Web: www.wolvercotenf.org.uk
Email: wolvercotenf@gmail.com

Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum (WNF) was first designated as a 'Neighbourhood Forum' in 2014, and was re-designated in 2019 and in 2024. It seeks to represent the views, in relation to planning matters, of residents in the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes both Elsfield Way and Harefields. Our Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) was approved overwhelmingly by residents in a referendum in May 2021 and was subsequently 'made' by Oxford City Council.

WNF objection to Planning Application 26/01920/FUL

The Steering Committee of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum has examined this application carefully, and found several aspects that would be damaging to residents we represent. Therefore, on behalf of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum, we object to Planning Permission being granted. These are the reasons for our objection.

1. **Over-development**
   The application proposes a two storey block of four flats, to be built in a plot that was previously part of the back garden of 9 Elsfield Way, surrounded by neighbouring back gardens of houses in Elsfield Way, Riddell Place and Harefields. The plot is only ca 13m wide, which has to accommodate the width of the building and all access, bin and bike stores etc. In our view, such a block of flats crammed into such a confined space constitutes over-development, and should not be permitted.

2. **Problems on the west side**
   On the west side of the site, much of the west-facing wall of the block is proposed to be within only 1m of the boundary with the back garden of 7 Elsfield Way. West-facing windows of the first floor flats 3 and 4 will be within less than 5m from this boundary. For neighbours at 7 Elsfield Way, this will clearly spoil the amenity of their back garden. It will be overlooked and deprived of privacy. The new block will have an overbearing effect on the entire northern half of this neighbour's garden: it has a height of 6m, while the garden's width is only ca 12m.

3. **Problems on the east side**
   On the east side of the block, flats 3 and 4 have balconies that face balconies of existing flats in the block at 40 Harefields, and the gap between the two buildings is only ca 25m. The new block will also screen greenery in nearby gardens from residents on the west-facing side of 40 Harefields. It is therefore clear that those residents will suffer a spoiling of the outlook from their flats, and lack of privacy on their balconies, because of the proximity of the balconies they will be facing.

4. **Poor access**
   The development is also badly served in terms of access. It has no direct access to a road. The only access is to Harefields, through the private car park serving residents of the block at 40 Harefields. No parking is provided for the new flats. Hence there is great potential for the new flats disturbing the

functioning of these neighbours' car park. All vehicles needing any temporary access to the new flats – e.g. Amazon deliveries – will inevitably use the car park for access and then need to turn within it, potentially causing nuisance for the residents of 40 Harefields. Moreover, this will be a particular problem during construction, as it will be the only access route available for all construction vehicles.

5. **Other neighbours affected**
   Other neighbours to be inconvenienced will be residents of nearby houses in Harefields. Residents of some even numbers in Harefields back onto the new development, and will find their outlook spoiled, with some potential for overlooking and hence loss of privacy from balconies of the new flats. Also, since the new development will have no car parking spaces allocated to it, any visitors to the new flats arriving by car outside the operational hours of the CPZ will park on the road in Harefields, increasing parking pressure on that road.

Most of the problems for nearby properties posed by the development are those of overlooking and removal of privacy. That conflicts with Policy BEC2 of our Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan 'Development design should safeguard privacy by minimising overlooking…etc etc'. It also breaches Policy H14 of the current version of the Oxford Local Plan, which states categorically that 'planning permission will not be granted for any development that has an overbearing effect on existing homes'. In our opinion, it is clear that planning permission should be refused.

From the Steering Committee of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum:

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

6 October, 2026