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Comments on Planning Application 25/02950/FUL

The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum (WNF) is a statutory consultee which seeks to represent the views (in relation to planning matters) of residents in the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes Harbord Road. The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) is a legally made plan approved overwhelmingly by our residents in a referendum in May 2021.

25/02950/FUL Demolition of existing dwellinghouse, erection 2 x 4 bed semi detached dwellinghouses (Use Class C3). Formation of dropped kerb and Boundary fence to the rear garden. Provision of bin and cycle storage. Alterations to landscaping and provision of ASHPs. (amended description) | 16 Harbord Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX2 8LJ.

The WNF Steering Committee has considered the application concerning the demolition of a bungalow and its replacement with 2 x 4 bed semis, and considers that in a number of respects the application is unacceptable. **WNF therefore objects to permission being granted.**

Reason for objecting:

The applicants intend to remove a total of 15.5m of existing hedgerow both at the front and rear of the property. A number of trees will also be removed. The Ecological Survey and biodiversity calculation submitted as part of the application indicate that this will mean that the demolition of the existing bungalow and its replacement with 2x4 bed semis will result in a reduction of 21% loss in habitat units and a loss of 100% of hedgerow units. **The new development will not meet the requirement to increase biodiversity by 10%.**

The Report concludes that this loss will have to be mitigated and compensated for by increases in biodiversity elsewhere. It does not mention where this could be.

The Oxford Local Plan 2036 (Policy G6 P85) deals with developments on residential garden land. It specifies that such mitigation should preferably be within the locality of the development.

." If any biodiversity loss cannot be avoided or mitigated on site, then biodiversity compensation may be acceptable. Compensation should be within the locality of the development".

Policy GBS5 (P23) of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan, which is concerned with Biodiversity, states that "loss can be mitigated and compensated for on a like-for-like basis elsewhere **within the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Area** by providing a replacement habitat of an equivalent or higher ecological value.....which provides net gains in biodiversity, which must be protected."

This application fails to increase biodiversity on site, and fails to specify where a compensatory increase will be provided.

The WNF objects to this application for these reasons.

From Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum Steering Committee

Paul Buckley (Chair), Mary Brown, Elaine Chaston, Tony Dale, Chris Dawkins, Judith Haverty, Katherine Kaye, Richard Lawrence-Wilson, David Stone.

12 December 2025