees overhead, overgrown, unstable, narrow, and mountain bikers using it illegally).

346 Old Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AF

Comments: 19th January 2022

I am objecting to this development on the grounds of road safety; this is a very bad idea.

For many years I have used the junction between Leckhampton Road and Old Bath Road (OBR) usually to turn right from OBR to go north (downhill) on Leckhampton Road. I can honestly say that I have NEVER seen a vehicle turn into or out of the reservoir site, although I do accept Severn Trent occasionally did access the site. My point of mentioning the above is that I doubt if it was ever accessed during busy commuting times.

As a driver I think the junction is already more complicated than it first appears; there are three lanes on OBR plus Undercliff Avenue.

Turning north from OBR can be quite taxing already. Vehicles travelling south on Leckhampton Road, may or may not turn onto OBR; vehicles travelling north may be turning into OBR using the central slip lane or maybe continuing downhill on Leckhampton Road (ignoring Undercliff Avenue as an additional option).

The prospect of adding a fifth access point opposite to the other four hardly bares thinking about. Turning out of the proposed development during busy periods is not something I'd be keen to do in a daily basis.

There are also other factors that need to be considered: each time there's an accident on the A417 near to the Air Balloon, the volume of traffic descending down the hill increases enormously; every race day at Prestbury produces two large waves of traffic through the junction in addition to the daily rush hour traffic; cyclists descend the hill at high speed and the danger to them will be significantly increased by traffic emerging from this development.

Has it actually been considered how vehicles will safely turn off Leckhampton Road into the proposed developed when travelling south? There is frequently a queue of traffic coming down the hill to turn onto OBR, so whilst waiting for this to clear, traffic turning from OBR will be blocked.

I note that one of the comments supporting the development is about how low the accident rate is currently. Why should we wait until a junction has accident stats which are unacceptable before deciding something is a bad idea? It's clear that this plan will increase the danger at this junction.

My final point here is about how sad it is to have watched how the development has already decimated the woodland through which I have walked hundreds of times - a classic case of deforestation by stealth, over a two year period.

3 Undercliff Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AB

Comments: 9th October 2021

I continue to object to this development on the grounds of health and safety.

The entrance to this site is at the confluence of Leckhampton road and old Bath road and the volume Motorists and cyclists, means the risk to accident is already high, and worsens in winter when visibility and road surfaces are poor.

I acknowledge, as per the access report, there is already access to the site. Of course this was for the reservoir and used infrequently.

This development will mean a constant flow of traffic in and out of site. I urge the council to stand at the junction or Undercliff Avenue at 8am to to observe how much more likely the risk of serious accident / fatality this development presents. I urge the planning committee to rethink the suitability of this site for development on the grounds of health and safety.

6 Leckhampton Rise
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 0AP

Comments: 31st January 2022

I'm objecting to the proposed application on the grounds of safety. The exit from the proposed site is on a steep area of Leckhampton Hill, a blind bend, and just yards past where the speed limit drops from 40mph to 30mph. The junction between Old Bath Road, Leckhampton Road and Undercliff Avenue is already difficult to navigate, due to cars and bikes speeding down the hill. Whenever the speed trap besides the Scout Hut is operational, it always indicates multiple vehicles travelling well over 30mph on that stretch of road. Further, due to the nature of the road as it bends, there is poor visibility of the potential dangers ahead as vehicles travel downhill.

10 Pilford Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9EH

Comments: 21st October 2021

I support this application as it helps fulfill Cheltenham's need to build more housing. This proposed project is utilizing open land without any other possible use. The plans have a sensitive approach which considers the surrounding land and properties.

376 Old Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AD

Comments: 17th October 2021

As stated previously in response to the PIP application, we object to this planning application on health and safety grounds. At peak times this area is very busy, and traffic at all times of day far exceeds the speed limits. At present the entrance to this site is only used very occasionally when Severn Trent need access to their pumping station. The opening to this plot of land is almost at the bottom of Leckhampton Hill opposite the split junction with the Old Bath Road and Undercliff Avenue. The gradient and camber here is extreme which adds to the problem. The visibility on exiting this proposed building plot is compromised by both the bend, the slope of the road and the poor light levels due to trees and vegetation. In winter and inclement weather this becomes even more the case.

This is a very hazardous junction with two major roads (Leckhampton Hill/Road and the Old Bath Road) meeting two minor roads (Undercliff Avenue/Undercliff Terrace). Both these minor roads have recently had significant housing development resulting in extra traffic using these junctions. This is a complicated, confusing junction with the attention of drivers'/cyclists' coming down the hill being drawn to the right. The hill is very popular with cyclists who descend the hill at high speeds. They blend into the landscape and unfortunately are very difficult to see.

A high percentage of vehicles travelling down the Hill turn right into the Old Bath Road, heading towards the Richard Pates School and the Charlton Kings area. The current road markings define a refuge area for these vehicles, which in itself is insufficient, as traffic backs up the hill waiting to pass, thus blocking the entrance to the proposed development. Vehicles coming from the opposite direction wishing to turn right into the reservoir site from Leckhampton Road would be unable to find space to wait and would be a definite hazard. There is already significant driver irritation at the current junction with drivers speeding out of the Old Bath Road up Leckhampton Hill without pausing with daily near misses.

We do not understand whether the planners wish to alter the present access. In the application in answer to point 8. Pedestrian and Vehicle Access, Roads and Rights of Way: Is a new or altered vehicular access proposed to or from the public highway? - the answer given is Yes.

We are not reassured that the developers appreciate the importance of this area to the many walkers and dog walkers who use the public right of way, which borders the proposed development and divides it from the reservoir, and who use the stile to access the AONB and enjoy the landscape.

Regarding the mention in Birketts LLP report of the formal application for a public right of way to be recognised from Leckhampton Hill through to the stile on the public walkway, we are disappointed at the tone and that they do not appear understand that a footpath that has been used for many years would not be straight and would vary in width as walkers navigate a slope through woodland. Of course, the woodland has recently been felled and walkers now have to walk around the tree trunks which have been left creating a modified path.

374 Old Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AD

Comments: 25th October 2021

The Erection of 2 dwellings at Land East of Leckhampton Reservoir Leckhampton Hill Cheltenham

As stated in the PIP application I strongly object to this development due to health & safety factors. Leckhampton Hill is a very busy road, particular with commuters, and any added traffic trying to get in and out of the proposed development would just be an accident waiting to happen. The original entry to the site was for Severn Trent to very occasionally use for access and not on a daily basis.

There has already been increased development in Undercliff Avenue & Terrace, which will add to the traffic on this junction.

Added to which it is an area used by the local community and walkers in an AONB, including a haven for wildlife and should be left as an amenity for the local residents.

Although, my address is 374 Old Bath Road, my garage and vehicular access is from Undercliff Avenue and, therefore, aware of the increased traffic difficulties.

372 Old Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AD

Comments: 25th October 2021

We object to the proposed development on the following grounds:

Road Safety:

The creation of residential dwellings as proposed in the plans will effectively introduce a new access point to Leckhampton Road directly opposite the junction with Old Bath Road and Undercliffe Avenue. Until now the existing site has only been accessed very infrequently by Severn Trent service vehicles and therefore did not cause any significant safety risk. The proposed development will result in frequent daily vehicle movements into/from the site. Given that there are already two other roads joining Leckhampton Road at the same point, and since the site access is on the downhill side of the road, this will create a situation where accidents are bound to happen. Leckhampton Hill is very well used by cyclists and the risk of them colliding with vehicles exiting the site must be very high.

My understanding is the developers have options/rights to the former reservoir site immediately to the west of the proposed development. The danger will become even more acute if the former reservoir site was later further developed with the addition of more dwellings.

Environmental Damage:

As reported in the Ecological Appraisal, we have witnessed the developers cutting down many mature trees and partially clearing the site during the past two year. The plans also require further felling of trees. If the development is allowed, the result will be replacement of a mature woodland area which is a haven for various wildlife species by large buildings made of concrete and other CO2 intensive materials. This is entirely inconsistent with national targets to reduce CO2 emissions.

Privacy:

The window on the eastern side of the sitting room in the proposed property on plot 1 will overlook our front first floor bedroom. Whilst the plans include "native species hedgerow planting" immediately inside the current boundary wall, there is no guarantee the hedge will grow high enough or will not be cut down by the property owners.

2 Leckhampton Rise
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 0AP

Comments: 31st January 2022

I object on the basis that entry to and from this site is not safe. I regularly use the junction from Old Bath Road, turning into Leckhampton Road, and this is a busy section of road. Traffic always travels quickly down Leckhampton Hill and entrance to and from this site would be dangerous.

Hillside
Undercliff Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 9AA

Comments: 26th October 2021

I live in Undercliff Avenue and confirm my agreement with comments made by other objectors as to the unsuitability of this proposed development because of Highway Safety issues

This is already a very dangerous junction with multiple accesses and adding a further access point to serve 2 houses with potentially a large number of cars is surely ill advised. The previous access to the Site was used very infrequently by Severn Trent Water (once every 2 months at most and then by one vehicle) and therefore it can't be validly argued that a precedence has been set.

The inherent danger is greatly increased at busy times and during the winter months when visibility is very much reduced.

I would urge the Council to refuse the Application for this very valid reason.

57 Leckhampton Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 0BJ

Comments: 4th November 2021

There is at present a (possibly unauthorised) footpath across this bit of land which is a useful link from Leckhampton Hill (opposite the end of Undercliff Avenue) to the route of the abandoned tramway incline and thus to the field above Collum End Rise. It will be a pity to lose this useful shortcut. Perhaps the present access to the reservoir could be opened up as part of the development as an alternative for walkers.

The design of the houses isn't what I would have chosen and is out of character with nearby properties but I concede that this is all a matter of taste...